

**VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO
RESOLUTION 2020-22**

**Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis and Committing to Meaningful Action in Response to the
Death, Trauma and Injury Caused by Institutional Racism**

WHEREAS, the Village of Yellow Springs recognizes that racist beliefs are a direct threat to our residents and visitors and that it is the responsibility of local government in collaboration with community members to actively identify this threat, prioritize implementation of anti-racist policies and take other intentional actions to address systemic racism; and

WHEREAS, race is a social construct with no biological basis and a pervasive form of social violence and oppression; and

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions – individual racism that is internalized or interpersonal as well as systemic racism that is institutional or structural – that inequitably and inhumanely structure opportunity and assign value based on social interpretations of how one looks; and

WHEREAS, racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities while unjustly giving advantages to other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources, and Village government is committed to ensuring equitable access to opportunity for every resident regardless of ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment and criminal justice, and an emerging body of research demonstrates that racism itself is a social determinant of health; and

WHEREAS, Village Value #6 states that Council and the Village will “intentionally promote anti-racism, inclusion, equity and accessibility through all policies, procedures and processes”; and

WHEREAS, Council for the Village of Yellow Springs is committed to prioritizing racial equity in our decision making processes, to acknowledging that communities of color have borne the burdens of inequitable social, environmental, economic and criminal justice policies, practices and investments, to understanding that the legacy of these inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm and mistrust, and to recognizing that racial equity is realized when and only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes; and

WHEREAS, while the Village of Yellow Springs has much more work to do and will do better, our local public safety and justice systems have notably improved over the last several years in response to community expectations that translated to policy changes such as a police department social worker, required crisis intervention, de-escalation, implicit bias and scenario-based training, limiting use of force with a better taser policy and fully utilizing our local Mayor’s Court to enhance social justice, and the entire community must re-commit to prioritizing this work; and

WHEREAS, Black Americans comprise 13% of the US population but account for 24% of the deaths from COVID-19 where race is identified—a death rate two time higher than their population share; and

WHEREAS, Council for the Village of Yellow Springs recognizes that this health disparity is the result of structural discrimination and lack of health care access, economic opportunity and other social advantages for persons of color and constitutes therefore a health emergency for citizens of color.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved That:

Section 1. Council for the Village of Yellow Springs affirms its belief that the above-noted disparities are the result of intentional policies and constructs and are, therefore, able to be changed.

Section 2. Council for the Village of Yellow Springs reiterates its commitment to the Guidelines for Village Policing, developed in collaboration with The 365 Project and other community members and which prioritize anti-racism, to prioritizing policies that provide affordability for all residents, and to our Village Values that highlight being a welcoming community of opportunity for all persons regardless of race.

Section 3. Council for the Village of Yellow Springs will continue to pursue real reform to dismantle racism by prioritizing more targeted and broader policy changes, including decriminalization of marijuana, better enforcement practices for minor traffic/vehicle violations, further restrictions on use of force, and establishing laws that address poverty such as eviction protections as well as community conversations and a citizen review board that deepen understanding, promote accountability and inform the development and implementation of meaningful anti-racism action.

Section 4. Council for the Village of Yellow Springs will move forward with its Justice System Advisory Committee, which will bring together community and Village team members to identify, develop and help implement impactful policy initiatives, including funding priorities and practices best fitting community needs, that address systemic racism in a transparent and open forum.

Brian Housh, President of Council

Passed: 6-15-2020

Attest: _____

Judy Kintner, Clerk of Council

ROLL CALL:

Housh __Y__

MacQueen __Y__

Stokes __Y__

Kreeger __Y__

Curliss __Y__