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City Council

Special Recognition - Proclamation Recognizing Black History Month

Agenda Date: 2/7/2023
Agenda Item Number: 2.A
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Title

Special Recognition - Proclamation Recognizing Black History Month

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Proclaim February as Black History Month in the City of Olympia.

Report

Issue:

Whether to proclaim February as Black History Month in the City of Olympia.

Staff Contact:

Olivia Salazar de Breaux, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Specialist, Parks, Arts and Recreation,
360.753.8343

Presenter(s):

Olivia Salazar de Breaux, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Specialist, City of Olympia
Javoen Byrd, Director, Hawk Foundation for Research and Education in African Culture

Background and Analysis:

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of Black individuals in U.S. history.

The creation of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans in 1926, every U.S. president since 1976 has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating black history.

In February 2022, the City of Olympia partnered with the Hawk Foundation for Research and Education in African Culture to host the first annual Black History Month Celebration. The City, its employees, elected officials, community members, and visitors enthusiastically participated. This year

the City is pleased to partner again with the Hawk Foundation, along with the Olympia School District, to host a series of three Black History Month events that allow time for learning, celebration and community building from February 16-18, 2023. All events are free of charge.

- Thursday, February 16, 1-2:30 p.m.: Virtual educational lecture with Dr. Sylviane A. Diouf, historian on African Diaspora and Visiting Scholar at the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice at Brown University and Lloyd International Honors College. Dr. Diouf will be presenting on the Maroon Peoples of the Southern United States.
- Friday, Feb. 17, 6:00-8:30 p.m.: In-person keynote and symposium with Dr. Joy DeGruy, researcher, educator and author of "Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome". Dr. DeGruy will be presenting about Steps to Healing and Mental Wellness Within the Black Community at the Black Box Theater (Washington Center for the Performing Arts) Space is limited.
- Saturday, Feb. 18, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Community celebration with presentations, music performances, and food at The Olympia Center. No registration required.

Climate Analysis:

There are no impacts to any of the climate mitigation sectors.

Equity Analysis:

Black History Month raises awareness about the sacrifices, contributions, and achievements made by generations of African Americans here in the Pacific Northwest and across the nation. This recognition benefits Olympia residents as well as those in neighboring communities by increasing a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Attachments:

- Proclamation
- Registration for February 16, 2023 Virtual Lecture Link
- Registration for February 17, 2023 In-Person Keynote and Symposium Link
- Information about February 18, 2023 Community Celebration Link
- Thurston Regional Planning Council Data - Population by Race (2020) Link