

RESOLUTION NO.

Recognizing the Second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples' Day

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria recognizes that Indigenous Peoples of the lands that would later become known as the Americas have occupied these lands since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on the Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia is home to Indigenous Peoples and the Commonwealth of Virginia currently recognizes 11 Indigenous tribes; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' unique and valuable legacy has largely been treated as a footnote in history. In Virginia schools, Indigenous history is taught insofar as it relates to the eventual European colonization; and

WHEREAS, 50,000 Indigenous Peoples comprised at least 15 separate Nations prior to the arrival of English settlers in Virginia. These include the Doege Indian village, which was cited on John Smith's 1608 map, and the Nottoway, Mattaponi, Nansemond, Pamunkey, Manahoac, Tutelo, Patawomeck, Sappony, Shawnee, Occaneechi, Meherrin, Paspahegh, Appommatoc, Chisca, and Westo; and

WHEREAS, the Namaengbquend Tribe is believed to be the indigenous owners of present-day Alexandria. The tribes that inhabited Northern Virginia and the area that is now the City of Alexandria were parts of, or allies with, the powerful Powhatan Confederacy. Many Indigenous People were displaced from their homelands and driven onto reservations as the English, and later, American colonial settlers, pushed to occupy more land in the region. Many of the Indigenous Peoples' in Virginia had been subjugated, killed, or removed by the turn of the 18th century; and

WHEREAS, as of January 2018, there are only seven federally recognized nations in Virginia—they are the Pamunkey Indian Tribe, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Rappahannock, Upper Mattaponi, Nansemond, and Monacan tribes. There remain three State recognized Tribes: Cheroenhaka (Nottoway), Nottaway Tribe and the Patawomeck Tribe; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that Indigenous People have been and continue to be the victims of prejudice and systematic discrimination, which perpetuates high rates of income inequality and exacerbates disproportionate health, education, and social standing. The City has a duty to oppose such discrimination, promote opportunity for those of Indigenous descent, and foster a welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and just community for all; and

WHEREAS, recognizing Indigenous Peoples' Day would be a crucial first step in acknowledging the deliberate and systematic oppression of Indigenous People, to celebrate their resiliency and contributions while acknowledging the current presence of Native Nations and their thriving cultures, while also sharing current issues facing their communities; and

WHEREAS, since 1994, more than 130 cities across the country have renamed Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples' Day; and

WHEREAS, the renaming of the holiday would not have an impact on the existing federal or City holiday and will still occur on the second Monday in October; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Alexandria does hereby proclaim that the second Monday of each October shall perpetually be known and celebrated as Indigenous Peoples' Day;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City recognizes and values the vast contributions made to our community and our country through Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, science, governance, philosophy, arts, and culture;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Alexandria strongly encourages Alexandria's State representatives to vigorously introduce legislation to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day on the second Monday of each October instead of the day before Thanksgiving;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Alexandria affirms that it is the City's policy to participate in the annual Indigenous Peoples' Day celebrations and that City departments work with the Indigenous People, the Alexandria Office of Human Rights and the Alexandria Human Rights Commission to encourage participation on a citywide basis;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Alexandria strongly encourages Alexandria City Public Schools to include the teaching of Indigenous Peoples' history with contemporary context and celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day on the aforementioned time;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Alexandria encourages other businesses, organizations, and public institutions to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day in a meaningful way and in partnership with local Native Nations;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Alexandria calls on all sports organization operating in the Commonwealth of Virginia to cease the heinous use of Indigenous Peoples' liken as mascots; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the City of Alexandria firmly commits to continue its efforts to promote the well-being and growth of the City's Indigenous Community and Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Adopted: _____

JUSTIN M. WILSON MAYOR

ATTEST:

Gloria A Sitton, CMC
City Clerk