

Town of Apex, North Carolina

# Proclamation

from the Office of the Mayor

## JUNETEENTH

WHEREAS, our country is made up of people from every nation, who are declared equal not only in freedom, but also in justice, both of which are essential for health human civilization; and

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776 with the Declaration of Independence, the classic statement being: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness;" and

WHEREAS, using his war powers as President, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, providing that all persons held as enslaved within any State or designated part of a State "shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free," and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day, is a worldwide celebration which commemorates the end of slavery in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation - signed by President Lincoln over two and a half years prior on September 22, 1862 - and to free all remaining enslaved people in the state of Texas; and

WHEREAS, initially a regional celebration popular in Texas and neighboring states brought remaining family members together who had resettled after June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1865, Juneteenth grew to become a national event during which African American communities gathered to share in the spirit of the day featuring outdoor activities, food, and prayer services; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth celebrations declined in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the result of educational focus which emphasized the Emancipation Proclamation, shifts in the workforce due to the Great Depression, and the popularity of the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday; and

WHEREAS, the Civil Rights Movement spurred a resurgence of Juneteenth, leading to the state of Texas declaring it an official state holiday in 1980, and continued to grow as an important national and local celebration of African American freedom, culture, and achievement; and

WHEREAS, the residents, businesses, and government institutions of the Town of Apex, North Carolina are firmly committed to celebrating and promoting diversity, inclusion, and cultural traditions of our Town's communities; and

WHEREAS, since June 2020 the Town of Apex has declared Juneteenth as an official Town holiday and day of observance; and

WHEREAS, on Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, the Town of Apex will observe and mark this important historical event and encourage all of Apex to celebrate this important event that promotes equity, respect, and understanding between people of all backgrounds and cultures.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jacques K. Gilbert, Mayor of the Town of Apex, do hereby recognize and commemorate Juneteenth in the Town of Apex and call upon all citizens to celebrate and explore this important celebration of African American culture, history, freedom, and pride.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand  
and caused the Seal of the Town of Apex, North Carolina  
to be affixed this the 8<sup>th</sup> day of June 2021

---

Jacques K. Gilbert, Mayor