

Resolution #2020-36

A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS IN THE CITY OF ALBION

WHEREAS, race is a social construction with no biologic basis; and

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions, including individual racism, which is internalized or interpersonal; and

WHEREAS, systemic racism, which is institutional or structural, is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks; and

WHEREAS, systemic racism unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and depletes the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS, racism is rooted in the foundation of America. From the time chattel slavery began in the 1600s, to the Jim Crow era, to the mass incarceration and inequitable sentencing of African Americans, to failing schools, to disproportionate outcomes in health, to infant mortality, to job and housing discrimination, racism has remained a presence in American society which subjecting African Americans to hardships and disadvantages in every aspect of life; and

WHEREAS, African American citizens across the State of Michigan and in the City of Albion have been limited to areas with restricted access to healthy foods, clean water, and other essential resources, leading to a variety of other health issues, including reduced life expectancy, higher rates of infant and maternal mortality, higher rates of lead poisoning, and higher vulnerabilities to public health pandemics including COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, African Americans are prematurely dying at a disproportionately higher rate and record numbers than their white counterparts; and

WHEREAS, African Americans are disproportionately suffering in part due to long standing, unaddressed health disparities as well as systemic racism and other socioeconomic inequities; and

WHEREAS, the simple tasks like driving, walking/running in neighborhoods, wearing a hoodies, going to the store, or just going to a park all come with certain risk if you are African American in America; and

WHEREAS, there is clear data to illustrate that racism negatively impacts the lives of African Americans in the City of Albion; and

WHEREAS, racism as a public crisis has adversely impacted students, families, and the community at large, our community is suffering from systemic economic shock, instability, and mental health issues;

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association, National Association of County and City Health Officials, and the American Academy of Pediatrics have declared racism as a public health crisis, the Albion City Council believes that it is now time to do the same. The disparities caused by racism that we have outlined in this resolution represent a public health crisis which affects us all; and

WHEREAS, we as a governmental body have a responsibility to ensure equity for all City of Albion residents;

WHEREAS, this Council encourages other governmental bodies to declare racism as a public health crisis and to immediately take steps to intentionally address and support methods that will strategically reduce the long-term impact of systemic racism;

Council Member Mayor Atchison moved, supported by Council Member Williamson, to approve the following resolution.

RESOLVED, that the Albion City Council hereby declares racism to be a public health crisis in the City of Albion that affects all members of our society on a local, state, and national level and demands action from all levels of government and society;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Albion is recommitting its full attention to improving the quality of life and health of our African American residents;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Albion City Council advocate for relevant policies that improve health in the African American community, and support local, state, and federal initiatives that advance liberty and justice for all;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Albion City Council will assess its current and proposed laws and policies, as well as their implementation, to promote health for African Americans within the City of Albion;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Albion City Council encourages our school system to develop/revise racial and cultural policies, curriculum, procedures, and protocols to reduce the effect of racism on minority students and families.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to the Albion City Charter, Section 5.7, the Albion City Council shall create, via ordinance, a citizen advisory board entitled "The City of Albion Equity Task Force," which shall be made up of City of Albion leaders, employees, and the community to achieve solutions to address the legacy of structural and systemic racism in the City of Albion;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Albion Equity Task Force shall assess internal policies and procedures to ensure racial equity is a core element in all organizational practices in the City of Albion and shall provide recommendations to the City Council and/or the City Manager;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Albion City Council calls on its police unions, the POAM and POLC to commit to addressing racism against African Americans in the City of Albion to ensure their officers receive sufficient training to ensure fair policing of African Americans in the City of Albion;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Albion City Clerk shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Michigan Legislature, the Michigan Governor's Office, and the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners.

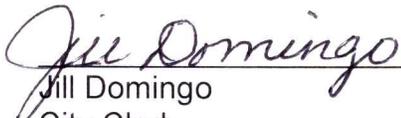
Date: July 20, 2020

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 (Hawker)

I certify that this resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Albion on July 20, 2020.



Jill Domingo
City Clerk