CITY OF WEST DES MOINES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING COMMUNICATION

ITEM: Approval of Proclamation
19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration

DATE: January 21, 2020

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

BACKGROUND:

The ratification of the 19th Amendment ensured women could more fully participate in our democracy and fundamentally changed the role of women in the civic life of our nation.

The Metro Des Moines League of Women Voters has requested that the City of West Des Moines approve a proclamation commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.

They will have representatives present at Tuesday's meeting to receive the signed proclamation and have a photo taken with the Mayor and Council.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES (if any): None

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of Proclamation commemorating the 19th Amendment Centennial.

Lead Staff Member: Ryan T. Jacobson, City Clerk RTJ

STAFF REVIEWS

Department Director	Ryan T. Jacobson, City Clerk
Appropriations/Finance	
Legal	
Agenda Acceptance	RTJ

PUBLICATION(S) (if applicable)

Published In	
Dates(s) Published	

SUBCOMMITTEE REVIEW (if applicable)

Committee			
Date Reviewed			
Recommendation	Yes	No	Split

Proclamation
19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration

Whereas, in 1848 people gathered together in Seneca Falls, New York and cited the unfairness of depriving women of the right to vote; and

Whereas, the fight for women's suffrage, from the first women's rights convention to enfranchisement, lasted more than 72 years, with women from all walks of life, political views and demographic backgrounds asking for the right to voice their opinions at the polls; and

Whereas, Iowa women by the thousands advocated for the right to vote and suffragists nationwide turned to public education and persuasion. They held conferences; campaigned; lobbied; marched; pleaded; petitioned; and suffered public opposition, and prison; and

Whereas, suffragists pushed for a single constitutional amendment, granting female suffrage on the federal level, dubbed the Susan B. Anthony Amendment; and

Whereas, Carrie Chapman Catt led the national movement, meeting with President Woodrow Wilson to secure his support for suffrage in light of women's contributions during World War I; and

Whereas, it took male allies to support women in their endeavor to vote, for it was sons, husbands and fathers who ultimately heard the calls of women and the House of Representatives took a historic vote on May 21, 1919 followed by the Senate on June 4, 1919, and three-fourths of the states needed to ratify the 19th Amendment; and

Whereas, Iowa was the 10th state to ratify the 19th Amendment on July 2, 1919 and Tennessee was the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment, making it the law of the land on August 26, 1920 whereby millions of women were enfranchised; and

Whereas, the introduction, passage and ultimate ratification of the 19th Amendment were the culmination of decades of work and struggle by advocates for the rights of women across the United States; and

Whereas, the ratification of the 19th Amendment ensured women could more fully participate in our democracy and fundamentally changed the role of women in the civic life of our Nation; and

Whereas, most of the women who began asking for the right to vote never lived to see the enfranchisement of women.

Whereas, the daughters, granddaughters and great granddaughters of the women who fought so hard to vote have been making their voices heard at the polls for nearly 100 years; and

Whereas, women are running for office in unprecedented numbers, many current politicians, both male and female, remember that they follow in the footsteps of these great suffragists; and

Whereas, the centennial anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment represents a historical milestone to be lauded and celebrated.

Now, Therefore, be it proclaimed, the City of West Des Moines:

1) commemorates the 100th anniversary of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment, providing for women's suffrage, to the Constitution of the United States;
2) honors the role of the ratification of the 19th Amendment in further promoting the core values of our democracy as promised by the Constitution of the United States;
3) reaffirms the opportunity for people in the United States to learn about and commemorate the efforts of the women's suffrage movement and the role of women in our democracy; and
4) reaffirms the desire of the City of West Des Moines citizens to continue strengthening democratic participation and to inspire future generations to cherish and preserve the historic precedent established under the 19th Amendment.

Therefore, citizens of the City of West Des Moines shall enjoy the freedom of voter participation, continue to fight for voting rights for all citizens celebrates this important milestone by proclaiming the calendar year 2020 to be the:

19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration

Signed this 21st day of January, 2020.

ATTEST:

Steven K. Gaer, Mayor

Ryan T. Jacobson, City Clerk