

WHEREAS, on October 12, 1793, 30 lots were auctioned by the University to create a Town, with 72 acres of land on the original map; and

WHEREAS, on the same day, the University laid the cornerstone for its first building, thus linking the Town and University inextricably for the past 226 years; and

WHEREAS, on November 20, 1819, the General Assembly of North Carolina established a government in the Town of Chapel Hill by appointing its first commissioners; and

WHEREAS, on January 29, 1851 Chapel Hill was incorporated by act of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, by 1859 the Town had grown to 820 acres; and

WHEREAS, as the Town changed the local government did as well and in 1869 H.B. Guthrie was appointed the first mayor of Chapel Hill followed, in 1879, by a Charter Amendment which formally established a mayor' position and invested it with police power; and

WHEREAS, in 1886 Wilson Caldwell, a former slave, became the first African American to hold office in Chapel Hill; and

WHEREAS, decisions made by early leaders responded to the needs and values of the community including a 1886 petition for a fire department and an ordinance making it a misdemeanor to cut down a tree which was passed in 1889; and

WHEREAS, in 1895 John H. Watson became the first elected mayor and the modern Mayor/Council structure began to evolve; and

WHEREAS, in 1922 Eddie Knox was hired as Chapel Hill's first Town Manager; and

WHEREAS, in the years between 1900 and 1950, the Town's public services grew with the opening of the Chapel Hill Public School in 1902, laying of pavement along Franklin Street in 1921 and construction of municipal buildings including the Post Office/Courthouse on Franklin Street in 1937, the first Town Hall on Rosemary Street in 1938 and the Hargraves Community Center (Negro Community Center) in 1945; and

WHEREAS, in 1953 Hubert Robinson was elected as the first African American Alderman in Chapel Hill and in 1957 Adelaide Walters became the first woman elected to office in Chapel Hill; and

WHEREAS, in 1958 the Chapel Hill Public Library first opened; and

WHEREAS, in 1969 Howard Lee became the first African-American mayor in Chapel Hill, making him the first African American elected mayor in a predominantly white

southern town which was considered a step forward for the Civil Rights movement in the South because it encouraged others to run for office; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, Mayor Lee brought important changes to Town government by establishing a mayor's office within Town Hall, working with the University to relinquish control over the Town budget and establishing Citizen and Youth Councils to gather input from local stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, under his leadership the Town built a new Town Hall at 405 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, implemented a municipal bus system and garnered HUD money to build public housing; and

WHEREAS, in 1979 the Board of Aldermen was renamed the Chapel Hill Town Council; and

WHEREAS, over the years there have been many other notable firsts on the Council including:

- Gerry Cohen who, in 1973, was the first UNC student elected to Town Council
- Joe Herzenberg, who, in 1987, was the first openly gay elected official in Chapel Hill (and the South)
- Barbara Booth-Powell who, in 1992, was the first African American woman elected to Town Council
- Rosemary Waldorf who, in 1995 was the first woman mayor of Chapel Hill
- Mark Kleinschmidt who, in 2009, was the first openly gay mayor of Chapel Hill
- Maria Unger Palmer who, in 2013, was the first Latina elected to Town Council
- Hongbin Gu who, in 2017, was the first Asian/Chines American elected to Town Council

WHEREAS, decisions made by elected officials over the years have helped create what the Town Chapel Hill has become today and have contributed to the quality of life we all enjoy including:

- 1987 partnership with Orange County and Carrboro which established the rural buffer
- 1979 opening of the Cedar Falls Trail as the start of our greenway system
- 2002 decision to make Chapel Hill Transit system fare-free, and
- 2003 passage of bond funds to expand our public library; and

WHEREAS, over time many decisions have been made to address underlying problems and move us toward being a welcoming, inclusive and diverse community including:

- 1984 decision to observe Martin Luther King Day as a municipal holiday
- 2005 vote to rename Airport Road as Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.
- 2006 naming and subsequent dedication of Peace & Justice Plaza
- 2010 – 2019 adopted policies and committed town resources to achieve affordable housing goals; and

WHEREAS, Chapel Hill is now home to about 60,000 people, and covers an area of 21.3 square miles with 1,200 acres of park, open space and greenway easements including 15 miles of trails and municipal services provided by over 770 employees in 13 departments; and

WHEREAS the Town values and encourages active community engagement in all aspects of the Town with over 16 Advisory Boards and Commissions.

NOW, THEREFORE, we the Chapel Hill Town Council do hereby proclaim November 19, 2019, to be the

200th Birthday of Chapel Hill government

And urge everyone to reflect on our past and to imagine another 200 years of ***Growing Better Together.***