



## Black History Month

**Whereas:** February is Black History Month and we call upon the Citizens and Public and Local officials of the Town of Swampscott to honor the history and achievements of Black Americans and to reflect on the centuries of struggle that have brought us to this historic moment of time to lived up to the founding principles of our Nation and the Town of Swampscott – that all people are created equal and have the right to be treated equally throughout their lives; and

**Whereas:** This observance affords a special opportunity to become more knowledgeable about Black heritage, and to honor Black citizens who have contributed to Swampscott's economic, cultural, spiritual, and political development; and

**Whereas:** After the Civil War, Exodusters migrated from the South and settled in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; they brought with them the desire for economic opportunities, freedom from oppression and harassment, and freedom to create their own lives; these settlers played an important role in settling the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Town of Swampscott, as well as the rest of the United States; and

**Whereas:** In 1915, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, noted Black scholar and son of former slaves, founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, which was later renamed the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH); and

**Whereas:** Dr. Woodson initiated Black History Week, February 12, 1926; and for many years, the second week of February, chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, was celebrated by Black peoples in the United States, and

**Whereas:** In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, Black History Week was expanded and became established as Black History Month, and is now celebrated all over North America, Canada and Europe; and

**Whereas:** While the observance of Black History Month calls our Town's attention to the continued need to battle racism and to build a society that lives up to its democratic ideals, this year's celebrations and recognition of Black History Month are especially significant as we reflect on the historic challenges facing our community and our Nation at this time; and

**Whereas:** We acknowledge that Black History is American History - stories and facts fully interwoven in the political, economic, cultural, scientific, and democratic fabric that make up our great Nation; and

**Whereas:** The Town of Swampscott, continues to be anguished by the **MURDER** of **George Floyd**, and since George Floyd's murder by Police, 181 Black people in the U.S. have been killed by the police, according to data from research group Mapping Police Violence, most recently, **Tyre Nichols** and it remains a shocking failure that many Black peoples, especially young Black men and women, are unfairly harassed and threatened and unjustly treated in Swampscott and our Nation; and

**Whereas:** We are proud to celebrate Black History Month and pledge our continued commitment to build a welcoming community – one that reflects the full talents and diversity of the American people and that celebrates Swampscott's second annual Juneteenth Celebration, among other efforts by Swampscott and broader Community that is committed to build a future that is inclusive and ready to confront deep racial inequities and the systemic racism that continue to plague our community and Nation; and

**Whereas:** The Town of Swampscott commits to doing everything in our power to demand that we all seek a greater understanding and implement changes to ensure that racism, anti-Semitism and the unjust treatment of any person is not tolerated in any way or form within the Town of Swampscott.

**Whereas:** Swampscott Unites Respects Embraces (S.U.R.E) Diversity will host a Black History Month celebration on Monday, February 27th, 7PM at First Church to share important conversations about Swampscott's Black History and work to build a more inclusive community.

**Now, Therefore,** the Town of Swampscott hereby establishes that February 2023 to be:

## "Black History Month"

in the Town of Swampscott, Massachusetts and encourage all faith based and non-profit organizations, residents, businesses, civic and public institutions to acknowledge, honor, value and celebrate **Black Citizens** and celebrate our diverse heritage and culture and continue our efforts to create a world that is more just, peaceful, and prosperous for all.

**In Witness Whereof,** we have here unto set our hands and caused to be affixed the GREAT Seal of the Town of Swampscott, Massachusetts, this 1<sup>st</sup> day of February 2023.



Laurence Neal Duffy  
Chair, Select Board



David Grishman  
Vice Chair, Select Board

Mary Ellen Fletcher  
Select Board



Catherine Phelan  
Select Board



Peter Spellios  
Select Board



Sean Fitzgerald  
Town Administrator

