

**BEN BARTLETT**

VICE MAYOR

CONSENT CALENDAR

June 6, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Vice Mayor Ben Bartlett, Councilmember Sophie Hahn

Subject: *Berkeley Juneteenth Festival: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds*

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of funds, including \$1000 from Vice Mayor Bartlett for pre-planning of the Berkeley Juneteenth Festival (organized by Berkeley Juneteenth Association, Inc. 501(c)3), with funds relinquished to the City's General Fund for this purpose from the discretionary council office budget of Vice Mayor Bartlett and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

BACKGROUND:

President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, but people in bondage in Texas remained unaware of their freedom until 1865, as their captors withheld this information from them. On June 18, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger of the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas, with 1,800 soldiers on a mission to force the captors to release the people in bondage, whose population had swelled to over a quarter million.

And so the following year, newly-freed people in Texas flooded the streets, celebrating June 19th as their own emancipation day. Local groups kept the Juneteenth tradition alive, and in 1979, the passage of H.B. 1016 made June 19th, Black Heritage Day, an official Texas holiday. Nationwide, this date is celebrated in commemoration of the centuries of struggle and progress led by abolitionists, educators, civil rights advocates, lawyers, activists, trade unionists, religious leaders, and public officials who have brought and fought for the rights of all. Also, this date serves as a day of celebration to honor the power and resilience of Black Americans who have endured generations of oppression in the ongoing journey toward equal justice, equal dignity, equal rights, and equal opportunity in America. In June of 2021, President Biden formally declared Juneteenth a federal holiday.

The Berkeley Juneteenth Festival was founded by R.D. Bonds, Bradley Walters, and Sam Dyke. They began the Festival celebration to promote community pride and bring together South Berkeley businesses and residents to celebrate a major African American cultural event. The establishment of Berkeley Juneteenth Association, Inc. (BJAI) culminated in the first annual Festival in 1987. Former City Councilmembers Mary Wainwright and the late Maudell Shirek were instrumental in obtaining City sponsorship.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No negative impact.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No General Fund impact; \$1000 is available from the discretionary council office budget of Vice-Mayor Ben Bartlett.

CONTACT PERSON:

Councilmember Ben Bartlett	510-981-7130
James Chang	510-981-7131

CONTACT PERSON:

1. Resolution No. XXXXX

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR A DONATION TO THE BERKELEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FUND TO PROVIDE AWARDS TO STUDENTS FOR THEIR WORK ON HIGHLIGHTING BLACK INVENTORS.

**WHEREAS**, Councilmember Ben Bartlett has surplus funds in his office expenditure account; and

**WHEREAS**, Berkeley Juneteenth Association, a California non-profit organization, will receive funds in the amount of \$1000 from Councilmember Ben Bartlett's office expenditure account; and

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth was established when the newly-freed people in Texas flooded the streets, celebrating June 19th as their own emancipation day; and

**WHEREAS**, the Juneteenth festival in Berkeley promotes community pride and brings together all Berkeley businesses and residents in the celebration of a major African American cultural event; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their office budgets, of an amount to be determined by each Councilmember shall be granted to Berkeley Juneteenth Association for the purpose of providing support for the celebration of the Juneteenth festival

