

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

PROCLAMATION NO. 2023-052

Proclaiming June 19th, 2023 as Juneteenth Day in Multnomah County, Oregon.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

1. The Independence Day movement initiated by the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776 did not include the enslaved descendants of African Americans, nor were they recognized as full human beings under the Declaration of Independence.
2. On January 1, 1863 the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, yet, all remaining slaves in Texas did not receive the news until June 19, 1865, earmarking Juneteenth as the annual observation and recognition date. On this day 42 states in the US including the District of Columbia celebrate the abolition of slavery which gave all slaves freedom and equal rights. This day is also known as Freedom Day and Emancipation Day and is heavily recognized in African American communities nationwide.
3. Juneteenth honors and celebrates the end of slavery; not the day slavery actually ended. "Delayed emancipation was not caused by not-knowing; the culprit was lack of enforcement." We celebrate Juneteenth because it was the beginning of freedom and abolition of slavery for African Americans in the United States.
4. Although President Abraham Lincoln signed an executive order known as the Emancipation Proclamation granting freedom to slaves in the states of the Confederacy on January 1, 1863 slave owners in the Confederate states continued to enslave people in defiance until well after the Civil War ended in April 1865.
5. When Union Major Gordon Granger read General Order Number 3 in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, it contained the important words, "all slaves are free", causing impromptu celebrations across the state as the long-delayed news spread.
6. Juneteenth is the oldest celebration commemorating the abolition of slavery in the United States today which celebrates the freedom and achievement of African Americans, while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all cultures in the African diaspora.

7. In 1945, Vanport resident Clara Peoples, the “Mother of Juneteenth,” brought the tradition from Muskogee, Oklahoma, to the Kaiser Shipyard in Oregon celebrating Juneteenth for the first time here in Multnomah County. Traditionally, the celebration of Juneteenth kicked off with the Clara Peoples’ Freedom Trail Parade, followed by a community festival. This was a time to celebrate and honor African Americans' freedom with an emphasis on education and achievement. Clara Peoples' granddaughter Janelle Peoples Jack honors her grandmother's legacy by leading Juneteenth Oregon, which now includes the Ms. Juneteenth Youth Leadership Development and Pageant program.
8. In 1997, the 105th United States Congress passed Senate Joint Resolution 11 and House Joint Resolution 56 officially recognizing Juneteenth Independence Day.
9. In 2001, Juneteenth became a statewide holiday here in the State of Oregon when Clara Peoples and Woody Broadnax worked with Senator Avel Gordly to have Juneteenth recognized as a statewide day of observance and declaration. Juneteenth is to be a day for celebration statewide of the dignity, worth, and freedom of all citizens. Members of the Seventy-first Oregon Legislative Assembly passed Joint Resolution 56 that proclaims June 19 of each year as Juneteenth Independence Day.
10. Multnomah County was the first County in Oregon to declare Juneteenth an annual paid holiday for Multnomah County employees in June 2020. By observing Juneteenth, Multnomah County seeks to not only commemorate the importance of the date of Black liberation, but also encourages staff to use the day as an opportunity to learn about Black history locally and nationally, to support Black writers, filmmakers and artists, patronize Black-owned businesses, and honor the accomplishments of Black colleagues.
11. Multnomah County acknowledges the ongoing impacts of slavery, Jim Crow, Oregon’s Black exclusion laws and gentrification on Black Oregonians and remains committed to promoting and investing in services and programs that support racial healing, reconciliation, restoration, justice and equitable opportunities for all people.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:

June 19, 2023 as Juneteenth Day in Multnomah County, Oregon, and encourages all residents, institutions, businesses and community groups to observe Juneteenth as a day of remembrance and celebration.

ADOPTED this 15th day of June, 2023.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Jessica Vega Pederson, Chair

REVIEWED:

JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By _____
Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY: Jessica Vega Pederson, County Chair