

BY: M. of A. Wallace

COMMEMORATING the 175th Anniversary of the Village
of Lancaster, New York

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to honor and commemorate the distinguished histories of the communities which comprise the noble body of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the Village of Lancaster, New York; this momentous occasion will be celebrated with a myriad of events throughout the year, and kicked off with a Demi-Semi Formal on Monday, January 1, 2024, at the Lancaster Opera House; and

WHEREAS, The third oldest village in Erie County, the Village of Lancaster is a lovely community 14 miles east of the City of Buffalo, and dates back to the early 1800s; it was part of the Holland Land Company holdings which were surveyed by Joseph Ellicott and his crew, and was once part of Clarence, its neighbor to the north; and

WHEREAS, Early settlers came to the Village of Lancaster from Connecticut, and were veterans of the Revolutionary War; some of the names of these early pioneers and settlers were Bissel, Clark, Blackmen, and Peckham; and

WHEREAS, In 1897, the iconic Lancaster Town Hall opened as a lovely red brick and Medina sandstone three-story structure; it is the quintessential focal point of the Lancaster downtown area; during this time, there were two jail cells in the basement, and the Lancaster library occupied space in the building from 1896-1941; today, the first floor basement of the building and an addition on the back are used for the town offices; and

WHEREAS, The Lancaster Opera House occupies the third floor of the Town Hall; when it first opened, it was a place where social and political activities took place within the community, including high school graduations, traveling vaudeville shows, recitals, dances, and parties; and

WHEREAS, The Opera House was also an important part of the civic community, engaging in several important local and regional projects, and was the headquarters of the Works Project Administration during the Great Depression; and

WHEREAS, The Opera House also warehoused civilian defense supplies; parachutes were manufactured in Lancaster, brought to the Opera House, and folded there by volunteers during World War II; and

WHEREAS, For a period of approximately 30 years after World War II, the Opera House was unused and neglected; restoration of this historical

building commenced in 1976 as a Bicentennial project, and reopened on September 20, 1981; today, the Opera House is an enjoyable 326-seat performing Arts and Community Center; and

WHEREAS, Across Central Avenue to the west of the Town Hall main entrance is West Main Street; this was the original thoroughfare that went through the town; the post office was originally located on this road when the town was called "Cayuga Creek"; during this time, Buffalo was known as "Buffalo Creek"; West Main Street connected to Water Street (now named Aurora Street) which connected to what is now Broadway; during the 1800s, this road connected the villages of Buffalo Creek (Buffalo) and Cayuga Creek (Lancaster) and continued eastward towards Batavia; and

WHEREAS, Today, the residents of the Village of Lancaster have a bright outlook for the future of their community, which remains a beautiful place in which to live and raise a family; and

WHEREAS, Of historic origin, and remaining fruitful over the ebb and flow of decades of growth and change, the Village of Lancaster continues to provide the quintessential quality of life for its residents; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the Village of Lancaster's rich history and enduring contribution to the State of New York, this Legislative Body is proud to pay tribute to this spirited town upon the occasion of its 175th Anniversary; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the Village of Lancaster, New York, recognizing the significance of the role it continues to play in the life of the community of the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Village of Lancaster, New York.