

RESOLUTION NO. 8113

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF REDLANDS AFFIRMING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

WHEREAS, racism results in a structured absence of opportunity and the assigning of a person's societal value based solely on physical characteristics, such as skin color, which creates unfair disadvantages for some individuals and communities, while simultaneously creating unfair advantages for other individuals and communities, therefore preventing societies as a whole from achieving their full potential; and

WHEREAS, throughout the history of the United States systemic racism has manifested by acts of discrimination and oppression directed towards immigrant populations and disproportionately towards Black Americans resulting in fear, anxiety, trauma, terror, and long-term physical and mental health impairments, as well as causing economic oppression for the targets of racism and acts thereof, their communities, and subsequent generations; and

WHEREAS, the United States Office of Disease Prevention recognizes that racial discrimination negatively impacts health outcomes and further the U.S. Census Bureau has documented a significant increase in anxiety and depression among Black people nationally following the May 25, 2020 killing of Mr. George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, in response to this and the death of countless others previously and subsequently under similar or other such circumstances, people across the country have risen to protest against historic acts of systemic racism and the resulting historic economic, environmental, and social injustices occurring towards people of various races and ethnicities, which continues to disproportionately affect the Black community; and

WHEREAS, protesters are marching to signal a "call for action" to dismantle systemic racism and reform government policies and practices across all levels of government and all public agencies and private organizations to ensure all people of color regardless of race or ethnicity are protected from experiencing racism, discrimination or unnecessary personal injury or loss of any kind, including loss of life; and

WHEREAS, systemic racism throughout the public and private sectors of society creates disparate outcomes in many areas of life that results in disparities in family stability, healthcare, physical and behavioral health, mental wellness, education, employment, economic development, public safety, criminal justice, incarceration, juvenile delinquency, and housing that disproportionately affects Black Americans and people of color; and

WHEREAS, systemic racism creates disparate outcomes in many areas of life such as housing, education, employment, economic opportunity, public safety, the criminal justice system, and physical and behavioral health; and further has led to geographic segregation that disproportionately exposes the Black community and people of color to lead poisoning, poor air quality, inadequate nutrition, and under-resourced recreational and healthcare facilities; and

WHEREAS, this City Council acknowledges that systemic racism was manifested throughout the history and development of our community and region resulting in the forced dislocation of local Native American settlements in its earliest forms and in a latter form by the implied geographic segregation of communities of color, known to them as the North and South sides of town, causing disparities of access and service to be felt by these residents due to their race, color, level of education or income, educational and recreational disparities, and other such deficiencies consistent with systemic racism; and

WHEREAS, The City of Redlands began working with and supporting “Unity In The Community” in 2016, organized by pastors, police, and city educators, to address relationship building between the Black community and the Redlands Police Department and to establish the first Juneteenth Celebration in Redlands in 2018 at Israel Beal Park, in honor of a native Redlands African American pioneer; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 this City Council adopted Resolution No. 8022, titled “Establishing a Healthy Redlands,” that, in relevant part, states: “The City Council hereby declares that the City will work with other cities, county departments, community partners, and regional agencies to adopt preventive measures, develop initiatives and programs to address chronic conditions, and create or support existing coalitions which collectively advance equitable community health and wellness;” and

WHEREAS, this City Council acknowledges the historic grievances held by Black Americans and the various forms of injustice that people of color have experienced for generations and further recognizes the opportunity for our City to participate in the healing process with members for our Black and Latino communities and other communities of color by acknowledging past transgressions; and

WHEREAS, this City Council recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity, without prejudice to anyone, and further acknowledges that employee conduct requires continuous support, training, monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests to ensure equity of access, services, and treatment for all persons, including people of color and regardless of race or ethnicity;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by this City Council and by extension, the elective offices of the City Clerk and City Treasurer, the City’s appointed officials, the offices of the City Manager and City Attorney, and the City departments (Facilities and Community Services, Development Services, Fire, Police, Library, Management Services, and Municipal Utilities and Engineering), will implement, with intent and fidelity, policies and practices that reflect a conscious effort to ensure racial equity, equity of access and service and further to ensure the equitable treatment of all people, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Section 1. This City Council declares that racism is a public health crisis and further acknowledges evidence of such throughout the historic development of our city.

