

TOWN OF PORTSMOUTH, RI
RESOLUTION #2020-12-14

RESOLUTION FOR EARTH DAY 2021 CELEBRATION, AQUIDNECK ISLAND EARTH WEEK

WHEREAS, all species play a unique role in the complex web of life and contribute to the ecosystem services on which all life on Earth depends, and hence, protecting our species is crucial to the survival of this planet and its inhabitants; and

WHEREAS, wild animal populations have declined on average by more than half and the Earth is facing an era of mass extinction; and

WHEREAS, the loss of species is for the most part a result of human activity, including degradation of ecosystems, deforestation, pollution, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, species provide important services to the people, such as generating oxygen and purifying the air; controlling other animals considered pests or that spread disease; pollinating plants and crops; providing recreation opportunities and well-being, etc.; and

WHEREAS, many plants, wild animals, and pollinators live in urbanized landscapes, and cities thereby have a responsibility to examine the ecological impacts of expanding urban areas and how to protect biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, it is understood that sustainability will only be achieved by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations; and

WHEREAS, Aquidneck Island communities are impacted by coastal hazards that are being exacerbated by sea-level rise and climate change; and

WHEREAS, given previous and ongoing events, we now find ourselves in a new era of more unpredictable and severe weather that can potentially cause extensive damage to our community's land and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to expand and diversify the local environmental movement to increase the resiliency of our communities; and

WHEREAS, it is more important than ever to cooperate locally and internationally to build on the environmental progress that has been heretofore gained; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is an annual reminder of the constant need for environmental activism, stewardship commitments, and sustainability efforts; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day was founded in 1970 and celebrated by over 190 countries around the world; and

WHEREAS, representatives from local non-profits, Town committees, schools, and businesses created an extensive public program for Earth Day 2020 (Aquidneck Island Earth Week) that can be revisited with an improved understanding of how to engage safely with community members when social distancing is required due to the coronavirus; and

WHEREAS, Aquidneck Island Earth Week partners, including Middletown's Open Space and Fields Committee and Tree Commission, Newport's Energy and Environment Commission, and Clean Ocean Access, commit to building on the success of Aquidneck Island Earth Week in 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Portsmouth does hereby declare the week of April 17, 2021 to April 24, 2021 Aquidneck Island Earth Week; a celebration of the 51st Anniversary of Earth Day, and supports an island-wide effort to share in the celebration of our interconnectedness with nature, environmental sustainability, and conservation of natural resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council requests the administration to put forth an effort to engage the entire community of Portsmouth and the neighboring communities of Newport and Middletown to join the effort to create Aquidneck Island Earth Week.

Adopted this 14th day of December 2020.

Kevin M. Aguiar
Town Council President

Attested: _____
Jennifer M. West
Town Clerk