

As one of the duties of the Equity and Human Relations Commission is to hear and address concerns regarding racial equity and advise the Long Beach City Council, we have written this letter. In keeping with the city's "Framework for Reconciliation," the Equity and Human Relations Commission supports The Change the Name Coalition's request for a new name and removal of Lincoln based art in the park on Pacific and Ocean Boulevard.

Should the Council agree and the Parks and Recreation Commission approve, we recommend that the new name and any art installations be discussed in consultation with the Native Americans of the land on which we live, the Tongva people.

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 the Equity and Human Relations Commission received and filed a presentation from the Change the Name Coalition. Members of the coalition presented their position, calling for a name change of the newly reopened Lincoln Park as well as removal of the statue of Abraham Lincoln and a 13 foot penny sculpture.

The Change the Name Coalition presented three historic events in support of their request that the park should be named for someone other than Mr. Lincoln.

- The hanging of 38 Dakota men in December 1862, reportedly the largest mass execution in U.S. history.
- The "Long Walk," in which 8,000 Navajo people were forcibly marched 450 miles in 1863, resulting in more than 2,000 deaths.
- The 1864 Sand Creek Massacre in Colorado, in which American soldiers killed "around 230 Cheyenne and Arapaho people composed mostly of women, children, and the elderly," according to the National Park Service.

"This history is not taught in schools," coalition and Dakota Tribe member George Funmaker told the commission. While books, films and lore may see Abe Lincoln as a hero, many Native Americans see him as villain. He added, he would not take his sons to this park as the namesake of Mr. Lincoln had put forth orders against Native Americans.

Stephanie Mushrush, coalition member and enrolled tribal member of the Washoe Tribe, said this history constitutes "historical trauma," leading to generations of health and psychological problems for Native Americans. She pointed out that, this tribute conceals the facts of an American genocide.

The Equity and Human Relations Commission also heard from the Park Director, Brent Dennis who had previously met with the coalition members. As he advised, a name change would be up to the City Council and the Park's and Recreation Committee would need to approve it.

With the expanding understanding of our history. the City of Long Beach has this opportunity to demonstrate respect for the Tongva People. The Equity and Human Relations Commission is proud to contribute to this evolution. Future generations will know about the land and the people who came before them.