

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT of GREATER CHICAGO RESOLUTION

SPONSORED *by the* BOARD of COMMISSIONERS RECOGNIZING

JUNE 19th *as* JUNETEENTH *and* HONORING PIA HAMILTON

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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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 of 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 Pia Hamilton, owner and director of the Intrigue Dance and Performing Arts Center, participate in its first Juneteenth celebration; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hamilton began studying dance when she was three years old. She has an extensive resume which includes performing in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular, as a concert dancer with Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, and in television production on “Barney and Friends”. Mrs. Hamilton is currently performing in Broadway’s “The Lion King”; and

WHEREAS, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Sports Medicine from Pepperdine University in California, Mrs.

Hamilton prides herself on providing a healthy and balanced dance experience for her students; 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 Pia Hamilton; 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 Pia Hamilton.



DATED THIS 16th DAY *of* JUNE, 2022.

BOARD *of* COMMISSIONERS

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