



City of Charles Town

101 East Washington Street, P.O. Box 14, Charles Town, WV 25414
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A Resolution to Honor Black History Month

WHEREAS, in 1926, the African American historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson first promoted “Negro History Week” to further awareness of the struggles and achievements of Black Americans. Woodson, the son of formerly enslaved persons, spent his childhood working in West Virginia coal mines, graduated from high school in Huntington, WV, and went on to earn his Ph.D. from Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, Woodson stated “We have a wonderful history behind us. ... If you are unable to demonstrate to the world that you have this record, the world will say to you, you are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else;” and

WHEREAS, 50 years later, in 1976, the United States of America officially commemorated and recognized February as Black History Month. The Month was meant to be a nationwide celebration that calls on all Americans to reflect on the significant roles that Black Americans have played in shaping U.S. history and the American experience; and

WHEREAS, Martin R. Delany, considered the “Father of Black Nationalism,” was born in Charles Town in 1812. In addition to being a doctor, author, newspaper editor, Delany was globally recognized for his achievements and was commissioned a Major in the 52nd U.S. Colored Troops Regiment by President Lincoln in 1865; and

WHEREAS, in 1859, Charles Town was where prominent abolitionist John Brown stood trial, along with his African American comrades - the valiant John Copeland and Shields Green. Their subsequent guilty verdicts and executions heightened the regional animosities that ultimately led to the American Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Charles Town was home to Sylvia Rideout Bishop, the first Black woman in the United States to become a licensed horse trainer. Bishop began her work at the Charles Town Race Track soon after it opened in 1933, and there, she provided top-notch care and coaching of racehorses until her retirement in 1999; and

WHEREAS, Charles Town has been the birthplace and home to many other unsung Black heroes who have made countless contributions to Charles Town, West Virginia, and the nation; and

WHEREAS, Charles Town has been enriched by the significant contributions of African American organizations, including but not limited to: Jefferson County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), African American Community Association, Green-Copeland American Legion and Auxiliary Post 63, Jefferson County African American Cultural and Heritage Festival Inc., the Page Jackson Alumni Association, and Star Lodge No. 1 Free and Accepted Masons Prince Hall Affiliated; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charles Town is committed to its continued support of our African American community through both words and action.

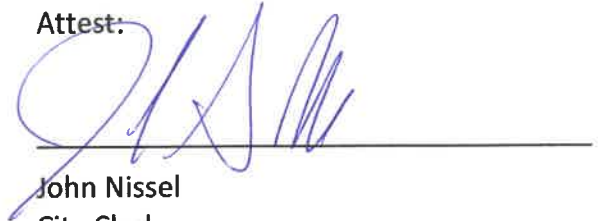
NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the City of Charles Town recognizes and supports February 2024 as Black History Month, and we encourage all residents to honor and re-commit to what President Gerald Ford urged American citizens to do when Black History Month was first established: “seize the opportunity to honor the too often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”

Adopted the fifth day of February, 2024.



Robert M. Trainor
Mayor

Attest:



John Nissel
City Clerk