

**The Council Chambers
City Hall
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

A Proclamation

Whereas: President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declared that as of January 1, 1863 all those enslaved in the states in rebellion against the Union "shall be then, thenceforward and forever free" but it was not until June 19, 1865 for that Proclamation to take effect in Galveston, Texas, when Major General Gordon Granger of the United States Army gave the order declaring the enslaved to be free; and

Whereas: Twenty years ago, in October 2003, the accidental unearthing of an African Burying Ground that had been paved over, built over and forgotten beneath a City street began the ongoing effort by this community to reckon with our history of enslavement, to recognize the presence of Africans in the region before enslavement, and to create the African Burying Ground Memorial Park; and

Whereas: Ten years ago, in 2013, NH State Senator Martha Fuller Clark sponsored the legislation for New Hampshire to declare Juneteenth as a holiday, and brought the bill forward again in 2017 so our representatives could continue to push for state recognition of Juneteenth, a federal holiday since 2021; and

Whereas: The Black Heritage Trail of NH has extended its annual Juneteenth celebration this year to a week-long series of events to honor these early African settlers, their descendants, the Africans who survived the Middle Passage and their successive generations who have contributed to the development, wealth and well-being of New England; and

Whereas: In Portsmouth, especially in our 400th year, we recognize Juneteenth to remember a critical part of American history and pay tribute to the achievements and deeply-rooted culture of the Black community in our city and rededicate ourselves to our commitment to being a Racial Justice Municipality.

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

Juneteenth 2023 in Portsmouth

and urge all members of the community to learn more about the Emancipation Proclamation and the history behind this holiday and to join in celebrations, commemorations and other programs and tributes organized by community members including the Black Heritage Trail of NH, the Seacoast African American Cultural Center, Black Lives Matter Seacoast, the Seacoast NAACP, the Racial Unity Team, the Business Association for People of Color and so many others.



Given with my hand and the
Seal of the City of Portsmouth,
on this 5th day of June 2023.

Deaglan McEachern, Mayor of Portsmouth