

**PROCLAMATION**  
**RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 2023 AS**  
**BLACK AND AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH**  
**IN THE CITY OF HERCULES**

**WHEREAS**, National African American History Month had its origins in 1915 when historian and author Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Through this organization Dr. Woodson initiated the first Negro History Week in February 1926. Dr. Woodson selected the week in February that included the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, two key figures in the history of African Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans have contributed to the rich fabric and diversity of America and have significantly furthered the advancement of civil rights, law, medicine, technology, business, food, music, literature, education, sports, entertainment, journalism and the arts; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1619, the first documented enslaved Africans arrived at the English colonies at Old Point Comfort, Virginia, on the English ships *White Lion* and *Treasurer*, and these individuals were sold in exchange for provisions, while others were transported to Jamestown, where they were sold; and

**WHEREAS**, between 1863 and 1865, hundreds of Black men fought in the American Civil War and died as enlisted men in the United States Colored Troops, seeking life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as a free people; and

**WHEREAS**, after 1865, and the ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution, the complete freedom and civil rights granted to previously enslaved men, women, and children was subverted by brutal Jim Crow laws, preventing their ability to live as fully free citizens and pursue life, liberty and happiness as guaranteed to white citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, between 1954 and 1968, African American activists, in particular women, spearheaded the Civil Rights Movement, fought for social justice, constitutional rights, organized sit-ins, workshops, boycotts, and grassroots campaigns; and

**WHEREAS**, attacks on the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments continue to persist in the 21st century for African Americans, and the City of Hercules devotes its resources to fulfilling the promises of the Emancipation Proclamation and the U.S. Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, today, African Americans continue to make gains in public office, education, and professional fields, and as entrepreneurs, as well as fight for an inclusive vision of liberty, justice, and equality for all; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Hercules will join with the nation in celebrating the 97th National Black History Month by celebrating, honoring and valuing Black lives, the essential contributions, sacrifices, and accomplishments African Americans have made to the United States as part of American history.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Alex Walker-Griffin, Mayor of the City of Hercules, on behalf of the entire City Council do hereby recognize February 2023 as Black History Month in our City of Hercules, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

In witness whereof, I hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of the City of Hercules to be affixed this Fourteenth Day of February 2023.

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Alex Walker-Griffin, Mayor