

## COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

### 3. **Flag Raising at City Hall to Recognize Black History Month in Vancouver in 2024**

Submitted by: Councillor Meiszner and Councillor Bligh

#### WHEREAS

1. Black History Month provides us with the opportunity to celebrate and learn about the many achievements, investments, and contributions of Vancouver's Black and African diasporic communities, even while these communities have endured historical and continuing inequality, oppression, and erasure in our city;
2. The City of Vancouver celebrates Black History Month by recognizing that People of African descent have been a part of Canada since the early 1600's prior to the abolishment of slavery in 1834, and have been part of British Columbia's history since 1858;
3. The City of Vancouver recognizes that Black Canadians and African diaspora communities continue to contribute to the vibrant cultural, economic, political, and social development of the city and affirms the rights, and is striving to strengthen, the full and equitable participation of people of African descent;
4. Vancouver is located on the unceded ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh People, and the City therefore also recognizes the historical relationship between Indigenous and Black Communities, and is dedicated to support strengthening relations between Indigenous, Black, and People of Mixed Heritage;
5. The UN General Assembly proclaimed 2015-2024 as the International Decade for People of African Descent;
6. The City of Vancouver honours the legacy of Black Canadians, including such notable persons as Emery Barnes, a trailblazer in politics as the first Black member of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, Barbara Howard, a pioneering figure in Canadian sports and education, and Vie Moore, whose Hogan's Alley restaurant became a prominent cultural and community Vancouver landmark, to name just a few who have significantly shaped this country and paved the way for the leadership, creativity, determination, and future imagination of Black Canadians, African Diaspora, and other racialized communities, as well as all Canadians;
7. The City of Vancouver is working on an Anti-Black Racism Strategy, and has signed an MOU with the Hogan's Alley Society to establish the long term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the 898 Main St. Block to address the intergenerational socio-economic impacts of displacement, and the need for the continued input of the Black Community's

perspective in the Northeast False Creek planning process and all our City planning processes;

8. On January 31, 2023, Mayor Ken Sim officially proclaimed the month of February 2023 as “BLACK HISTORY MONTH” in the City of Vancouver;
9. 2024 will mark the end of the International Decade for People of African Descent. It is therefore incumbent upon the City and the people of Vancouver to find new and ongoing ways to mark and celebrated Black History Month;
10. Large flags are frequently raised on the north lawn of City Hall, and standard-sized flags are flown at the flag island at 12<sup>th</sup> and Cambie. The City’s Protocol Office frequently makes requests for flags to be raised on the flag island for occasions such as Pride Week and National Indigenous History Month/Peoples Day (at least 12 flags are required to cover the entire island). Most recently, Ukrainian flags have been flown at the flag island to show our city’s support for the Ukrainian people and our Sister City Odesa during this time of war with Russia;
11. The City of Vancouver has specific policies and procedures for flying flags on City buildings and structures. Under the City’s flag policies and procedures, the City Clerk has the responsibility and authority for making decisions regarding the flying of guest flags, half-masting, and any other discretionary matters; and
12. There are a number of flags that are specific to and/or connected with Black History Month, as well as flags such as the Pan-African Flag – which is red, black and green – that are emblematic of and/or reflective of Black and African communities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to engage with Vancouver’s Black and African diasporic communities in 2023 to enable the raising of a suitable flag or flags to be flown at Vancouver City Hall to mark Black History Month in 2024, including specific consultation with the Black and African diasporic communities as to the flag or flags that would be supported by the Black and African diasporic communities;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to report back before the end of Q3 of 2023 with information gleaned from their engagement and consultations with the city’s Black and African diasporic communities, including any recommendations for additional actions required by Council.

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