

Whereas, during Black History Month, we recognize the vast contributions made by Black Americans and the African Diaspora within Salt Lake County, the state of Utah and across the nation; and

Whereas, the origin of Black History Month can be traced back to 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson and the association for the study of Negro Life and History, which he co-founded, declared the second week of February “Negro History Week;” and

Whereas, in 1970, the first celebration of Black History Month took place at Kent State University and six years later, in 1976, Black History Month was recognized by President Gerald Ford who urged all Americans to “honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history;” and

Whereas, the history of Utah cannot be discussed without acknowledging the history and influence of Black Americans within Salt Lake County, the State of Utah, and the United States; and

Whereas, Black Americans have been in Utah since before the arrival of the pioneers; and

Whereas, we honor Salt Lake Valley pioneers like Green Flake, Hark Wales, and Oscar Smith; and

Whereas, Black Americans came to Utah as pioneers, including Elisabeth Jane Manning James and her family as well as others, and their contributions to the founding of Utah and Salt Lake County cannot be overlooked; and

Whereas, Black Americans in early Utah comprised of miners and soldiers including the members of the 24th Infantry regiment stationed at Fort Douglas who, despite initial prejudice, became beloved and valued members of Salt Lake County society; and

Whereas, Black Americans and Africans in the Diaspora continue to be a valuable part of the Salt Lake County Community to this day; and

Whereas, Utah's population includes 67,000 Black or African Americans, 52% of which live in Salt Lake County and 40% of which are multiracial; and

Whereas, since 2010, Utah’s Black population grew 55% while the total state population grew only 18%, causing the black share of the state to increase from 1.6% to 2.1%; and

Whereas, the number of multiracial Black residents nearly doubled during this time, growing 94% and contributing to the multiracial population’s status as Utah’s fastest growing racial group; and

Whereas, Black Americans and Africans in the Diaspora have enriched Salt Lake County, and we celebrate their culture, traditions, and heritage; and

Whereas, Black Americans and Africans in the Diaspora have a profound and positive impact on Salt Lake County through their economic contributions, their strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, faith, hard work, their numerous acts of community service, and their civic engagement efforts; and

Whereas, we acknowledge the generations of Black Americans from Salt Lake County who have served in the Armed Forces, in government, as first responders, advocates, educators, scientists, lawyers, judges, entrepreneurs, essential workers and frontline service providers, artists, and private and public sector leaders; and

Whereas, Salt Lake County is home to Black American youth; young leaders who will shape our future as they enter the education system, workforce, and our Salt Lake County community to create a hopeful future for all; and

Whereas, we honor the resilience of those past and present who have strived and sacrificed to overcome many challenges, often in the face of prejudice, in order to establish the opportunities of the American Dream for themselves, their families and the future of Salt Lake County; and,

Whereas, together we recognize the Black American and African Diaspora community in Salt Lake County, acknowledge and celebrate their many achievements and applaud their proud legacy of service, unity, and dedication to our nation, our state, and to Salt Lake County;

Whereas, February 1st to 29th, 2025 has been declared Black History Month in Utah;

Now, therefore, We, the Salt Lake County Council, on this 4th Day of February, 2025, do hereby recognize and celebrate all the Black American and Africans in the Diaspora residents of Salt Lake County during this month set aside to honor them.