

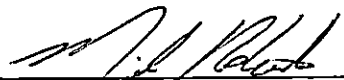
**ORDER: APPROVE REQUEST TO PLACE LYNCHING MEMORIAL ON THE
COURTHOUSE LAWN**

Motion was made by David Rikard, duly seconded by Brent Larson, to approve request to place lynching memorial on the Courthouse lawn.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

Supervisor Brent Larson, voted yes
Supervisor Larry Gillespie, voted yes
Supervisor David Rikard, voted yes
Supervisor Chad McLarty, voted yes
Supervisor Mike Roberts, voted yes

After the vote, President Roberts, declared the motion carried, this the 19th day of January, 2021.



Mike Roberts, President
Board of Supervisors



Sherry Walker, Chancery Clerk

Lynching in Lafayette County

For decades, African American men were lynched by white mobs in Lafayette County. Most of these men were lynched because of interactions with white women which were characterized as "inappropriate" or "assaults." These allegations against Black people were rarely subject to serious scrutiny. Instead, mobs frequently pulled lynching victims from jails, often facing little to no resistance from law enforcement officers who were legally required to protect them. On July 12, 1885, a white mob kidnapped Harris Tunstal from jail and hanged him behind the Methodist Episcopal Church near the Oxford square. On November 13, 1890, a mob interrupted Will Gregory's trial in front of a magistrate and shot him to death before hanging his body near Orwood. A mob hanged an unknown Black man on September 2, 1891 after kidnapping him from the Oxford jail. Less than two years later, on July 30, 1893, a mob lynched Will Steen near Paris because of rumors that he was boasting about an affair with a white woman. On June 19, 1895, a white mob shot William Chandler and hanged him from a telegraph pole across from the depot in Abbeville. On September 8, 1908, Lawson Patton, a jail trustee accused of the murder of a white woman, was fatally shot in his cell and hanged on the grounds of the Lafayette County Courthouse. No one was ever held accountable for these lynchings.

The Equal Justice Initiative 2020

Lynching in America

Thousands of African Americans were victims of racial terror lynching in the United States between 1877 and 1950. During this era, racial terror lynching emerged as a stunning form of violent resistance to emancipation and equal rights for African Americans, intended to intimidate Black people and enforce racial hierarchy and segregation. After the collapse of Reconstruction, violent resistance to equal rights for African Americans and an ideology of white supremacy led to fatal violence against Black men, women and children accused of violating social customs, engaging in interracial relationships, or committing crimes. Lynchings in Lafayette County continued well into the twentieth century. On September 17, 1935, Elwood Higginbottom was on trial for the alleged murder of a white farmer when he was dragged from jail and hanged by a mob of white men about a mile and a half north of the Oxford square. Although the perpetrators of this violence and other acts of racial terror lynchings were often known to law enforcement, white mobs were usually allowed to act with impunity without fear of any legal repercussions. Many names of those whose lives were claimed by these acts of violence were not recorded and will never be known, but over 650 racial terror lynchings have been documented in Mississippi alone, at least seven having taken place in Lafayette County.

The Equal Justice Initiative 2020