



TOWN OF FALMOUTH RESOLUTION

On the Commitment to Racial Equity and Social Justice

- WHEREAS,** the Falmouth Town Council recognizes the history of racism in the United States and Maine from the arrival of European settlers on Native lands, and continuing through European slavery and the slave trade, segregation, Jim Crow, anti-immigrant laws, voter suppression, discriminatory policies and laws, and racist rhetoric and violence; and
- WHEREAS,** the Town Council acknowledges the racial injustice in the settlement of Falmouth, including the near destruction of the Abenaki people, formerly populous in Falmouth, whose roots in the Casco Bay region long preceded those of European settlers; and
- WHEREAS,** the Town Council recognizes that the transatlantic slave trade from 1619 to 1808 brought African men and women to the Western World to be used as enslaved labor, that Mainers, including Falmouth residents, benefitted from slavery through their consumption of and profit from the sale of goods produced by enslaved people, that enslaved people lived and worked in Maine until at least 1783, that Maine ship builders and shipmasters were part of the “triangle trade” that carried products and enslaved people between the Americas, Europe and Africa, and that Maine was a leading producer of cotton fabric made from the product of slave labor; and
- WHEREAS,** the Town Council recognizes that this economic activity contributed to the population growth and economic prosperity that led to Falmouth’s incorporation as a Town in 1718 and Maine’s petition for statehood in 1820 as part of the Missouri Compromise, which furthered the expansion of slavery within the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** the Town Council recognizes that racial inequities for communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) have become ingrained in and perpetuated by the law, policies, policies and practices of many institutions, leading to disparities in education, job attainment, housing, and access to quality health care; and
- WHEREAS,** the Town Council acknowledges that racial inequities are also reflected in the criminal justice system, creating higher rates of incarceration and longer sentences for BIPOC people, which can further exacerbate barriers to housing and educational and economic advancement; and

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WHEREAS, the Town Council recognizes that the Town's own ordinances and practices may have contributed and may be contributing to racial inequity; and

WHEREAS, the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and many others have mobilized people across the nation and world to affirm that Black lives matter, and that change is necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council recognizes the recent increase in unlawful harassment, threats, and violence targeted at members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council believes that eradicating unjust and inequitable policies, practices, and outcomes will require directly confronting issues of racism and racial inequality at the national, state, municipal, neighborhood, and personal levels, including in our own community; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council embraces diversity and recognizes the benefits of heterogeneous voices and perspectives for enhancing community character, expanding educational experiences, and supporting economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Falmouth has begun taking steps to understand racial justice issues as they exist in Falmouth and promote improvement, transparency, and accountability in our community by hosting a community-wide forum on police practices in Falmouth, enhancing access to police policies, and hosting educational programming on Black history for senior staff members;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FALMOUTH, ASSEMBLED THIS XX DAY OF XX 2021, THAT:

1. The Town of Falmouth condemns racism, discrimination, bigotry, dehumanizing words and actions, and all forms of racial violence.
2. The Town of Falmouth seeks to become a more welcoming and supportive community to BIPOC members and affirms that all people should be able to exist here peacefully.
3. The Town of Falmouth commits to seeking out more racially diverse representation in the delivery and management of public services through Town recruiting, training, and hiring.
4. The Town Council commits to seeking out more racially diverse representation on boards and committees.
5. The Town Council commits to examining racial equity in its decision-making on proposals before the Council with the goal of building a more inclusive and equitable community.
6. The Town Council and staff commit to review of the Town's existing policies and ordinances, trainings, and service delivery approaches to determine whether they are contributing to racial inequity and to revise or eliminate as necessary.

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7. The Town will offer regular educational opportunities on Black history and racial justice issues for all Councilors, Committee and Board members, and designated Town staff.
8. The Town Council and staff will engage the Falmouth community in public education and conversations about Black history and racial justice issues in collaboration with other community resources such as Falmouth Memorial Library, Community Programs, Falmouth Public Schools.
9. The Town Council and staff, including the Police Department, will work to advance cohesion and trust between BIPOC communities and law enforcement, regularly assess police practices and policies, and continue data collection to determine if racial profiling is persistent.
10. The Town Council and staff commit to ensuring that issues of racial equity and inclusion are discussed in the context of Falmouth's Vision and Values project, including in focus groups and the "Think Tank," including by discussing the extent to which racial diversity, equity, and inclusion are shared community values, how policies on residential growth and development may have impacted Falmouth's racial demographics and housing affordability in the past, and how future policies could influence Falmouth's racial demographics and housing affordability going forward.
11. The Town Council and staff commit to holistically exploring racial equity issues in the context of Falmouth's Comprehensive Plan update, including increasing housing diversity, attracting and supporting Black owned businesses, and taking up other initiatives that may be brought forth by the community.
12. The Town Council affirms this resolve in order to respect, honor, and value historically marginalized groups with the hopes of creating a better Town, State, and nation through the inclusion and humanization of all people.

Attest: _____ Date: _____
Ellen Planer, Town Clerk