EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 4-20

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia holds an integral place in our nation’s founding as the birthplace of democracy, the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence, where the following words were written: “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”;

WHEREAS, despite these words, the United States continued to be stained by the institution of slavery;

WHEREAS, President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, ending slavery in the Confederacy, did not mean true freedom for all slaves;

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865 Major General Gordon Granger issued an order informing the people of Texas “that in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free”;

WHEREAS, the General’s order established the basis for the holiday now known as Juneteenth, which is now the most popular annual celebration of emancipation of slavery in the United States;

WHEREAS, on June 19, 2019, Governor Tom Wolf designated June 19th as Juneteenth National Freedom Day in Pennsylvania;

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia is a diverse and welcoming city where, according to the 2018 American Community Survey, 40% of residents are Black;

WHEREAS, Juneteenth has a unique cultural and historical significance here in Philadelphia and across the country.

WHEREAS, Juneteenth represents the resiliency of the human spirit, the triumph of emancipation and marks a day of reflection;

WHEREAS, in February 2019, the City of Philadelphia announced its official partnership with the Philadelphia Juneteenth Parade and Festival.

WHEREAS, the Philadelphia Juneteenth Parade and Festival, produced by the Pennsylvania Juneteenth Initiative, joins people together to embrace African and African-American culture and history, and continue the tradition of higher education, self-empowerment and self-determination;

WHEREAS, the Philadelphia Juneteenth Parade and Festival is the largest Juneteenth Parade in the United States with over 25,000 attendees and generating over $500,000 in revenue in the Philadelphia Region;

WHEREAS, the need to acknowledge institutional and structural racism is needed now more than ever;
WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia is committed to work for true equity for all Philadelphia residents, and toward healing our communities;

WHEREAS, Black Lives Matter;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MAYOR JAMES F. KENNEY, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, by the powers vested in me by the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, do hereby ORDER as follows:

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF JUNETEENTH AS A CITY HOLIDAY

A. June 19, 2020 is designated a holiday for all City employees and shall be treated as such in accordance with the applicable Civil Service regulations and Administrative Board rules.

B. City offices and facilities shall be closed to the public in accordance with ordinary City holiday practices.

C. The Deputy Mayor for Labor and the Director of Finance shall include discussion of the paid holiday schedule with all bargaining units in the next round of collective bargaining.

Date: June 16, 2020

By: James F. Kenney, Mayor
City of Philadelphia