

## **Proclamation Declaring June 17, 2023, as “Celebration of Juneteenth in Wilsonville”**

WHEREAS, the Emancipation Proclamation, was an executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln on September 22, 1862, effective January 1, 1863, that freed approximately 3.5 million slaves in the Confederate states; and

WHEREAS, while President Abraham Lincoln had officially freed the slaves, enforcement of this order became difficult to enforce in areas where there were few Union soldiers. Texas, in particular, remained unaffected, as it was geographically isolated from Union troops and thus was the last confederate state to have the proclamation announced; and

WHEREAS, many slave owners moved to Texas looking to not be affected by the enforcement of the proclamation. By the end of the Civil War on April 9, 1865, the number of slaves in Texas had increased by tens of thousands, despite the proclamation; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger from the Headquarters District of Texas in Galveston, with more than 2,000 Union troops, traveled to every county in Texas informing the people that all slaves were free; and

WHEREAS, the Juneteenth celebration was started a year later in Texas to celebrate the importance of June 19 with the announcement that slavery had been abolished. It was from this celebration that Juneteenth (“June” combined with “nineteenth”) was born; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth became a national holiday on June 19, 2021 after President Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law ; and

WHEREAS, Wilsonville’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee will host a community celebration on the Saturday before June 19, Juneteenth, 2023; and

WHEREAS, traditions include public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, singing traditional songs such as "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing", and reading of works by noted African-American writers such as Ralph Ellison and Maya Angelou, as well as sharing of slave food delicacies, including the barbecue pit, and certain foods that became popular and synonymous with Juneteenth celebrations, such as strawberry soda-pop.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Julie Fitzgerald, Mayor of the City of Wilsonville, encourage all citizens to join with our neighbors and Wilsonville’s African American community to declare June 17, 2023, as “Celebration of Juneteenth in Wilsonville.”

Dated the 5<sup>th</sup> day of June 2023.



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Julie Fitzgerald, Mayor