



Council Member Motion

For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of July 29, 2021

To: Committee of the Whole of July 29

Date: July 26, 2021

From: Councillor Dubow

Subject: Emancipation Day

BACKGROUND

WHEREAS, August 1, 1834, marks the day in which the practice of the enslavement of African peoples in all British colonies came to an end; and,

WHEREAS, Emancipation Day recognizes the day that slavery was officially ended in the British Empire in 1834 before Canada was a separate country from Britain; and

WHEREAS, On August 1, 1834, only enslaved children below the age of six were freed. Enslaved people older than six years of age were “assistants” and required to work 40 hours per week without pay, as part of compensation payment to their prior owners. Full release from slave labour happened at 12 PM on July 31, 1838, just about four years later;

WHEREAS, Emancipation Day recognizes not only when slavery was abolished in Canada and other British colonies, on Aug. 1, 1834, but also Black people’s long struggle against racism and discrimination that continues today; and

WHEREAS, On March 24th, 2021, by unanimous consent, the House of Commons has adopted the M-36 bill. Canada has now recognized August 1st as Emancipation Day nationwide; and,

WHEREAS, The Government of Canada announced on January 30, 2018 that it would officially recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent to highlight the important contributions that people of African Descent have made to Canadian society, and to provide a platform for confronting anti-black racism; and

WHEREAS, The City of Victoria joined the Government of Canada, several other Canadian cities as well as cities worldwide in acknowledging and recognizing the International Decade for People of African Descent

RECOMMENDATIONS

BE IT RESOLVED that Council of the City of Victoria, British Columbia recognize and proclaim Sunday August 01, 2021 as Emancipation Day

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council direct the Mayor to write to the Province of British Columbia to call for Emancipation Day on August 1st to be recognized as a holiday.

That this item be forwarded to the July 29, 2021 daytime Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Dubow', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Dubow