

PROCLAMATION

JUNETEENTH Annually on the 19th of June

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865 Union Major General Gordon Granger landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the American Civil War had ended two and a half years prior with the signing of President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 and that the enslaved are now free; and

WHEREAS, Texas was the last state to accept an "equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired laborer"; and

WHEREAS, many former slaves left the plantations of Texas to embrace freedom and seek out family in Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, settling into these new areas as free men and women brought on new realities and the challenges of establishing a heretofore non-existent status for black people in America for President Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson overturned the order that had provided 40,000 freed men with 400,000 acres of land entitled to them and provided it to the very planters that had declared war on the United States years prior; and

WHEREAS, recounting the memories of that great day in June of 1865 would serve as motivation as well as a release from the growing pressures encountered in their new territory; and

WHEREAS, the celebration of June 19th was coined "Juneteenth" as a celebration for reassuring each other, for praying, for recounting the past, and for some an annual pilgrimage back to Galveston for that date; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth today, celebrates Black freedom and achievement as it takes on a more national, symbolic, and even global perspective it is known that decades and centuries of systemic racism have permeated every aspect of our Nation's history, effectively forbidding the growth of Black wealth and requiring the active dismantling of these systems and investment in Black lives; and

WHEREAS, the events of 1865 in Texas are not forgotten, for all roots tie back to that fertile soil from which a national day of pride is growing; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the Village of Oak Park supports the celebration of Juneteenth both financially and in spirit fully; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vicki Scaman, President of the Village of Oak Park and Board of Trustees, do hereby proclaim that the Village of Oak Park shall recognize June 19, 2021 and each year thereafter on the 19th of June as Juneteenth.

ADOPTED and **APPROVED** this 7th day of June, 2021.

President Vicki Scaman

ATTEST:

Christina M. Waters, Village Clerk