

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2024-018

**First Reading Passage Requested**

2

**(G. Johnson)**

3

SPONSORS Executive Shapiro & Ms. Sims, Council as a Whole

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DATE January 29, 2024

COMMITTEE Human Services

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**A Resolution declaring the month of February 2024 as Black History Month in Summit County, recognizing the incredible accomplishments made by Black Americans in the face of adversity, for the Executive, and declaring an emergency.**

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WHEREAS, the first Black History Month was proposed and celebrated by the faculty of the Center of Pan-African Culture and members of Black United Students at Kent State University in 1970, conferring local significance on what would become a national observance in 1976; and

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WHEREAS, the Civil Rights Movement prompted historians and educators to expand the teachings of Black history and properly recognize the contributions of Black scientists, artists, educators, athletes, politicians, business people, faith leaders, and countless others in the United States and Summit County; and

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WHEREAS, current movements for racial justice and equity continue to press for the full implementation of the tenets and values of the Civil Rights Movement, such as equal treatment under the law, as well as increased awareness of the experiences and identities of people of color; and

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WHEREAS, the foundations of the Civil Rights Movement, and subsequently Black History Month, were paved by countless leaders, such as Sojourner Truth, who gave her renowned speech in Akron, Ohio in 1851, declaring movements for justice and equality must fight for the rights of *all* races and *all* women, including Black women; and

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WHEREAS, in 2022, the Sojourner Truth Project and key partners broke ground on Sojourner Truth Memorial Plaza, which honors Truth, her speech, and her legacy, which still holds immense value today; and

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WHEREAS, in 2024, Summit County will celebrate the unveiling of Sojourner Truth Memorial Plaza, providing a site of historical, educational, and cultural significance for the community, the state, and the nation; and

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WHEREAS, despite great progress, there continues to be disparities in the United States and Summit County between people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds; and

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WHEREAS, Summit County remains committed to fostering a workplace and community that is diverse, inclusive, and equitable for employees and residents alike through programs and practices set out by strategic planning; and

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WHEREAS, Black History Month provides time to reflect on progress toward justice and equality, as well as barriers to building a better future; and

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WHEREAS, residents are encouraged to participate in events during Black History Month and to take time to explore local history through resources at their local library and the Summit County Historical Society; and

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2 PAGE TWO

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4 WHEREAS, the Executive and this Council share this message of resilience and hope as a  
5 new year begins; and

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7 WHEREAS, this Council finds and determines, after reviewing all pertinent information,  
8 that it is necessary and in the best interest of the County of Summit that February 2024 be declared  
9 Black History Month in Summit County, and encouraging the residents of Summit County to join  
10 in this acknowledgement;

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12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Summit, State  
13 of Ohio, that:

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15 SECTION 1

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17 The month of February 2024 is hereby declared Black History Month in Summit County  
18 and the residents of Summit County are encouraged to join in this acknowledgement and recognize  
19 the role that racial diversity and inclusion plays in strengthening our community.

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21 SECTION 2

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23 This Resolution is hereby declared an emergency in the interest of the health, safety, and  
24 welfare of the residents and employees of the County of Summit and for the further purpose of  
25 immediately declaring February 2024 as Black History Month in Summit County.

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27 SECTION 3

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29 Provided this Resolution receives the affirmative vote of eight (8) members, it shall take  
30 effect immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Executive; otherwise, it shall take effect  
31 and be in force at the earliest time provided by law.

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33 SECTION 4

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35 It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating  
36 to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all  
37 deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were  
38 in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22  
39 of the Ohio Revised Code.

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41 INTRODUCED January 29, 2024

42 ADOPTED January 29, 2024

43 DocuSigned by:  
  
5560BEF400F5451...

45 CLERK OF COUNCIL

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47 APPROVED January 29, 2024

48 DocuSigned by:  
  
CB033E40D287473...

50 EXECUTIVE

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52 ENACTED EFFECTIVE January 30, 2024

DocuSigned by:  
  
C65A946FE4BA42A...

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Voice Vote – YES: 10 – 0: Darrow,  
Dickinson, Donofrio, McKenney,  
Rodgers, Schmidt, Sims, Walters, Wiedie  
Higham, Wilhite  
Absent: DeVitis