

At the end of last week, I received a copy of a Proclamation signed by Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Matt Murell declaring that Juneteenth would be a holiday in Columbia County.

The background on Juneteenth. In 1863 while the Civil War was still being fought, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. The proclamation, however, could not be implemented in places still under Confederate control. As a result, in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas, enslaved people would not be free until June 19, 1865, when some 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas. The army announced that the more than 250,000 enslaved black people in the state, were free by executive decree. This day came to be known as "Juneteenth," by the newly freed people in Texas.

Juneteenth became a federal holiday in 2021 and this year, it became a County holiday.

Tonight I am asking the Board to adopt a Resolution making Juneteenth a holiday in Copake. In the words of the Resolution, "as this Nation continues to work towards a more perfect Union,

Now, therefore be it Resolved, that Juneteenth shall be a holiday in the Town of Copake in year 2022, to be observed on June 20, 2022 and that Article VI, C (6)(a) of the Town Policy Manual shall be amended to include Juneteenth as a holiday."

I am very proud that Columbia County, and Matt Murell in particular was proactive in declaring this holiday.

Last night at the Board of Supervisors Supervisor Linda Mussman and I read aloud another Proclamation by the Chairman, this one recognizing June 2022 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Pride Month. The last line of the Proclamation states "Love is what holds hope in the hearts of everyone who breathes the same air and dreams the dreams of justice and fairness".

I thought that was worth repeating here.