



WHEREAS, February is *Black History Month* and is recognized throughout the United States as an opportunity to celebrate the historical and present achievements and contributions made by African-Americans to the economic, cultural and political development of our great Country, the State of North Carolina and our local communities; and,

WHEREAS, Black History Month's early origins began in February 1926, when "Negro History Week" was established by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a Harvard scholar and a son of former slaves. Dr. Woodson launched an initiative to encourage the study of black history and the African-American experience in the United States. He chose February because it marked the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and the American abolitionist Frederick Douglass; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Woodson's legacy influenced the eventual shift from "Negro History Week" to a month-long celebration later to be established in the mid 1970's and celebrated thereafter as "Black History Month"; and,

WHEREAS, the national theme for Black History Month 2020 "*African Americans and the Vote*" and the 1965 Voting Rights Act guarantees African-American men and women the right to vote which is important today as it was then. Many African-American men and women hold various appointed and elected positions at the local, state and federal level throughout our nation; and,

WHEREAS, this year marks the 56th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, which was first proposed by President John F. Kennedy in 1963, and eventually signed into law during the height of the American Civil Rights Movement on July 2, 1964 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The legislation prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin and paved the way for future anti-discrimination legislation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners, in commemoration of this nationwide celebration, hereby proclaims February 2020 as

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

in recognition of the many contributions of African-Americans to Gaston County, North Carolina and the Nation at large, and the ongoing pursuit of equality and human rights for all citizens.

Tracy L. Philbeck, Chairman

Chad Brown

Allen R. Fraley

Jack B. Brown, Vice-Chairman

Tom Keigher

Bob Hovis

Ronald E. Worley

Adopted this 25th Day of February 2020