



An Official Formal Apology

Presented publicly, and read for the first time anywhere in the history of this City, this official apology is offered by the present City Administration to foster goodwill through the recognition and acknowledgment of a tragic event of 100 years passed. The tragic events that occurred were brought on by a combination of socio-economic and political exploitation of the black community. This was one of the most egregious acts of cowardice and murderous behavior ever engaged in by a civilized society in that century. There will never be any words that can explain away the actions of these men. Nothing can justify such terror.

Today, November 8, 2020, we the elected officials of the City of Ocoee have chosen to invite each of you here to openly, publicly, and sincerely admit, acknowledge, and forever voice our displeasure over the inhumane acts of terror committed against the African American community of Ocoee. Let us be clear and completely candid, those of us gathered here today will forever bear testimony to the efforts of the City of Ocoee, and its citizens to move forward into the future knowing that we are a culturally diverse, modern, community with eyes set on conscious unification.

Our unified hopes are that you will search deep within the consciousness of your hearts and souls in an effort to find the necessary humility to accept in good faith, this sincere and genuinely offered apology on behalf of today's City of Ocoee, for the ungodly deeds of the fore- fathers of the community of Ocoee of 1920. The acts of violence committed against you, and all the African American families of that day were horrible and unforgivable. So, we, today's duly elected officials, do solemnly implore each descendant, collectively and individually to look at the situation as it was then, and as it is now. More realistically, we understand that there are those of you who are still being held emotionally hostage because of the negative deeds committed against your ancestors; but, there is no one living here today that can be held responsible for any acts that were committed by those who lived and acted savagely towards the African American community of 100 Years ago.

Therefore; we, the elected officials of the City of Ocoee, Florida, do hereby and herewith officially extend to each and every member of the community of Ocoee, of 1920, and to each descendant both living today or deceased, our deepest apology for each and every atrocity that was committed against those individuals. We will no longer stand for complacency and put all rumors to rest that the City of Ocoee remains in the past. We fervently vow that such inhumane and insensitive behavior will never again be demonstrated by any elected official or employee of this City, against any human being regardless of their origin, race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, or sexual orientation. Never Again!

Respectfully given under our hands, this 8th Day of November, In the Year of Our Lord, 2020, we have herewith caused our names to be affixed hereto:

Never Again!

Larry Brinson, Sr., District 1

Rusty Johnson, Mayor

Rosemary Wilsen, District 2

Richard Firstner, District 3

Robert D. Frank, City Manager

George Oliver, III, District 4