

**WHEREAS,** America's Independence Day Movement, initiated by the Declaration of Independence and the 4<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 1865, through the reading of General Order No. 3 to the last group of slaves in bondage, creating America's 2<sup>nd</sup> Independence Day Celebration, Juneteenth Independence Day, observed on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June as the oldest African-American holiday; and

**WHEREAS,** the 19<sup>th</sup> of June is the freedom forerunner to the 13<sup>th</sup> 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 105<sup>th</sup> 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 slaves (Blacks) on June 19, 1865, two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln. 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; and

**WHEREAS,** on June 18, 2021, President Joe Biden signed into law a bill creating a federal holiday to commemorate Juneteenth. This is the 23<sup>rd</sup> year that the Juneteenth Festival has been held, prior to it being named a federal holiday.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Linda Hudson, Mayor of the City of Fort Pierce, Florida, do hereby proclaim June 19<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> day of June 2023.

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**MAYOR /COMMISSIONER**