

PROCLAMATION

Declaring April 19, 2022 to be Astronaut Jessica Watkins Day in Lafayette, Colorado

WHEREAS, Jessica Watkins was born in Gaithersburg, Maryland, but considers Lafayette, Colorado her hometown. Her parents, Michael and Carolyn Watkins, still live here; and

WHEREAS, Jessica Watkins graduated from Fairview High School in Boulder, Colorado, earned a Bachelor of Science in Geological and Environmental Sciences from Stanford University and a Doctorate in Geology from the University of California, Los Angeles, where she studied Mars surface processes and conducted her graduate research on the emplacement mechanisms of large landslides on Mars and Earth; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Watkins served as chief geologist for a NASA analog mission at the Mars Desert Research Station in 2009 and as a science operations team member for a NASA Desert Research and Technology Studies analog mission in 2011. Dr. Watkins also served as an aquanaut crew member in the Aquarius underwater habitat for the 2019 NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operations (NEEMO) 23 Mission; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Watkins was selected by NASA to join the 2017 Astronaut Candidate Class, reporting for duty in August 2017 and completing two years of training as an astronaut candidate; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Watkins, during the two-year period she worked at NASA's Ames Research Center and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, was a science team collaborator for NASA's Mars Science Laboratory rover, Curiosity; and

WHEREAS, her work included participation in daily planning of rover activities, testing of Mars rock physical properties, and multi-scale investigation of the geologic history of Gale crater. While at Caltech, Dr. Watkins also served as a volunteer assistant coach for the Caltech Women's Basketball team; and

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, Vice President Mike Pence named her as one of 18 astronauts to lead the United States in a multibillion-dollar effort called Artemis, to return humans, including the first woman and the first person of color, to the surface of the moon in 2025; and

WHEREAS, the astronauts NASA sent to the moon during the Apollo program were all white men, in recent years the agency has sought to make its astronaut programs more representative of the American population; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, Dr. Guion S. Bluford, Jr. became the first Black American to go to space, and in 1992, Dr. Mae Jemison was the first Black woman to do so; and

WHEREAS, only seven of the 249 people who have boarded the International Space Station since its creation in 2000 are Black; and

WHEREAS, Victor J. Glover, Jr., a Navy commander and test pilot who joined NASA's astronaut corps in 2013, became, in 2020, the first Black crew member in a regular long-duration mission at the station; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Jeanette Epps, a NASA astronaut who was initially set to be the first Black woman to live and work on the space station in 2018, was replaced by another astronaut and remains scheduled for a six-month mission to the International Space Station as part of the first operational astronaut crew to fly Boeing's Starliner Capsule; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Watkins is currently assigned to fly to space for the first time as a Mission Specialist on NASA's SpaceX Crew-4 mission to the International Space Station, scheduled to launch no later than April 19, 2022, for a six-month mission in the microgravity laboratory; and

WHEREAS, becoming an astronaut was something Dr. Watkins had dreamed about since childhood; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Watkins believes that representation is very important in whatever form it takes, and that if you can make a connection with someone who looks like you, has the same background as you, and comes from the same place as you, you can help that person see paths of possibility and realize that their dreams can become a reality; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Watkins hopes other young girls and children of color see what she has accomplished and are inspired to pursue their dreams and never give up; and

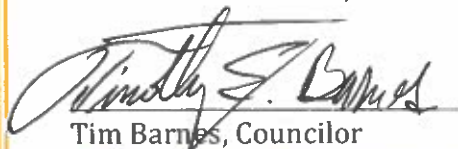
WHEREAS, the City of Lafayette has a strategic priority to be a SAFE, WELCOMING, AND INCLUSIVE community that maintains a sense of small town livability by promoting a diversity of culture, ideas, and neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lafayette is committed to building a community of diversity and inclusiveness through our actions, our words, our activities, and our policies.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Lafayette, Colorado, do hereby declare April 19, 2022, to be **Astronaut Jessica Watkins Day** and encourage all residents to support and recognize our diverse and inclusive community where everyone can feel safe and be inspired to reach for their dreams.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 5th DAY OF APRIL, 2022.

CITY OF LAFAYETTE, COLORADO

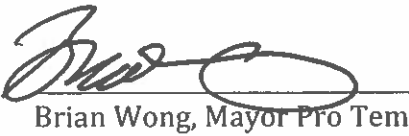

Tim Barnes, Councilor


Nicole Samson, Councilor


Jaideep Mangat, Mayor


Tonya Briggs, Councilor


Stephanie Walton, Councilor


Brian Wong, Mayor Pro Tem


Enihs Medrano, Councilor

ATTEST:

Lynnette Beck, City Clerk