



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

JUNETEENTH PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Swampscott is made up of people from every nation on earth, who are declared equal not only in freedom but also in justice, both of which are essential for a healthy human civilization; and

WHEREAS, Our nation was conceived on July 4th, 1776 with the Declaration of Independence, the classic statement being: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”; and

WHEREAS, July 4, 1776, represents the birth of the United States of America and commemorates the United States’ independence from British rule, but did not offer independence and freedom to enslaved people; and

WHEREAS, At 2:00 p.m. on New Year’s Day, January 1, 1863, using his war powers as President, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, providing that all enslaved people within any State or designated part of a State “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free;” and

WHEREAS, Two and a half years later on June 19, 1865 Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas announcing the end of slavery, stating: “The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property, between former masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employer and hired labor” and;

WHEREAS, Juneteenth celebrations began in 1866 including cook-outs, prayer gatherings, and musical performances; and some communities purchased land specifically for these gatherings; and as freed families then emigrated to other parts of the United States they brought the traditions of Juneteenth with them, and;

WHEREAS, Juneteenth improves upon the nation’s promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the strength and resolve of Black and African Americans throughout our history and serves as an opportunity to celebrate the rich and numerous contributions of Black and African Americans; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is also known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, Cel-Liberation, and Juneteenth Independence Day; and

WHEREAS, June 19, 2021, marks the 156th commemoration Juneteenth;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Swampscott Select Board and Town Administrator, do hereby proclaim June 19th, 2021 as Juneteenth in Swampscott Massachusetts and we call upon all employees and residents of Swampscott to celebrate and reflect on this date’s historic significance.