

August 18, 2024

Bristol Town Council  
10 Court Street  
Bristol, RI 02809

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
BRISTOL, RI 02809

2024 AUG 19 AM 11:39



Dear Councilors:

RE: Bristol Land Acknowledgement

**RECEIVED AT MEETING**

As a Bristol resident and member of the Sowams Heritage Area Project Steering Committee, I urge the Bristol Town Council to grant the petition for Adoption of a Land Acknowledgement.

Sowams Heritage Area is dedicated to instilling a sense of stewardship and deep appreciation for the profound historical, cultural, and natural significance of the Sowams region on the northeastern watershed of Narragansett Bay. Here, the critical alliance between the Pokanoket Tribe and the Mayflower settlers, and the fracturing of that alliance, changed the course of history.

Through preservation, regional collaboration, community development, and experiential learning, we illuminate the pivotal events that happened on this landscape over centuries, providing a space for people to tell their own stories about the intricate interplay of people, land and water that shaped the political, economic and social heritage of the nation.

Just as Bristolians are proud of their role in celebrating America's independence, they can also take pride in living in the ancestral homeland of the Pokanoket Massasoit Ousamequin, who welcomed the Pilgrims, saved them from starvation, and formed a remarkable 50-year alliance with them. We have an opportunity to learn from the tragic lessons of the aftermath of the King Philip's War, which ended here, in Bristol, with the death of Philip in the "Miery Swamp" at the foot of Mt. Hope.

For 10,000 years, Mt. Hope, called Potumtuck, has been the sacred meeting place of the Pokanoket. We encourage the Town Council to acknowledge the profound significance of Bristol's Pokanoket origin story, so that this beloved landmark can also be a beacon of hope, pride, and reconciliation to all Bristolians for years to come.

Sincerely,

Andrea Rounds

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