

memo

To: Mayor and City Council of Dacula
From: Alethia Hyman, Tax Clerk
Date: May 26, 2022
Re: Juneteenth Holiday Request

Juneteenth, observed on June 19th, commemorates the ending of slavery in the United States. Though the Emancipation Proclamation became official on January 1, 1863, it took two and half years for it be enforced. On June 19, 1865 Galveston, Texas received the news that the war was over. The Union had won and had the power to enforce the end of slavery. Word spread throughout Texas and many newly freed persons left the state to seek better opportunities. Over the years, former enslaved persons and their descendants traveled back to Galveston, Texas to recount memories and to celebrate that joyful day in June. Juneteenth (as it is now called) is considered African American Emancipation Day. This day is not only for celebration, but for reflection of achievement, education, and success within the African American community.

The Federal government made Juneteenth a holiday on June 17, 2021. Governor Brian Kemp signed legislation that made Juneteenth a state holiday in April 2022. Gwinnett County also recognized it as a paid holiday for employees in April of this year. A small poll seeking input about the proposed holiday was sent to several cities within Gwinnett. As a result, the cities that have passed Juneteenth as a holiday are: Suwanee, Peachtree Corners, Lawrenceville, Norcross, and Duluth.

If the Mayor and Council are in agreement, we are requesting that the City of Dacula observe Juneteenth as an official holiday. Recent growth of the City has led to an increase in diversity. Recognizing this holiday may foster a strong sense of community and inclusion.

If considered, due to millage rate hearings scheduled for Monday, June, 20th, we kindly ask that this year we observe Juneteenth on the preceding Friday, the 17th. All services provided by the City will be modified as required per the Personnel Manual.