



**PROCLAMATION SUPPORTING THE PREVENTION OF GUN VIOLENCE**

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma acknowledges the devastating impact of gun violence, which presents a clear danger to our community; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2020 gun violence became the leading cause of death for people under the age of 18 in America; and boys ages 12 to 17 account for most gun-related deaths; and

**WHEREAS**, a gun is stolen from a vehicle in Tacoma every 57 hours, as reported by the Tacoma Police Department, and failures to safely store legally purchased firearms are resulting in firearms ending up in the hands of youths and an unknown number of guns illegally circulating in our community; and

**WHEREAS**, Tacoma’s youth are not immune to gun violence, and we have already lost beloved children, many of whom were youths of color, cherished by their families and friends, with full lives ahead of them; and

**WHEREAS**, data published by the Pew Research Center show that as of 2021 Black children were about five times more likely to die from gun violence than white children; and

**WHEREAS**, gun violence not only changes or cuts lives short, but also traumatizes perpetrators, witnesses, and families, while stoking stress, fear, and anxiety in our neighborhoods and schools; and

**WHEREAS**, it takes all of us working as a community to ensure every child is safe, healthy, engaged, and supported, and

**WHEREAS**, Metro Parks is fully committed to offering parks, recreation, and zoological programs and spaces as an important element of youth violence prevention, and that this is part of the District’s commitment to supporting the Whole Child; and

**WHEREAS**, Metro Parks Tacoma is working through the Joint Municipal Action Committee (JMAC) and other partners to quickly implement and launch the Late Night Summer Program – also known as Whole Child Safe Zones – which offer places throughout the City five nights a week where middle school and high school students can enjoy a free dinner as well as music, art, and opportunities to hang out with their friends in the evenings; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tacoma City Council adopted Resolution 41197 on May 16, 2023 and the Tacoma Public Schools Board of Directors adopted Resolution 2124 on June 8, 2023, both of which express support for this shared responsibility to protect our youth; Now, therefore, be it

**PROCLAIMED** by the Board of Park Commissioners of the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma to support community collaborations to prevent gun violence and provide safe places and spaces for youth to grow, and to encourage everyone to help spread the word to all of Tacoma’s teenagers about the Late Night Summer Program.

The foregoing proclamation was adopted by the Board of Park Commissioners of the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma at a regularly scheduled meeting held June 26, 2023.

ATTEST:

  
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Board President

  
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Board Clerk

