

The Council Chambers
City Hall
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

A Proclamation

Whereas: In 2023 as we celebrate 400 years of history in our City we recognize that Portsmouth, as all cities, towns and villages everywhere, depends on the achievements and contributions of women, from the original Abenaki women of the Seacoast region to the economic, cultural, and social leaders of today; and

Whereas: When David Thomson built a house at Odiorne Point in 1623, or very soon after, he was accompanied by his wife of 10 years, Amais Cole Thomson; and we know that a woman named Patience Chadbourne Spencer was one of the first to arrive on board the ship *Pied Cow* that brought English colonists in 1635 to the settlement that would become Portsmouth; and

Whereas:: From those early days to now, women have made historic and everlasting contributions to Portsmouth, as citizens, leaders and champions of the philosophy that makes us the City of the Open Door, pushing the door open to the right to vote and other social justice equities, holding the door open to their sisters, mothers, daughters – and fathers, brothers and sons – and advocating efforts and institutions that keep the door open for all who follow; and

Whereas: Portsmouth has a particularly proud and distinctive history of women in leadership positions. Mary Carey Dondero began this legacy when she was elected as Portsmouth's first female City Councilor in 1940 and then subsequently elected as our first female Mayor in 1945. Her daughter, Eileen Dondero Foley, followed her trail blaze when she was elected Mayor in 1968. Mayor Foley's tenure of character and competence is evidenced by her record of being the longest-serving Mayor in Portsmouth history, serving our community for eight distinguished terms between the years of 1968 and 1997. Mayor Foley was succeeded in this esteemed position by Mayor Mary McEachern Keenan and Mayor Evelyn Sirrell. This leadership surely influenced the many other women who have and continue to honorably serve Portsmouth as City Councilors and Board & Commission Chairs; and

Whereas: Every year since 1987, the President of the United States recognizes the month of March as "Women's History Month" to celebrate the contributions women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made to the growth and strength of the United States, and to recognize the specific achievements women have made over the course of American history, including serving as leaders at the forefront of the suffrage, abolitionist, emancipation, labor, and civil rights movements; and

Whereas: Today, Assistant Mayor JoAnna Kelley, with Councilors Cook and Moreau have been entrusted by the residents of Portsmouth to continue this storied tradition, and the City is being skillfully led by City Manager Karen Conard, the first female manager in its history; and

Whereas: We are resolved to affirm the City's Mission "to foster a diverse, fiscally sound and harmonious community which offers a full range of housing, business, cultural and recreational opportunities for *all* of its residents, businesses and visitors."

Now, therefore, I, Deaglan McEachern, Mayor of the City of Portsmouth, on behalf of the members of the City Council and the citizens of Portsmouth, do hereby proclaim the month of March 2023 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire as

Women's History Month

and urge all citizens to learn especially in our 400th year about the essential contributions of women to the past, present, and future of Portsmouth.



Given with my hand and the
Seal of the City of Portsmouth,
on this 6th day of March, 2023

Deaglan McEachern, Mayor of Portsmouth