



**Resolution of Recognition
in honor of the
50th Anniversary of the Virginia Living Museum**

WHEREAS, the Virginia Living Museum will begin a year-long celebration of its 50th Anniversary in September 2015, of providing outstanding service to the City of Newport News and will soon be welcoming their 8 millionth visitor; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Living Museum, then known as the Junior Nature Museum and Planetarium, was established in 1966, as a result of the combined efforts of the Junior League of Hampton Roads and the Warwick Rotary Club; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, the museum was renamed the Peninsula Nature and Science Center, and expanded to include exhibits focusing on physical and applied sciences, in addition to the natural sciences; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, Governor Gerald L. Baliles opened the newly renamed Virginia Living Museum, "becoming the first living museum east of the Mississippi, combining elements of a native wildlife park, science museum, aquarium, botanical preserve and planetarium"; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Living Museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and the American Alliance of Museums, and is a Virginia Green certified attraction; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, the Virginia Living Museum's Red Wolf Exhibit opened becoming the first permanent display of red wolves in Virginia and the first time the museum exhibited animals belonging to a federal Species Survival Plan; and

WHEREAS, the beginning of the 21st century has been a period of continued growth, debt elimination, and expansion for the museum, evidenced by the opening of a new 62,000 square foot exhibition building, along with an elevated boardwalk, the Abbitt Planetarium and Observatory, the Holt Native Plant Conservatory and Teaching Gardens, the Wason Amphitheater, and other additions; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Living Museum's mission statement is "Connecting people to nature through educational experiences that promote conservation." It is governed by a Board of Trustees, employs a dedicated staff, and has an active corps of over 500 volunteers; and

WHEREAS, each year more than 40,000 students receive K-12 education museum programs recognized by the National Science Foundation and the Virginia Department of Education for promoting achievement in science; and

WHEREAS, the Council for the City of Newport News wishes to recognize the Virginia Living Museum on the 50th Anniversary of its founding, and acknowledges the many leaders, employees, and volunteers who have supported the museum in its commitment to provide exceptional and selfless service to the citizens of the City of Newport News.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Newport News, Virginia:

- 1. That it hereby recognizes and congratulates the Virginia Living Museum on its 50th Anniversary in the City of Newport News.*
- 2. That it congratulates the leaders, employees, and volunteers of the Virginia Living Museum for their dedicated service to the citizens of Newport News, and extends its best wishes for continued success and development in the City of Newport News.*
- 3. That a copy of this resolution be spread upon the records of this body and that a copy be presented to the Virginia Living Museum.*
- 4. That this resolution shall be in effect on and after the date of its adoption, August 11, 2015.*



Attest:

Mabel Washington Jenkins
Mabel Washington Jenkins, MMC, City Clerk

McKinley L. Price, DDS, Mayor

Robert S. Coleman, Vice Mayor

Herbert H. Bateman, Jr., Member of Council

Sandra N. Cherry, D. Min., Member of Council

Sharon P. Scott, Member of Council

Tina L. Vick, Member of Council

Dr. Patricia P. Woodbury, Member of Council