

# METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT *of* GREATER CHICAGO RESOLUTION

SPONSORED *by the* BOARD *of* COMMISSIONERS RECOGNIZING

## JUNE 19<sup>th</sup> *as* JUNETEENTH *and* HONORING *the* INTRIGUE DANCERS

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth or June 19th, is an annual celebration which commemorates the anniversary of the date that slaves in Galveston, Texas were informed that they were free. Also known as Emancipation Day, Juneteenth is the oldest known observation of the emancipation of slaves in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, during the Civil War, as many Confederate states were defeated by the Union Army, many slave owners from Louisiana, Mississippi, and other southern states moved with their slaves to Texas due to its relative isolation and lack of monitoring by the Union Army. Thus, by the end of the Civil War, the number of slaves in Texas had grown immensely; and

**WHEREAS**, while General Robert E. Lee of the Confederate Army surrendered on April 9, 1865, marking the official end of the Civil War, news regarding the capitulation traveled slowly to isolated areas of the South. Texas was the last state in the Confederacy to receive notice that the Civil War was over and that the Confederate's efforts to withdraw from the Union had failed; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 19, 1865, Union soldier Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas and announced the end of the Civil War. In reading "General Orders No. 3", he announced "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free."; and

**WHEREAS**, the announcement officially gave effect to the Emancipation Proclamation, which had been issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. While the Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery in states that had seceded from the Union, slavery as an institution in the United States did not end until the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment on December 6, 1865; and

**WHEREAS**, the first recognition of Juneteenth can be traced back to Galveston, Texas as early as 1866. As former slaves moved north from Texas in search of a better life, they took with them the history of June 19th. As such, Juneteenth festivals became widespread throughout African American communities in the United States; and



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**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, on January 1, 1980, due to the efforts of State Representative Al Edwards of Houston, Texas became the first state to proclaim Juneteenth a holiday. On June 17, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, which designated Juneteenth as a federal holiday; and

**WHEREAS**, on August 6, 2020, in acknowledgment of the significance of Juneteenth, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago Board of Commissioners was one of the first government agencies in the State of Illinois to authorize that Juneteenth be offered as a holiday for all employees; and

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth is a day of considerable emotions. It symbolizes the promise of freedom, new beginnings, truth, optimism, endurance against injustice, and the fight for equality. Juneteenth is not just a day of celebration for African Americans, but for all Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, the District is honored to have the Intrigue Dancers participate in its first Juneteenth celebration; and

**WHEREAS**, the Intrigue Dancers include Harlow Chatys, Aubrey Child-Dufelmeier, Lathan Goodrum, Madison Greene, Mairah Lopez, Sofia Lopez, Arnesia Lovelace, Ava Mendoza, Morgan Moreno, Gabriell Nicholas, Tyra Outlaw, Ckylee Pitchford, Makaila Shephard, Ta'Sandra Marie Jeanette Watson with Brittany Fegans as the choreographer and Steve Gorski as the director; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the Board of

Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, on behalf of ourselves and our staff, do hereby recognize June 19th as Juneteenth and honor the Intrigue Dancers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago and that a copy of same, suitably engrossed, be presented to the Intrigue Dancers.



DATED THIS 16<sup>th</sup> DAY *of* JUNE, 2022.

**BOARD *of* COMMISSIONERS**

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