

P R O C L A M A T I O N

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 enslaved persons, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired laborer"; and

WHEREAS, many former enslaved persons 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 people 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, recognizing 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

WHEREAS, Opal Lee, described as the "grandmother of Juneteenth," is a tireless advocate and community leader who played a pivotal role in raising awareness and advancing the recognition of Juneteenth as a federal holiday in the United States; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vicki Scaman, President of the Village of Oak Park and Board of Trustees, do hereby proclaim the Village of Oak Park shall recognize June 19, 2024 and each year thereafter on the 19th of June as ***JUNETEENTH***, and urge all community members to celebrate and participate in events arranged for this time.

ADOPTED and **APPROVED** this 11th day of June, 2024.

Vicki Scaman
Village President

ATTEST:

Christina M. Waters
Village Clerk