

**PROCLAMATION
OF THE
SEMINOLE COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PROCLAIMING 2026 AS
A YEAR OF CELEBRATION
IN HONOR OF THE
250TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
IN SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

WHEREAS, July 4, 2026, marks the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, a defining moment in human history, which proclaimed America's independence from Great Britain and King George III, an act that profoundly changed not only the course of America's history, but the history of the world; and

WHEREAS, the 14th and 15th British Colonies of East Florida (with its capital at St. Augustine) and West Florida (with its capital at Pensacola) were created in 1763 with the passage of the Proclamation of 1763 by the British Crown and are often omitted from the traditional narrative the American Revolution and Seminole County is located in what was known as East Florida; and

WHEREAS, the British Crown ordered German surveyor and cartographer John William Gerard de Brahm to survey its holdings in East Florida upon its acquisition from the Spanish in 1763, and de Brahm traveled along the St. John's River into what is now Seminole County and likely became one of the first Europeans to visit this area, and in 1765 subsequently created a map known as "the Map of East Florida, East of the 82nd degree of Longitude from the Meridian of London ... Surveyed by William Gerard de Brahm, Surveyor General for the Southern District of North America. In two parts" that represents the earliest known surveyed map of portions of what would become Seminole County; and

WHEREAS, the British Crown granted land allotments to individuals such as Dr. William Stork (1000 acres), Sir Alexander Grant (20,000 acres), John Beresford (20,000 acres), Captain Samuel Barrington (20,000 acres), Captain John Jervis (20,000 acres) and William Henry Ricketts, Esq. (20,000 acres) around Lake Grant (modern day Lake Monroe), Lake Beresford (modern day Lake Jesup), and the Upper Lake (modern day Lake Harney) and these people became some of the first surveyed land owners in what would become the cities of Winter Springs, Oviedo, and the village of Geneva in Seminole County demonstrating Seminole County's ties to the eighteenth century in a way heretofore unknown; and

WHEREAS, Seminole County, Florida, joins communities across our state and nation in recognizing the importance of this milestone and in reaffirming our shared commitment to the ideals and values that continue to unite us as Americans; and

WHEREAS, the year 2026 offers an opportunity for all Americans to reflect upon and celebrate the enduring principles of freedom, democracy, and self-government that have guided our nation since its founding in 1776; and

WHEREAS, the United States Semiquincentennial provides a historic occasion to honor the vision, courage, and sacrifices of the patriots who secured our independence, as well as the generations that have since worked to expand and protect the blessings of liberty for all; and

WHEREAS, the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners encourages residents, schools, businesses, civic organizations, and cultural institutions to participate in activities and programs throughout the year that celebrate our nation's history, honor those who have served to defend its principles, and inspire future generations to uphold the promise of freedom and equality;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners, hereby designate the year 2026 as a Year of Celebration in Honor of the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the United States of America with pride, gratitude, and unity.

ADOPTED this 27th day of January 2026

**ANDRIA HERR, CHAIRMAN SEMINOLE COUNTY, BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**