



Administrative Report

P.2., File # 24-0661

Meeting Date: 4/23/2024

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

From: ELIZABETH HAUSE, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING OPTIONS TO CELEBRATE AND COMMEMORATE THE JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the March 21, 2023 City Council meeting, the Council adopted a resolution commemorating Juneteenth as an annual celebration in the City of Redondo Beach. On April 2, 2024, staff was directed to return with an item to discuss options on ways to celebrate the Juneteenth holiday. This report provides Council with examples of celebrations programmed or sponsored by other cities, and also shares events or activities already taking place in the City of Redondo Beach. Staff is seeking direction on what types of activities or events the City Council would like staff to further explore and if there are any celebratory actions or activities the Council would like to have occur in 2024.

BACKGROUND

On January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation legally ended slavery in the United States, but the low presence of Union troops and non-compliance with the Proclamation prolonged slavery in Texas and in other states. On June 19, 1865, U.S. General Gordon Granger and 2,000 federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to enforce the emancipation of slaves and inform those still enslaved within the borders of the United States that they were free. Juneteenth (short for June Nineteenth) has since become the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. On June 17, 2021, Juneteenth became a federal holiday and on September 29, 2022 it became a California state holiday.

At the June 21, 2022 Council meeting, a referral was made to staff to return with an item discussing the possible adoption of a resolution recognizing and celebrating Juneteenth. At the March 21, 2023 meeting, the City Council adopted a resolution commemorating Juneteenth as an annual celebration in the City of Redondo Beach.

At the April 2, 2024 meeting, staff was directed to return with an item to discuss options on ways to celebrate the Juneteenth holiday. Below are examples of events that have taken place in previous years in other cities within or near the Los Angeles County area:

Manhattan Beach

- The City hosted a ceremony at Bruce's Beach Park on June 19th, which included remarks by city leaders, a local historian, and a member of the Mira Costa Black Scholars

Union.

- The City also sponsored a Juneteenth celebration the weekend after Juneteenth at Polliwog Park. The event included a professional jazz ensemble, DJ, dancing, art, family and educational activities, food trucks, vendors, partnerships with Black business owners, local musicians, and performers
- The City received an anonymous \$45,000 donation facilitated by the MBX Foundation to be spent over three years, \$15,000 per year. The City is planning to match the funds with either city dollars or private donations for an additional total of \$30,000 to be used for future ceremonies and celebrations.

City of Carson

- Held a Juneteenth Rhythm and Blues Celebration. The City sponsored the event in partnership with the Carson Citizens Cultural Arts Foundation. The event took place the weekend prior to Juneteenth at Mills Park, 11AM-6PM and included live entertainment, teen fun zone, arts and crafts, food vendors and display booths.

City of Long Beach

- Hold an annual Long Beach Juneteenth Celebration. Organized by Carl Kemp, with sponsorships from Long Beach businesses and the City of Long Beach. General admission is free, with reserved seating offers at \$50 per seat. Located at Rainbow Lagoon Park from 10:30AM - 7PM. The event included DJ, live music, dancing, and family activities (face painting, arts & crafts).

City of Culver City

- Held a Juneteenth Celebration and Resource Fair. The event was sponsored by the City, Culver City Unified School District and the Wende Museum. It was held on the weekend prior to Juneteenth at Ivy Station from 11AM - 2PM. The event invited local artists, businesses and organizations and featured resource booths, market vendors, kids' activities, and food trucks. It included DJs, live bands, and West African drummers and dancers.

City of Lakewood

- Held a Juneteenth Lunch & Learn event. The City sponsored the event at Mae Boyar Park's community building. It was held the weekend prior to Juneteenth. Families were invited to an author reading of the children's book, "We May Be Different But We Can Come Together" by Lakewood resident and educator Ama Darkwa Holmes. The event included learning activities and locally catered meals and is part of the City's Community Dialogue on Race, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI).

City of Santa Monica

- The City celebrated the 31st year of Juneteenth Celebration in 2023. The City's annual celebration is sponsored by the City and produced in partnership with the Santa Monica Juneteenth Celebration Committee, Inc. The most recent event took place the weekend prior to Juneteenth, at Virginia Avenue Park from 1PM-7PM. The 2023 theme was "Coming Together in Appreciation, Reconciliation, and Commemoration." The free family-friendly event featured music, unique food and craft vendors, a kid's activity area, a community stage, and local resource booths.

Currently, the City's Library Services Department commemorates Juneteenth annually by hosting two special Juneteenth Storytimes (one at each location) and creates a display in recognition of Juneteenth, including relevant book and media titles.

The City's Community Services Department has not yet produced a Juneteenth event, nor have they been approached by any local organizations or groups interested in partnering on an event. That said, Council may wish to direct staff to begin outreach to local and regional organizations to see if there is interest in coproducing or cohosting a Juneteenth celebration in Redondo Beach.

Should the Council choose to fund and host an event this year, the Community Services Department has confirmed that - although June is very busy with several summer events - there is some flexibility to schedule an early evening event at one of the City parks. Community Services staff also confirmed that it may be possible to secure live entertainment and other family-friendly activities, provided that funding is made available and staff is given enough time to identify and secure these vendors.

This report provides the City Council with an opportunity to discuss options to celebrate and commemorate the Juneteenth holiday in Redondo Beach. Staff is seeking direction on what types of activities or events the City Council would like staff to further explore and if there are any celebratory actions or activities the Council would like to have occur in 2024.

COORDINATION

The City Manager's Office coordinated this item with the Community Services Department and the Library Services Department.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of a City-sponsored or City-produced event will be determined by the scope of the desired activities.

APPROVED BY:

Mike Witzansky, City Manager