



## A PROCLAMATION IN CELEBRATION OF JUNETEENTH

**WHEREAS**, on June 19, 1865, Union Army Major General Gordon Granger led troops into Galveston, Texas, and presented an order announcing all enslaved people were now free, two-and-a-half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, and

**WHEREAS**, Metro Parks Tacoma acknowledges and celebrates Juneteenth as a critical and culturally significant milestone in the long and necessary process of the emancipation of Black people that would continue throughout the United States for many years to come; and

**WHEREAS**, this date has been celebrated annually in communities around the world as the oldest known observance of the end of slavery in the United States, commemorating the struggle and sacrifice of Black Americans in the fight for freedom; and

**WHEREAS**, we acknowledge that while Juneteenth marked a monumental victory in the struggle for freedom, it did not mark the end of race-based oppression for Black Americans through other means including “Black Codes,” Jim Crow, and forms of systemic racism that persist to this day; and

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth is an opportunity to celebrate the progress and achievements of Black Americans as well as recommit to the continued struggle for liberty and justice for all; and

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth officially became a federal holiday in 2021 and was designated as an officially recognized holiday to be observed annually by Metro Parks Tacoma by the Board of Park Commissioners that same year; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 19, 2024, thousands of people will gather at Stewart Heights Park to remember and celebrate the legacy of this day at Juneteenth Celebration: A Road to Economic Freedom, which is anticipated to be the largest community-led Juneteenth celebration in Washington State; and

**WHEREAS**, Metro Parks Tacoma acknowledges racism as a public parks and recreation crisis and is committed to the work of reforming structures that perpetuate racism within our agency as well as actively engaging in anti-racist work to address disparities in our community; and

**WHEREAS**, in celebrating the Juneteenth holiday with our community, we acknowledge and denounce the history of slavery in the United States, celebrate the bravery and resilience of Black Americans who fought for their freedom, and recommit ourselves to advancing justice, diversity, equity and inclusion for all people.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Park Commissioners hereby proclaims Juneteenth as a Metro Parks Tacoma holiday and encourages all Tacomans to celebrate this day in honor of the hard-won freedom of Black Americans.

The foregoing proclamation was adopted by the Board of Park Commissioners of the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma at a regularly scheduled meeting held on June 10, 2024.



ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Board President

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Board Clerk