



HUMAN RIGHTS DAY PROCLAMATION OF 2020

WHEREAS, Human Rights Day is observed annually throughout the world each December 10th, commemorating the day on which, in 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and

WHEREAS, each year the United Nations calls on everyone to stand up for someone's rights on Human Rights Day; and

WHEREAS, United Nations states that disrespect for basic human rights is wide-spread in all parts of the globe and locally, the Town Council has heard expressions of similar concern from residents; and

WHEREAS, residents of Amherst have expressed their belief in and commitment to protecting the Human Rights we all share by consistently acting to demonstrate the values we hold as a community; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, Town Meeting adopted a Human Rights Bylaw that asserts no person, public or private, shall be denied any rights guaranteed pursuant to local, state and/or federal law on the basis of race or color, gender, physical or mental ability, religion, socio-economic status, ethnic or national origin, affectional or sexual preference, lifestyle or age, and in 2011 expanded this definition to include gender identity or expression and genetic information; and

WHEREAS, Town Meeting also adopted a Sanctuary Community Bylaw, established Race Amity Day, and authorized the Select Board to file special legislation seeking the ability to provide local voting rights for legal permanent residents residing in Amherst, so that residents may vote in local elections and be elected to local offices in the Community in which they live; and

WHEREAS, Town Meeting has also passed resolutions to create a Human Rights Culture, to assist in the safe resettlement of cleared Guantanamo detainees, and to not do business with the State of Arizona due to its immigration laws; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has issued Proclamations in support of Black History Month, Puerto Rico Heritage Month, LGBTQ Pride Month, Tibet Day, Race Amity Day, and Human Rights Day, has adopted a Resolution Denouncing Xenophobia and Discrimination Against Asians and Asian Americans, and has supported the provision of sanctuary to an immigrant by a local house of worship; and

WHEREAS, these actions collectively reinforce the Town of Amherst's dedication to the fundamental proposition of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - that each one of us, everywhere and at all times, is entitled to the full range of human rights, and that it is every person's responsibility to uphold them; and

WHEREAS, as a Town Council, we have always embraced every opportunity to reflect and embody these values that bind us together as a global community in our work for the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Amherst Town Council hereby proclaims December 10, 2020 as Human Rights Day, and urges residents of Amherst to celebrate this day with a communal, socially-distanced, and masked reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the Common at 4:00 pm.

Voted this 7th day of December 2020.
On behalf of the Town Council.

Lynn Griesemer,
Amherst Town Council President