

RESOLUTION R04-06 CMS

A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH JUNETEENTH AS AN OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED DAY OF COMMEMORATION AND CELEBRATION FOR THE CITY OF OBERLIN, OHIO

WHEREAS, Oberlin's early citizens committed themselves to the ideals of freedom and equality for all by the Constitution of the Oberlin Anti-Slavery Society, founded in June, 1835:

"Our object is the immediate emancipation of the whole colored race within the United States: The emancipation of the slave from the oppression of the master, the emancipation of the free colored man from the oppression of public sentiment, and the elevation of both to an intellectual, moral, and political equality with whites"; and,

WHEREAS, in 1858 the Oberlin citizens who were arrested for their participation in the Oberlin-Wellington Slave Rescue confirmed their commitment, after three months in prison, by Resolution, stating:

"Resolved: That after all the pains and penalties inflicted upon us by Government Officials in the attempt to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act, we feel it to be our duty to say, that our hatred and opposition to that unjust and unconstitutional law is more intense than ever before.

No fine or imprisonment however enforced by whatever Court, can induce us to yield in obedience. We will hereafter, as we have heretofore, help the panting fugitive to escape from those who would enslave him, whatever may be the authority under which they may act"; and,

WHEREAS, two young men from Oberlin, John Copeland and Lewis Sheridan Leary, gave their lives at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, in an attempt to wrest freedom for their enslaved brethren by raiding the federal arsenal under the leadership of John Brown. In one of his last letters, Copeland wrote:

"It was a sense of the wrongs which we have suffered that prompted the noble but unfortunate Captain Brown and his associates to attempt to give freedom to a small number, at least of those who are now held by cruel and unusual laws, and by no less cruel and unjust men. To this freedom they were entitled by every known principal of justice and humanity, and for the enjoyment of it God created them. And how, dear brother, could I die in a more noble cause?" and,

WHEREAS, Oberlin men, black and white, gave their lives during the Civil War to ensure "freedom for all"; and,

WHEREAS, on January 1, 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation; and,

WHEREAS, the news of emancipation did not reach those enslaved in Texas until June 19, 1865 almost two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863; and,

WHEREAS, Juneteenth or June 19, 1865, is considered the date when the last slaves in America were freed; and,

WHEREAS, while the roots of Juneteenth are in Texas, Juneteenth symbolizes freedom and has become a day to celebrate freedom all over the United States; and,

WHEREAS, Oberlin's history of commitment to abolition and the cause of freedom makes this community uniquely qualified to celebrate Juneteenth; and,

WHEREAS, Oberlin pays tribute to the men, women, and children who lived and died in bondage, as well as those who suffered pain, ostracism, imprisonment and death in the aid of freedom seekers; and,

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest and most widely known celebration of emancipation in the United States and forerunner to the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution; and,

WHEREAS, all citizens, institutions and businesses, both private and public in Oberlin are urged to join in promoting Juneteenth by celebrating Oberlin's unique contribution to the abolition of slavery, the significant contributions of the freedmen and women and their descendants to Oberlin and our larger society, and Oberlin's recommitment to promoting freedom, brotherhood and equality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Oberlin, County of Lorain, State of Ohio, five-sevenths (5/7ths) of all members elected thereto concurring:

SECTION 1. That the City of Oberlin hereby reaffirms its commitment to the ideals of their fore-parents by establishing Juneteenth, the Saturday in June that falls between the 13th and 19th of June each year, as an Officially Recognized day of Commemoration and Celebration for the City of Oberlin.

SECTION 2: It is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning or relating to the adoption of this resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council and that all deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to

the public in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 3: That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety of the citizens of the City of Oberlin, Ohio, or to provide for the usual daily operation of a municipal department, to wit, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code:

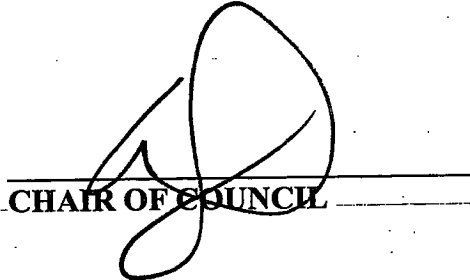
“In order to establish Juneteenth as an officially recognized day of Commemoration and Celebration for the City of Oberlin, Ohio, in a timely manner”,

and shall take effect immediately upon passage.

PASSED: 1st Reading – June 7, 2004 (E)
2nd Reading -
3rd Reading -

ATTEST:


CLERK OF COUNCIL


CHAIR OF COUNCIL

POSTED: June 8, 2004

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 8, 2004