



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND, WA**

**AB 5567
June 4, 2019
Special Business**

PRIDE MONTH PROCLAMATION	Action: Proclaim June 2019 as Pride Month in the City of Mercer Island.	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
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DEPARTMENT OF	City Manager (Ali Spietz)
COUNCIL LIAISON	n/a
EXHIBITS	1. Pride Month Proclamation
2019-2020 CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY	n/a
APPROVED BY CITY MANAGER	

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$	n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$	n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$	n/a

SUMMARY

June is Pride Month, a month to celebrate gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and asexual people, plus all other sexual orientations and genders. Pride Month is celebrated in June in commemoration of the Stonewall Riots, which kicked off the first major demonstrations for gay rights in America. On June 28, 1969 police raided the Stonewall Inn in New York City’s Greenwich Village, but bar patrons — gay men and drag queens — fought back, a spontaneous incident which is now marked as the beginning of the gay rights movement in the United States. Today, Pride Month features marches around the country, educational and awareness events, and parties to celebrate gay pride.

Pride month is also an opportunity to peacefully protest and raise political awareness of current issues facing the community. Pride Month is important because it marks the start of huge change within the LGBTQ+ community, as well as the wider societal implications. Although attitudes and injustice still remain, much has changed since the riots of 1969 and by continuing in this long-standing tradition awareness is raised, the attitudes of society are improved, and inclusiveness is encouraged.

Accepting the proclamation on behalf of the community is Jason Fussell, Mercer Island resident and Secretary for the Pride Foundation, and members of the Mercer Island High School Queer Straight Alliance (QSA) Club: Artemis Kim, Mash Batalov, Maggie Petersen, and Kate Petersen.

Jason Fussell manages the transfer agency functions of US retail mutual funds at Russell Investments. He has extensive experience within the operational team in designing and implementing oversight and controls. In addition, Jason is an active leader in the LGBT diversity and inclusion network at Russell Investments. Jason grew up in the Pacific Northwest and graduated from Portland State University with a degree in Sociology. He has lived in the Seattle area for more than 18 years, and he currently lives in Mercer Island

with his husband, Robert Heuer, and their dog, Indy. Beginning his relationship with Pride Foundation nine years ago as a volunteer, he loves participating in the scholarship review committee, and impacting the future leaders of the LGBTQ community and giving back to the community in a meaningful way.

Senior Artemis Kim and Sophomore Mash Batalov are the President and Vice-President and Freshmen Maggie Petersen and Kate Petersen are members of the QSA Club at the Mercer Island High School. The QSA Club (Queer Straight Alliance) is a student led club at Mercer Island High School. It is a club that is both a safe space for students of any gender or sexuality to come and hang out and a place where students work to promote inclusivity at school. In the past few years the QSA advocated to change graduation robe colors to all maroon, worked with the leadership class to change the homecoming royalty selection process to be more inclusive, led teacher training workshops, met with administration to discuss issues such as bathroom access for all students, and created library displays and posters to celebrate PRIDE month. QSA works to create a culture where all students feel safe at MIHS!

RECOMMENDATION

Assistant to the City Manager

Mayor presents the proclamation and proclaims June 2019 as Pride Month in the City of Mercer Island.



The City of Mercer Island, Washington

Proclamation

WHEREAS, Mercer Island is a welcoming community and an exceptional place to live, learn, work, play, and raise a family; and

WHEREAS, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are our family, friends, neighbors and co-workers who contribute meaningfully to our community; and

WHEREAS, Gay Pride events are held in June to commemorate the June 28, 1969 Stonewall riots, that were sparked in response to ongoing police harassment of New York's gay community, and were also the catalyst for establishing safe places for gays and lesbians to be open about their sexual orientation without fear of being arrested or jailed; and

WHEREAS, the fight for dignity, equality and inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people has been hard-fought in the streets and in the courts of this country; and

WHEREAS, these fights for inclusion have made much progress toward changing the hearts and minds of people in many parts of the world; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that young people in the community, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, feel valued, safe, empowered, and supported by their peers, educators, and community leaders.; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Salim Nice, Deputy Mayor of Mercer Island, do hereby proclaim June 2019 as

PRIDE MONTH

in Mercer Island, Washington, to celebrate gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and asexual people, plus all other sexual orientations and genders, who are members of our community, to recognize their contributions, and to actively promote the principles of equality and liberty.



APPROVED, June 4, 2019

Salim Nice, Deputy Mayor