Section 2. This City Council declares that the lives and experiences of Black People matter and furthermore that the lives and experiences of people of color living in Redlands matter.

Section 3. This City Council endorses the continued implementation and use of policies and practices for employee conduct and equitable treatment of all people and honors, by approval of this Resolution, the common humanity of all people, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Section 4. This City Council commits to actively participating in the dismantling the remnants of racism in Redlands by:

A. Implementing annual training on the following topics: implicit bias, diversity, equity, and inclusion for all elected officials, City staff and members of boards, commissions and committees.

B. Assessing and revising City department policies, procedures, and ordinances to ensure racial equity and transparency are core elements.

C. Ensuring that hiring practices provide greater opportunities for people of color to be employed to further diversify our workforce.

D. Ensuring diversity of race, age, and gender within the city commissions.

E. Creating a system of reporting progress towards achieving the goals outlined in this resolution and communicating such to the greater community.

F. Supporting community efforts to amplify issues of racism and engaging actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.

G. Adding health, equity, and justice to the objectives and purview of the appropriate city commission to address ways to improve the public health and welfare of all the residents through an equitable lens as prescribed in the Healthy Redlands resolution and to identify specific activities to further enhance diversity and principles of equity.

H. Continuing to work with and support “Unity in the Community” in conjunction with The Human Relations Commission and/or appropriate City commissions and community groups to help measure and achieve the goals outlined in this resolution.

I. Building and strengthening alliances with other organizations that are confronting racism, and encouraging other agencies to recognize racism as a crisis, including considering City membership in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), which is a national network of local government agencies working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. Additionally, involve community representation and input in matters of historic and continued racial injustice.

Section 5. This City Council will continue to, through its goodwill, dialogue, and decision-making efforts and powers, support policies that are consistent with the principles of equity of access, services, and treatment of all people regardless of race, color, or ethnicity.

ADOPTED, SIGNED AND APPROVED this 21st day of July, 2020.

Paul W. Foster, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeanne Donaldson, City Clerk

I, Jeanne Donaldson, City Clerk of the City of Redlands, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the City Council at a regular meeting thereof held on the 21st day of July, 2020, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Jeanne Donaldson, City Clerk

EXHIBIT “A”

DECLARING RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

To declare racism as a public health crisis in the City of Redlands is to direct our full attention to improving the quality of life and health of our residents who are marginalized based on their racial identity. This resolution recognizes that racism and oppression has dramatically affected the populations who have experienced more than 400 years of slavery, genocide, poverty, and forced relocation. Racism and its effects continue to contribute to intergenerational trauma in millions of people in the State of California.

By definition, a public health issue is something that hurts and kills people ‘or impedes their ability to live a healthy, prosperous life. Racism certainly falls in that category.

Michelle A. Williams, epidemiologist and dean of the faculty at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and Jeffrey Sánchez, a former Massachusetts state representative, is a lecturer at Harvard Chan published the following in a June 4, 2020, Washington Post article:

“Across the country, black Americans suffer from higher rates of diabetes, hypertension, asthma and heart disease than white Americans. They are more likely to be obese and get insufficient sleep, which can contribute to such health issues. The role of racism in these underlying conditions cannot be denied.

A growing body of literature shows that social determinants — otherwise known as the conditions in which we’re born and in which we live, work and play — are key drivers of health inequities. For generations, communities of color have faced vast disparities in job opportunities, income and inherited family wealth. They are less likely to have housing security and access to quality schools, healthy food and green spaces. All these factors undoubtedly undermine mental and physical well-being.”