



City of Arts & Innovation

Governmental Processes Committee

TO: GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES COMMITTEE DATE: APRIL 3, 2024

FROM: GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

**SUBJECT: CONSIDER INPUT FROM THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION ON HOW TO
RECOGNIZE GROUPS AND CAUSES WHICH DO NOT HAVE ESTABLISHED
COMMEMORATIVE FLAGS**

ISSUES:

Consider input from the Human Relations Commission for recognizing groups and causes which do not have established commemorative flags and consider an expanded list of groups and causes without commemorative flags for recognition.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Governmental Processes Committee:

1. Consider the Human Relations Commission's suggestions for recognizing groups and causes which do not have an established commemorative flag by issuing Proclamations, lighting up the Grier Pavilion in associated colors, adding the groups and causes to the City's Cultural Holidays and Celebratory Months calendar, holding student poster art contests, and adding RiversideTV programming during the corresponding recognition month, and
2. Consider the Human Relations Commission's suggestion to expand the list of groups and causes for recognition which do not have commemorative flags, consisting of Dr. Martin Luther King Day, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month, Indigenous Peoples Day, and Native American Heritage Month to include Human Trafficking Awareness Day, Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, Lunar New Year, Deaf Awareness Week, Mental Health Awareness Month, Black Balloon Day, and National Poverty in America Awareness Month; and
3. Recommend that the City Council consider the option(s) selected by the Committee for recognizing groups and causes without established commemorative flags.

BACKGROUND:

On January 17, 2023, the City Council adopted a resolution establishing the City of Riverside Flag Policy (attachment 2), which provides a set of guidelines to ensure the uniform handling and

display of flags at City facilities. In addition, the adopted Flag Policy sets forth guidelines for the display of commemorative flags. A commemorative flag under this policy means a flag that identifies a specific date, historical event, cause, or group of people, whereby the City honors or commemorates the date, event, cause or people by flying the flag. At this same meeting, the City Council requested that staff solicit input from the Human Relations Commission regarding developing a schedule for display of commemorative flags at City facilities.

On February 23, 2023, staff solicited input from the Human Relations Commission (HRC) on a commemorative flag display schedule for City facilities.

On May 2, 2023, by a majority vote the City Council approved the display of established or commonly recognized commemorative flags incorporating input from the HRC but did not give direction for suggested groups of people or causes for which there is currently no established or commonly recognized commemorative flag.

On June 6, 2023, by a majority vote the City Council adopted Resolution 23996 authorizing the display of commemorative flags at City Hall and where possible at other City facilities, as follows:

1. Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27 only)
2. Black History Month (February, entire month)
3. Women's Suffrage Victory Flag (March, entire month)
4. LGBTQ Pride Month (June, entire month except for June 19)
5. Juneteenth (June 19 only)

On January 16, 2024, by a majority vote the City Council approved the commemorative flag schedule for the upcoming year consisting of Holocaust Remembrance Day, Black History Month, Women's Suffrage Victory Flag, LGBTQ Pride Month and Juneteenth. At this same meeting, staff were directed to return to City Council with a resolution supporting the City's display of the flags chosen.

On January 31, 2024, staff solicited the Human Relations Commission's input on how to recognize groups or causes which do not have an established commemorative flag. Their recommendations as well as suggestions for expanding the list of dates, groups and causes for recognition are discussed below.

On February 27, 2024, the City Council approved a resolution authorizing the display of commemorative flags at City Hall and where possible at other City facilities as follows:

1. Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27 only)
2. Black History Month (February, entire month)
3. Women's Suffrage Victory Flag (March, entire month)
4. LGBTQ Pride Month (June, entire month except for June 19)
5. Juneteenth (June 19 only)

On February 27, 2024, the City Council approved the addition of the Disability Pride Month Flag to the commemorative flag schedule for the upcoming year and directed staff to return to Council with a resolution authorizing the display of the Disability Pride Month Flag during the month of July.

