

**RESOLUTION OF
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF
CANTON, MICHIGAN**

Commemorating June 19, 2021 as “Juneteenth Independence Day” in Canton Township in recognition of June 19, 1865, the date on which slavery legally came to an end in the United States.

Whereas the transatlantic slave trade system established both Europe and North America as world powers by and through the commoditization of Africans. Millions of Africans suffered disease and death on the eight-week voyages across the Middle Passage;

Whereas from 1619 through 1865, millions of Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States, the thirteen American colonies, and eventually the United States of America;

Whereas maritime, agricultural, insurance, defense, tobacco, sugar, and cotton industries were established off profits from the atrocities of slavery;

Whereas Michigan served as the major hub of the Underground Railroad and home to several white abolitionists, including U.S. Representative and U.S. Senator Jacob Merritt Howard, Guy Beckley of Ann Arbor, Erastus Hussey of Battle Creek, and Seymour Finney of Detroit;

Whereas through the work of these great men of all colors, the Second Baptist Church of Detroit, Friends of the Fugitives, Anti-Slavery Society, and other institutions, thousands of slaves were freed;

Whereas Canton historian David Curtis has invested more than 200 hours of research into the home located at 43425 Warren Road in Canton, which is believed to be the third oldest home in our community, and a possible stop on the underground railroad and a refuge for runaway slaves on their way to Canada;

Whereas effective January 1, 1863, “all persons held as slaves” were to be freed under the Emancipation Proclamation, in which word of this proclamation did not reach Texas until two and a half years later, on June 19, 1865, following his statement, June 19th (Juneteenth) became the emancipation date of those long suffering for freedom;

Whereas this tradition of celebration has remained strong well into the 21st century to recognize the triumph of the human spirit over the cruelty of slavery and to honor the strength, endurance, and faith of African American ancestors;

Whereas slavery was abolished through the passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865, after the end of the Civil War;

Whereas the Canton Historical Society as identified 80 soldiers from Canton who served in the Michigan Infantry and Calvary divisions in the Civil War;

Whereas it is imperative that citizens across the state join together to acknowledge a time in our history that carried on the nation's ideals of equality and democracy and celebrate the joys of liberty and justice for every American citizen; and

Whereas in June 2005, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm signed legislation officially designating the third Saturday in June as Juneteenth National Freedom Day in Michigan and Senator Martha G. Scott sponsored Senate Bill 384 to recognize Juneteenth as an official state holiday; Now, therefore be it,

Resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Canton commemorates June 19, 2021, as Juneteenth Independence Day and recognize the devastating legacy of American slavery, and encourage all residents to educate each other and future generations on the history of slavery in order to ensure this tragedy will never be forgotten or repeated and to and celebrate African American history and culture, while continuing to promote diversity, equality, and a strong sense of community in Canton Township.

Ayes:

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent: