



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – September 22, 2021 Agenda Item 6

Work Session

Discussion of Ordinance Designating Juneteenth as an Annual Day of Remembrance and a Paid City Holiday

Recommended Council Action

Adopt the ordinance.

Context with Key Issues

Juneteenth has long been considered a day to celebrate the emancipation of enslaved people by members of the Black community. We, as a community, must continue to reflect on the history of racism in our Country, to acknowledge the ongoing systematic racism that still occurs today, and to work to eradicate injustices in today's society.

Council Priority

An Engaged, Responsive & Service-oriented Government

Environmental Considerations

Adoption of this resolution is not expected to have an environmental impact.

Fiscal Considerations

Recognized City holidays generally require additional payroll dollars. The cost of each holiday differs, as several different factors play into additional costs. The five holidays of 2021 so far have cost an additional \$6,000 to \$26,000, with an average of \$12,720 for those employees required to work on the holiday.

Racial Equity Considerations

Designation of this holiday will not cause a disparate impact on any group, and will allow for reflection on the ongoing systematic racism occurring today.

1 Introduced by:

First Reading:
Second Reading:
Effective Date:

2
3
4
5
6 **CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**
7 **ORDINANCE NO. 2021-__**

8
9 **RECOGNIZING JUNETEENTH AS AN ANNUAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE**
10 **AND A PAID CITY HOLIDAY**
11

12
13 WHEREAS, Black people have experienced oppression and suppression since they were stolen
14 from their homes and brought to the United States of America over 400 years ago;
15 and

16
17 WHEREAS the first enslaved Africans were brought as captives to what is now the
18 Commonwealth of Virginia in 1619; and

19
20 WHEREAS, Black people were bought and sold as slave labor for 250 years and suffered
21 unspeakable acts of violence; and

22
23 WHEREAS Black people have endured violent slavery, Jim Crow era laws and lynching, the
24 Civil Rights era, modern day lynching, institutional and systemic racism, and anti-
25 Blackness within their communities and workplaces; and

26
27 WHEREAS for a Black person in this country, navigating life does not come with the same
28 privileges experienced by white people. Everyday tasks may result in a racist
29 interaction; and

30
31 WHEREAS in the workplace, Black staff may experience racism, yet these occurrences can be
32 difficult to substantiate, and Black employees are often forced to seek alternate
33 employment, accept the labels “aggressive” or a “troublemaker”, and endure the
34 racism silently; and

35
36 WHEREAS the Black community has experienced displacement due to gentrification, redlining,
37 gaslighting, career suppression, police brutality, racial profiling, discrimination,
38 and the psychological trauma of these experiences; and

39
40 WHEREAS to demonstrate the Black community is an integral part of our nation and the City
41 of Takoma Park, it is the responsibility of City government to engage in genuine
42 gestures of appreciation of the Black community; and

43
44 WHEREAS it is the charge of elected officials to ensure the physical and emotional safety and
45 the equitable treatment of Black people in the City of Takoma Park as a workforce
46 and community; and

1 WHEREAS Black people are faced with the moral and economic conflict of supporting
2 government institutions that have perpetuated systemic racism, at a time the nation
3 is still grieving and outraged over the repeated murders of Black people; and
4

5 WHEREAS June 19th marks a significant opportunity to renew our collective commitment
6 towards healing and dismantling anti-Black racism within the workplace and
7 community. June 19th is Juneteenth, the oldest nationally celebrated
8 commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States of America; and
9

10 WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln first issued the Emancipation Proclamation effective
11 January 1, 1863, freeing the enslaved people in the South and such order was
12 ignored by southern slave owners; and
13

14 WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas to enforce the
15 president’s order, freeing the enslaved two and a half years after it was first decreed.
16 This day has since come to be known as Juneteenth; and
17

18 WHEREAS, the City Council of Takoma Park, Maryland recognizes the history of racism in our
19 country and how it has led to many current-day disparities in education, job
20 attainment, housing, and healthcare, as well as disproportionate incarceration rates
21 for Black people; and
22

23 WHEREAS, forty-six percent of Takoma Park residents are non-white, and national disparities
24 by race in education, job attainment, income, housing, and healthcare are also
25 reflected in Takoma Park census data; and
26

27 WHEREAS, on June 18, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden proclaimed June 19th as Juneteenth
28 Day of Observance, to celebrate the emancipation of Black Americans and commit
29 to eradicating systematic racism that still undermines our ideals and collective
30 prosperity; and
31

32 WHEREAS, as an initial step the City of Takoma Park formally recognizes and apologizes for
33 the atrocities Black people have suffered in this nation and is committed to restoring
34 trust, deconstructing institutional and systemic racism, and working towards a more
35 just future for the Black community in Takoma Park and the nation; and
36

37 WHEREAS, City staff are encouraged to spend time self-educating on anti-Black racism and the
38 negative impacts of white supremacy with fifty eight percent of City staff
39 identifying as people of color; and
40

41 WHEREAS, City staff and residents are encouraged to support Black-owned businesses and
42 community organizations on Juneteenth. The intention of the day will be to grieve,
43 listen, learn, engage, and heal; and
44

45 WHEREAS, essential employees who work on Juneteenth will receive a deferred holiday; and

1 WHEREAS, the City Council encourages the community to participate in anti-Black racism
2 trainings, in collaboration with Black community members, leaders, and voices on
3 workplace culture, public safety, mental health, housing, income inequality,
4 economic development, and prosperity.
5

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA
7 PARK, MARYLAND:
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9 SECTION 1. Title 4, Personnel, Chapter 4.04.320 Holiday Leave, of the Takoma Park Code, is
10 amended to include the following:
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12 4.04.320 Holiday leave.
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14 A. The following days shall be recognized as legal holidays for which compensation will be
15 made:
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- 17 1. New Year's Day;
- 18 2. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday (January 15, 1986, and every year thereafter).
- 19 3. Washington's Birthday (third Monday in February);
- 20 4. Memorial Day (last Monday in May);
- 21 5. Juneteenth (June 19)
- 22 ~~5.~~ 6. Independence Day (July 4);
- 23 ~~6.~~ 7. Labor Day (first Monday in September);
- 24 ~~7.~~ 8. Veterans Day (November 11);
- 25 ~~8.~~ 9. Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November);
- 26 ~~9.~~ 10. Friday after Thanksgiving Day (November 24, 1989, and the fourth Friday in November
27 every year thereafter);
- 28 ~~10.~~ 11. Christmas Eve [1/2 day];
- 29 ~~11.~~ 12. Christmas Day.
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32 SECTION 2. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.
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34 Adopted by the Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, by roll-call vote on this ___ day
35 of _____, 2021, as follows:
36

37 AYES:

38 NAYS:

39 ABSENT:

40 ABSTAIN:
41

42 **Explanatory Note**

43 Additions to the existing language of the *Takoma Park Code* are shown by underlining.

44 Deletions to the existing language of the *Takoma Park Code* are shown by ~~strikeout~~.
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