



Town of Ipswich Encourages Reflection in Observance of Juneteenth

IPSWICH -- Town Manager Anthony Marino and the Town of Ipswich are encouraging staff and members of the community to take time to reflect, observe and celebrate the importance of Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, this weekend.

In 2020, Gov. Charlie Baker signed into law June 19 as a state holiday. It reflects the day, June 19, 1865, when Union Army Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas and shared the news of freedom with enslaved African-Americans. Today, President Joe Biden signed a bill making Juneteenth a federal holiday as well.

Town offices will be closed Friday, June 18 in observance of the holiday.

"Over the last year or so, there have been many long overdue conversations about race and racism both locally and on a global scale. We acknowledge this is a welcome first step; however, as we engage in these conversations and make necessary changes we recognize there is still more to be done. As part of this ongoing process and conversation, I am elated that the state and now the federal government are bringing additional recognition and awareness to this holiday," Town Manager Marino said. "Juneteenth marks the end of slavery in America, and in the context of today I believe the day serves as a meaningful reminder of how far we have come and how much more we must do to eradicate racism in our society."

In recent months, a group of community members have come together to form a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) group promoting DEI in the community.

Christina Donehew, a founding member of the group and Ipswich resident, shared the following statement from the group pertaining to Juneteenth observances:

“As we take on this challenge of eradicating racism in our community, Town Manager Marino has the support of a newly formed group of Ipswich community members, who will focus on issues around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our town, schools and workplaces. The group will be working on initiatives and guidance for our town to ensure human rights and respect for everyone. The children of Ipswich are watching and waiting for unified leadership on these issues both in our schools and in our community.”

Resources

The Town of Ipswich wishes to share resources and information on local events for those interested in learning more about Juneteenth. The following is by no means intended to be a complete list, but rather a small selection of resources residents may find helpful and informative regarding the holiday:

- Ipswich Public Schools will raise Juneteenth flags at each school on Friday morning, and the history of the day will be shared with students over the morning announcements. Numerous teachers have also developed lessons regarding the holiday. The flags will stay in place through the weekend.
- The Ipswich Museum has prepared a free, virtual historical walking tour and map that sheds insight into the history of slavery in the area. The tour visits six historically significant sites and includes an audio component. To learn more, [click here](#).
- [The North Shore Juneteenth Association, Inc.](#) is a regional nonprofit and group of community leaders. Together, the organization works to raise awareness of Juneteenth as a holiday, educate the community about African American culture and celebrate it, and seeks to spark change and

dismantle racism through its events and programming. The association is holding a festival in Lynn celebrating Juneteenth on Saturday, June 19 from 1-5 p.m. at 590 Washington St. in Lynn.

- To read a blog post about Juneteenth, its meaning and history by the City of Boston's Resilience and Racial Equity Department, [click here](#).
- The Museum of Fine Arts is offering free admission Saturday and will honor the work of Black artists, scholars and creatives. To learn more [click here](#).
- To learn more about the history of Juneteenth, [click here](#) to read a blog post by the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture. The museum is offering virtual programming celebrating Juneteenth on its website this year, [linked here](#), including videos, music, recipes, and blog posts reflecting on the holiday by museum scholars.
- [Click here](#) to read an interview with Historian and Assistant Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education Jarvis Givens, published in June 2020, reflecting on the holiday.

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A message from the Town of Ipswich