



## **City of Steamboat Springs Observes Juneteenth Holiday** *City Offices Closed Monday, June 19, in Honor of National Holiday*

**STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-June 14, 2023**-On Monday, June 19, the City of Steamboat Springs will for the first time observe Juneteenth, a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans.

“Steamboat Springs and the entire Yampa Valley is stronger because of the collective sum of our experiences,” said City Manager Gary Suiter. “Juneteenth is a day to reflect on racism, inclusion, and diversity and how we can all work to ensure everyone feels welcome in our community.”

Juneteenth became a federal holiday on June 17, 2021, and Colorado officially designated the day the following year when Governor Polis signed the bill into law in May of 2022 and the Juneteenth flag flew at the state capitol a month later. This year, city offices will be closed in recognition of the holiday on Monday, June 19, 2023.

Juneteenth has been celebrated by Black Americans for decades, particularly in Texas, where the holiday originated. On June 19, 1865, more than two years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all enslaved persons free, Union Army troops finally marched to Galveston, Texas and freed the last enslaved Black Americans. Juneteenth celebrates human freedom, and an opportunity to reflect on racism and discrimination and the long history of slavery in the United States.



Although black history in the West has been largely erased, Black Americans were cowboys and cattle ranchers dating back to the earliest west slope pioneers. In 1879, Buffalo Soldiers (some of them likely former enslaved persons) scouted the area around Steamboat Springs and engaged with the Ute Tribe in the Battle of Milk Creek.

Daisy Anderson is among the most famous Black Americans to call Routt County home, and she was also one of the last living widows of a former American Civil war soldier and enslaved person. Ms. Anderson lived for nearly 60 years in Strawberry Park, farming and running the Rushing Water Inn, and later publishing a personal memoir, lecturing, and writing poetry.

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