A PROCLAMATION

JUNETEENTH DAY

JUNE 19, 2021

Whereas, from the founding of our nation, a political tension has existed between the self-evident truth articulated in the Declaration of Independence that all persons are created equal and the provisions of the Constitution, which sanctioned the enslavement of one race of people by another as an acceptable means of living and working; and

Whereas, it took a Civil War among American citizens to resolve the inherent conflict between the Declaration’s self-evident truth of the equality of all human beings and the Constitution’s endorsement of human enslavement; and

Whereas, the disastrous consequences of the Founding Fathers’ endorsement of slavery as an acceptable institution within the United States Constitution continue to be experienced by African-Americans today; and

Whereas, the Emancipation Proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery on January 1, 1863, the enslavement of Black Americans did not end in the United States until June 19, 1865 when the Union Army liberated the last group of enslaved human beings on American soil in Galveston, Texas, an event which has become known as Juneteenth Day or Freedom Day; and

Whereas, the observance of Juneteenth Day serves to remind all Americans that the sanctioning of human enslavement in the United States Constitution was an abhorrent stain on the American democratic experience and that all Americans must strive to live by the ideals we regularly pledge to our flag, which are, “one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Now, therefore, the Mayor, in concert with the Council of the Borough of Whitehall, hereby proclaims Saturday, June 19, 2021 as

Juneteenth Day

and calls upon all residents and businesses to acknowledge that slavery was immoral and incompatible with the notion that God created all human beings equal and endowed them with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and to recommit ourselves, without exception, to the pledge that we continually make to our country’s symbol of freedom - liberty and justice for all.

James F. Nowalk, Mayor
Borough of Whitehall