

WHEREAS, America's Independence Day Movement, initiated by the Declaration of Independence and the 4th of July, 1776, did not include enslaved African-Americans as they were not recognized as full human beings. Freedom from slavery was initiated by the enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, and formally announced by Union General Gordon Granger in Galveston, Texas on the 19th of June, 1865, through the reading of General Order No. 3 to the last group of slaves in bondage, creating America's 2nd Independence Day Celebration, Juneteenth Independence Day, observed on the 19th of June as the oldest African-American holiday; and

WHEREAS, the 19th of June is the freedom forerunner to the 13th Amendment, which implemented freedom for all slaves in the United States, Juneteenth Independence Day completes the cycle of Independence Day Celebrations in America. In 1997, the 105th Congress of the United States passed Senate Joint Resolution 11 and House Joint Resolution 56 officially recognizing Juneteenth Independence Day in America; and

WHEREAS, the Juneteenth celebration commemorates the emancipation of Southern Blacks on June 19, 1865, two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. The memory of all those who moved from slavery to freedom remains as a lesson for all Americans regardless of their background, race or religion; and

WHEREAS, the Florida legislature issued an apology on March 26, 2008, expressing profound regret for the shameful history of enslaving black people and passing laws that sanctioned involuntary servitude upon generations of African slaves.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Linda Hudson, Mayor of the City of Fort Pierce, Florida, do hereby proclaim May 20th – August 2015 as:

“JUNETEENTH SEASON OF FREEDOM”

in the City of Fort Pierce and June 19th as:

“JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY”

for all Americans as a time to learn more about our common past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped our Nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the City of Fort Pierce, Florida, to be affixed this 15th day of June 2015.

MAYOR COMMISSIONER