



Legislation Text

File #: Res. 2020-031, **Version:** 1

City Council Meeting Date: March 10, 2020

To: Mayor and City Council
City Administrator

From: Beth Kallestad, Program Coordinator

Consider Resolution for Approval of Land Acknowledgement Statement.

Action Requested:

The Northfield City Council is asked to consider adoption of a land acknowledgement statement for use during City functions and events.

Summary Report:

The following summary is provided by the Human Rights Commission. A more detailed document is provided as an attachment.

In 2017, the Northfield Human Rights Commission (HRC) began studying the history of Northfield, particularly as it pertained to Indigenous People in the area. Those studies were so fruitful that the HRC decided to focus on educating the larger community. This process began with the International Day of Peace held Friday, September 21st, 2018.

As interest in the project grew, the Northfield City Council, on Tuesday, October 2, 2018, passed a resolution recognizing the second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day. Since then, Northfield has hosted two Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations, in 2018 and 2019. In January 2019, representatives from both Carleton and St. Olaf colleges invited the HRC to join in the drafting of a Land Acknowledgement Proclamation recognizing both the early and ongoing contributions of the Dakota Nation, and particularly the Wahpekute Band. Through this statement, the city and community pledge their support for purposeful action to include the contributions of Indigenous People in celebrating the history of Northfield.

The statement recommended by the HRC to be approved by the Northfield City Council is:

We stand on the homelands of the Wahpekute Band of the Dakota Nation. We honor with gratitude the people who have stewarded the land throughout the generations and their ongoing contributions to this region.

This statement could be used at ceremonial events on behalf of the City. Carleton and St. Olaf support the adoption of this statement as presented and are currently in the process of affirming the statement on their respective campuses.

The group also adopted a second statement, expanding on the statement above to address injustices in the past by white settlers and the US military. Here is the expanded version.

We stand on the homelands of the Wahpekute Band of the Dakota Nation. We honor with gratitude the people who have stewarded the land throughout the generations and their ongoing contributions to this region. We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota Nation, and we wish to interrupt this legacy, beginning with acts of healing and honest storytelling about this place.

The HRC focus continues to be to increase the cultural competence of all Northfield residents, through public awareness events and programs sharing our rich history. It is impossible to share that history without being confronted with the injustices committed against Indigenous Peoples.

HRC plans to continue to develop actions and events to honor and promote all of Northfield's growing diversity, including the contribution of the community's Indigenous People, past, present, and future.

Alternative Options:

The City Council does not adopt any statement.

Financial Impacts:

Not applicable.

Tentative Timelines:

Not applicable.