



AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

Meeting Date: May 23, 2023

Subject: Flag Raising – Progress Pride and Juneteenth Flag

Prepared by: Jonathan Weinberg, Vice Mayor

Attachment(s):

1. Resolution No. 2022-90 Flag Raising Policy
2. Exemplar of the Progress Pride Flag
3. Exemplar of the Juneteenth Flag
4. Resolution No. 2022-XX
5. Resolution No. 2022-XX

Initiated by:

Vice Mayor

Previous Council Consideration:

November 29, 2022

Fiscal Impact:

None

Environmental Review:

Not applicable

Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:

- In accordance with the City’s flag raising policy, shall the City of Los Altos recognize the Progress Pride flag as government speech and raise the Progress Pride flag from June 1, 2023 through June 7, 2023 at City Hall?
- In accordance with the City’s flag raising policy, shall the City of Los Altos recognize the Juneteenth flag as government speech and raise the Juneteenth flag for the time period June 19, 2023 through June 25, 2023 at City Hall?

Summary:

- The City Council approved the Los Altos Flag Raising Policy on November 29, 2022. The policy provides that the City Council may authorize the display of flags other than the country, state, and city flags on City property, including to commemorate an event or occasion in the form of a resolution if the flag is recognized as government speech.

Reviewed By:

City Manager

GE

City Attorney

JH

Finance Director

JD



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- Vice Mayor Weinberg requests that the City (1) raise the Progress Pride flag from June 1, 2023 through June 7, 2023 at City Hall, and (2) raise the Juneteenth flag for the time period June 19, 2023 through June 25, 2023 at City Hall.

Purpose

City Council to review whether the City of Los Altos recognizes the Progress Pride flag as government speech and raise the Progress Pride flag from June 1, 2023 through June 7, 2023 at City Hall and recognizes the Juneteenth flag as government speech and raise the Juneteenth flag for the time period June 19, 2023 through June 25, 2023 at City Hall?

Background

At its regular meeting on November 29, 2022, the Los Altos City Council approved Resolution 2022-90 which established the City' flag raising policy. A copy of the resolution is included as Attachment A. The resolution includes a copy of the flag raising policy.

Los Altos' flag raising policy says that in addition to the flags of the United States, the State of California, and the City of Los Altos, "the City Council may authorize the display of other flags on City property, including to commemorate an event or occasion." Authorization to fly an additional flag must be in the form of a resolution.

At its regular meeting on May 9, 2023, the Los Altos City Council approved placing on its agenda the question of whether to fly the Progress Pride flag and/or the Juneteenth flag in the month of June, 2023.

Discussion/Analysis:

Progress Pride Flag

The Progress Pride flag image has been included as Attachment #2.

According to the BBC:

"The Pride flag is a symbol of the LGBTQ+ community and its colours represent the different communities within it.

The Pride flag was created by American artist and gay rights activist Gilbert Baker, and first displayed in 1978 to be a symbol for the LGBT community.

The original design had eight stripes instead of the six normally seen now, and each of its colourful stripes had a meaning.



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Speaking about his design, Gilbert said: ‘We needed something beautiful... something from us.’

What do the colours in the flag mean?

- Red - Life
- Orange - Healing
- Yellow - Sunlight
- Green - Nature
- Blue - Peace/Harmony/Art
- Violet - Spirit

The flag design spread around the world and in the 1990s it became a symbol for those fighting for equal rights for the LGBT community.

Forty-three years later the Pride flag is still a widely used and recognised symbol of the LGBT community.

Over the years the original rainbow flag has been redesigned, with some within LGBTQ+ movements arguing it needed to better represent and reflect more communities.

In 2017, Philadelphia's Office of LGBT Affairs added black and brown stripes to the Pride flag to recognise people of colour.

One year later, an artist called Daniel Quasar released a redesign of the Pride flag, called the Progress Pride flag, which was widely shared on social media.

It included black, brown, pink, pale blue and white stripes, to represent marginalised people of colour in the LGBTQ+ community, as well as the trans community, and those living with HIV/AIDS.

‘The arrow points to the right to show forward movement, while being along the left edge shows that progress still needs to be made.’ explained Daniel Quasar.”

Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/57607955>

Juneteenth Flag

The Juneteenth flag image has been included as Attachment #3.

According to Wikipedia:



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“The Juneteenth flag is a symbol for the Juneteenth holiday in the United States. The first version was created in 1997 by activist Ben Haith and that early version was displayed in 1997. The present version was first flown in 2000. The colors and symbols on the flag are representative of freedom and the end of slavery. The date on the flag represents that of General Order No. 3 issued in Galveston, Texas in 1865. In 2020 and 2021, many states began recognizing Juneteenth by flying the flag over their state capitol buildings, especially after Juneteenth was declared a federal holiday by President Joe Biden in June 2021.

Design

The Juneteenth flag was designed in 1997 by activist Boston Ben (Ben Haith). Haith displayed the first version of the Juneteenth flag in June 1997 at Boston's John Eliot Square District. It was described by Patricia Smith of the Boston Globe as, ‘A banner adorned with sunbursts and flaming candles.’ The present design was completed and copyrighted by Haith in 2000. Haith is also the founder of the National Juneteenth Celebration. Lisa Jeanne Graf claims on her website that she was another contributor to the design: she states that she fine-tuned the design of the flag for the National Juneteenth Celebration Foundation.

The flag uses the colors of red, white and blue from the American flag. Featured prominently in the center of the flag is a bursting star. Running through the center of the flag horizontally, is an arc that is meant to symbolize the new horizon of opportunity for black people. According to the president of the National Juneteenth Observance Foundation Steve Williams, the star is a ‘Bursting star of freedom.’ Williams also states that the arch representing the horizon shows blue above and the red color below is symbolic of the ground soaked with blood; the blood which was shed by the African American slaves for the United States. The red, white, and blue colors were meant to convey the message that all enslaved people and their descendants are American. In 2007, the date ‘June 19, 1865’ was added.

Symbolism

The five-pointed star refers both to Texas (nicknamed the ‘Lone Star state’) and to the ‘freedom of African Americans in all 50 states.’ Surrounding it is a nova (or ‘new star’) representing a new beginning for all.

Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation of June 1, 1863, declared that all slaves in the rebel Confederate States were free. The State of Texas rejoined the Union with the end of the Civil War on April 9, 1865. On June 19, 1865, Union General Gordon Granger arrived at



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the port of Galveston Texas and announced that slavery had been ended with General Order No. 3. The Juneteenth Flag has the date of June 19, 1865 displayed on it.

One year later freed slaves in Texas celebrated the first Juneteenth on June 19, and it was called ‘Jubilee Day.’ ”

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juneteenth_flag