DISCUSSION:

On January 31, 2024, staff solicited input from the Human Relations Commission on how to go about recognizing the groups and causes previously supported by the Human Relations Commission at their meeting on February 3, 2023, but for which there is no established commemorative flag. These specific groups or causes are:

- **Dr. Martin Luther King Day:** Recognized on the third Monday in January, a federal holiday in honor of the civil rights leader.
- **Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month:** Recognized the month of May, an annual celebration that recognizes the historical and cultural contributions of individuals and groups of Asian and Pacific Islander descent to the United States.
- **Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month:** Recognized September 15 to October 15, it recognizes and celebrates the history and cultures of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.
- **Indigenous Peoples Day:** Recognized on the second Monday in October, it honors and celebrates the history, culture and contributions of indigenous peoples in the Americas.
- **Native American Heritage Month:** Recognized in November, it celebrates the traditions, languages and stories of Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Island communities and ensures their rich histories and contributions continue to thrive with each passing generation.

The Human Relations Commission supports honoring these groups and causes with a Proclamation presented during the corresponding recognition month, along with a photo opportunity with the Mayor and the City Council. When a specific color is associated with the cause, the Human Relations Commission suggested that City Hall and the Grier Pavilion be lit up in the associated color, if possible. Additionally, it was suggested that the City's Marketing and Communications team add these groups, causes and dates to the City's Cultural Holidays and Celebratory Months calendar for social media awareness. These suggestions may be implemented immediately.

The Human Relations Commission also offered several suggestions for consideration which will require a longer implementation timeframe, such as student art contests to design posters, and use of RiversideTV to raise awareness of the recognized groups and causes. If directed by the City Council, staff will coordinate with the local schools to have students submit artwork for posters commemorating the groups or causes. The winning posters may then be announced during the corresponding month and displayed in City Hall, in Council Chambers and/or at other City facilities during the month. Secondly, RiversideTV may be utilized to create public service announcements, interviews and stories to broadcast during the corresponding recognition month and share with local public broadcasting channel KVCR.

Additional Groups and Causes Supported by the Human Relations Commission

In addition to the groups and causes outlined above, the Human Relations Commission recommends that the City Council expand the groups and causes for recognition **which do not have an established commemorative flag** to include:

Human Trafficking Awareness Day: Recognized on January 11, it is dedicated to raise awareness about human trafficking and to educate the public about how to identify and prevent this crime. It's associated with the color blue, and social media #WearBlueDay

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month: Recognized in March, it seeks to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life, as well as awareness of the barriers that people with disabilities still face in connecting to the communities in which they live. This month is associated with the color green.

Deaf Awareness Week: Recognized in the last week of September, it promotes the understanding and inclusion of deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

Lunar New Year: Celebrated on the first new moon that occurs between the end of January and the middle of February, it is a traditional festival celebrated by many East and Southeast Asian cultures, including Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean communities.

Mental Health Awareness Month: Recognized in May, it aims to raise awareness and educate the public about mental illnesses, the realities of living with these conditions, and strategies for attaining mental health and wellness.

Black Balloon Day: Recognized on March 6, it is a day of remembrance and awareness for those who have lost their lives to drug overdoses. It is observed with the release of virtual black balloons.

National Poverty in America Awareness Month: Recognized in January, it aims to raise awareness about poverty, its causes and consequences, as well as ways to take action to help those in need.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item supports Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government, and Goal 5.5, Foster a culture of safety, well-being, resilience, sustainability, diversity and inclusion across the City organization.

This item aligns with *EACH of the five Cross-Cutting Threads* in the Envision Riverside 2025, as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – In accordance with the City of Riverside Flag Policy, which was reviewed publicly at three meetings of the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement & Governmental Processes Committee prior to being adopted by the City Council, the consideration on the Human Relations Committee's suggestions for honoring groups and causes without established commemorative flags is now agendized for Governmental Processes consideration, furthering public transparency.
2. **Equity** – Commemorative flags and Proclamations promote equity and representation for diverse groups of people and historical events, consistent with the City's adopted vision, mission and strategic priorities.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Any commemorative flags purchased as a result of Council action will be procured in accordance with City purchasing policy.

4. **Innovation** – Commemorative flags and Proclamations provide an innovative way to promote diversity and inclusion by recognizing specific groups or causes consistent with the City’s adopted vision, mission and strategic priorities.

5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Commemorative flags and Proclamations promote social sustainability, as an integral component of sustainability is the ability to embrace diverse communities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with this discussion to consider the Human Relations Commission’s ideas for honoring groups and causes which do not have established commemorative flags.

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| Prepared by: | Shari Call, Deputy General Services Director |
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| Approved as to form: | Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney |

Attachments:

1. Presentation
2. Flag Policy