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## Orinda gets a new public holiday: Juneteenth now officially recognized

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda adopted Juneteenth as a public holiday at the May 17 city council meeting, giving Orinda employees a new day off each year. California is also considering adoption of the holiday, which honors the end of slavery in the United States.

In the resolution adopting Juneteenth, Orinda noted that last year President Joe Biden signed legislation establishing Juneteenth as a federal holiday. Juneteenth, which is observed on June 19, became the first new federal holiday since the addition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 1983. The resolution explains that essentially Juneteenth celebrates the Emancipation Proclamation, which ended slavery. The June 19 date commemorates when Union Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to announce to enslaved African-Americans they were free and the Civil War ended. President Lincoln had announced the Emancipation Proclamation two and a half years earlier, but it didn't take effect while the Civil War raged on. In Orinda, the observed holidays are specifically enumerated in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Teamster bargaining group and the Unrepresented Employee Manual, which now includes Juneteenth as the 12th official holiday for employees of Orinda. In 2022, June 19 is a Sunday, so the employees will get a day off on Monday, June 20.

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