



## A PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND

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### Proclaiming June 19, 2020 as "Juneteenth" in Kirkland, Washington

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth recognizes and commemorates the day of June 19, 1865, when enslaved African-Americans in Texas were informed by Major General Gordon Granger that they were "free," ending 246 years of chattel slavery; and

**WHEREAS**, though President Abraham Lincoln enacted the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, resistance to the Executive Order, as well as continued fighting in the state of Texas regarding the abolishment of slavery, significantly delayed the freedom of slaves; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 19, 1866, one year after Major Granger's announcement, the freed African American men and women in the state of Texas held the first "Juneteenth," or African American Independence Day celebration, and Juneteenth celebrations would later spread to all corners of the country; and

**WHEREAS**, for people of African descent in this country, Juneteenth is the closest occasion of a true "freedom day" to celebrate; and

**WHEREAS**, despite that over 155 years have passed since chattel slavery was officially ended in the United States, the nation continues to struggle with dismantling the lingering effects of discriminatory systems and structural racism in our country; and

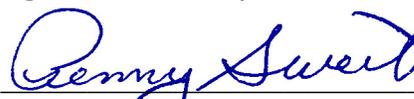
**WHEREAS**, the recent murder of George Floyd by Minnesota police officers reminds us of the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."; and

**WHEREAS**, recent protests that have occurred across the nation, including here in Kirkland, have brought these continued inequities and injustices to the forefront of our collective conscious and provided us with an opportunity to make meaningful change; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Kirkland strives to be a safe, inclusive and welcoming community for all, choosing to willingly engage in difficult conversations, participate in active listening about institutional racism, and taking action to address bias and injustice within our own systems;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Penny Sweet, Mayor of Kirkland do hereby proclaim June 19, 2020 as Juneteenth in Kirkland, Washington, recognizing its historical importance and calling on our community to join us in listening, reflecting and acting so that we can finally achieve racial justice for all.

Signed this 19<sup>th</sup> day of June 2020

  
Penny Sweet, Mayor