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**Trustees**  
of the Freeholders and Commonalty of the  
**Town of East Hampton**

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***Resolution #2023-29***

***Resolution to Change the Name of the Captain William J. Rysam Scholarship Fund***

The following resolution was offered by David Cataletto and seconded by Susan McGraw-Keber and adopted:

**WHEREAS**, the Trustees of the Freeholders and Commonalty of the Town of East Hampton (hereinafter referred to as “the Trustees”) wish to change the name of The Captain William J. Rysam Scholarship Fund to “The East Hampton Town Trustees Scholarship Fund”, effective immediately for 2023, and

**WHEREAS**, the Trustees have received the application from the East Hampton High School Guidance and Counseling department for the school’s annual Awards Scholarship Night, describing the requirements for student applications that are specific to the Trustees, a vote by this board of Trustees is necessary to make the proposed change of name of the scholarship; and

**WHEREAS**, after research and consultation with Dr. Georgette Grier-Key, the Executive Director and Chief Curator of Eastville Community Historical Society in Sag Harbor, whose “mission is to preserve historic buildings and research, collect and disseminate information about the history of the Eastville area of Sag Harbor, Long Island, New York, County of Suffolk, State of New York, and one of the earliest known working-class communities composed of African Americans, Native Americans, and European immigrants, and David Rattray, editor-in-chief of The East Hampton Star and Donnamarie Barnes, co-founders of “In Plain Sight Project” an on-going and in-depth study of slavery on Long Island and within our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Education Committee members have ascertained and learned that Captain William J. Rysam was not only a slave owner, which was legal at the time, but that his shipping business brought people from the West Indies to Long Island / Sag Harbor to be sold and traded as slaves; and

**WHEREAS**, the Education Committee members have concluded that the current namesake of the Trustee’s scholarship fund, Captain William J. Rysam, is neither relevant nor reflective of the intended purpose of the scholarship as the original benefactor’s donation of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) to be provided for the education of East Hampton’s “poor children” as Rysam considered them to be, and his donation cannot be historically accounted for as to recipients or expenditures associated with the funds. Most profoundly, the Education Committee members do not believe it is in the interest of our community to continue to herald the name of one who engaged in the sale and trade of human beings for the purpose of slavery; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Trustees hereby agree to change the name of The Captain William J. Rysam Scholarship fund to The East Hampton Town Trustees Scholarship Fund effective January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**Vote: Passed and adopted.**