



Agenda Report

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 9, 2021

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY CLERK VÁZQUEZ FLORES

SUBJECT: BLACK LIVES MATTER FLAG

STATEMENT OF ISSUES:

Council Member Gonzalez received a request from a public member requesting that the Black Lives Matter flag be displayed for the month of February to commemorate Black History Month.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Resolution Authorizing the Display of the Black Lives Matter Flag at the Civic Plaza during the Month of February in Commemoration of Black History Month, in Accordance with the Council Policy for Outdoor Display of Commemorative Flags

DISCUSSION:

The City flies the U.S., California, and City flags in in the City Plaza in front of the Library entrance, but the City does not have a flag policy. The City does comply with Chapter 1-The Flag of Title 4 of the United States Code to display the U.S. and California flags. The Council will be considering a Council policy for outdoor display of commemorative flags at its February 9, 2021, meeting.

On May 19, 1990, the City Council authorized the display of the Prisoner of War (POW)/Missing in Action (MIA) flag at the City Plaza below the State of California flag. On February 23, 2010, the Council authorized the creation of a City flag and its display at the Civic Plaza.

Most recently, on January 19, 2021, the Council approved the display of the Pride flag, and at that meeting Mayor Pro Tempore Parker directed staff to develop a policy for commemorative flags, which is also on tonight's agenda for the Council's consideration and approval.

On January 20, 2021, Council Member González received a request from a member of the public asking the City to display the Black Lives Matter flag in February to commemorate Black History Month (also known as African American History Month).

Black History Month pays tribute to the generations of African Americans who struggled with adversity to achieve full citizenship in American society.

Black Lives Matter was founded by Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi in 2013 in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the murder of Trayvon Martin. Their efforts grew into a global movement to fight against injustice for people of color.

The Black Lives Matter movement, like the Black and African American civil rights movements before it, has effectively articulated the injustices that exist at the intersections of race, class, and gender.

In 2017, Australia's Sydney University awarded the Sydney Peace Prize to its founders. The international prestigious award that honors peacemakers around the world for promoting human rights, nonviolence, and "peace with justice."

Petter Eide, Norwegian lawmaker, nominated the Black Lives Matter movement for the 2021 Nobel peace prize for the way it called for systemic change spread around the world. Mr. Eide stated, "I believe that Black Lives Matter is the largest and strongest social movement in the world today, fighting racial injustice." Eide, 61, told CBS News.

The recent Black Lives Matter protests peaked on June 6, 2020, when half a million people turned out in nearly 550 places across the United States, was one of the largest movements in the United States' history.

The City Council acknowledges that throughout the United States' history, institutional and structural racism has caused division and fear for communities, and that the Council shares in the responsibility to respond to such circumstances in our community.

The official flag is black, charged with the official logo of the movement: words BLACK LIVES MATTER in white, inscribed in three rows, and three yellow horizontal lines below (as illustrated below). The size and placement of the flag will be consistent with the requirements set forth in the City's new Commemorative Flag Policy.



STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action is consistent with the City's Strategic Plan priorities of 05-Community Engagement & Well-Being.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The cost of the flags would be less than \$100 and would be funded from the City Council's Office Equipment account.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The Council could consider not displaying the Black Lives Matter flag this year.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES: None