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**MEMO**

TO: County Commission

FROM: Robert W. Wilson

Date: April 15, 2025

Subject: 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of first airing of Lawrence Welk Show

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Several months ago Mr. Scott Wheeler of Tallahassee, FL contacted the Administration Office requesting consideration that the Commission issuing a proclamation recognizing the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first airing of the Lawrence Welk Show.

Mr. Wheeler provided examples that he has taken this on as a serious endeavor and made similar requests of jurisdictions across the upper Midwest in the hopes of seeing a historic slice of Americana recognized on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the show's debut approaches on July 2, 1955.

Welk, a native of Strasburg, North Dakota was inducted into the Roughrider Hall of Fame in 1961 and received an honorary degree from NDSU in 1965. His birthplace is now owned by the State of North Dakota and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Mr. Wheeler's efforts to draw attention to the show's anniversary have been recognized by the NDSU Division of Performing Arts, NDSU Agriculture, the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Orchestra and former Minnesota Congressman Collin Peterson.

**Motion: Proclaim July 2, 2025 Lawrence Welk Day in Cass County and recognize the day as the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Lawrence Welk Show.**



## **RESOLUTION #2025-04**

**WHEREAS**, July 2nd, 1955, will mark the 70th Anniversary of the national debut of "The Lawrence Welk Show" on television; a show which was aimed at family friendly variety in acts and music which spanned numerous genres such as Country, Jazz, Pop, Polka, and Patriotic.

**WHEREAS**, Lawrence Welk, a native of Strasburg, North Dakota took to the national stage values and love for music that started like crops in North Dakota soil and the harvest benefited generations of Americans during times of war and peace, prosperity and difficulty.

**WHEREAS**, in North Dakota he was recognized in his lifetime such as being inducted into the Rough Rider Hall of Fame in 1961, awarded an honorary degree by North Dakota State University in 1965. Later, his birthplace, the Ludwig and Christina Welk Homestead where he lived until he was 21 was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is today open to the public, and owned by the State of North Dakota.

**WHEREAS**, many North Dakotans are of full or partial German and/or Norwegian descent, it is noteworthy that Lawrence Welk was of German (German Russian) heritage, and Myron Floren originally from Webster, South Dakota was the son of immigrants from Norway and was himself inducted into the Scandinavian American Hall of Fame in Minot, North Dakota in 1984. Their success stories are among the examples of how far Americans from anywhere in America can go with hard work and perseverance.

**WHEREAS**, "The Lawrence Welk Show" is still aired regularly across America in a number of states including North Dakota (on Sunday evenings in North Dakota) more than 40 years after its last episode, and more than 30 years after his passing.

**WHEREAS**, his aim at family friendly entertainment is an example of a worthy goal in any generation as is the idea of bringing together quality from the past and present, and worth of all corners of North Dakota to come together to celebrate.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, The Cass County Commission hereby proclaims July 2, 2025, Lawrence Welk Day and a day to honor "The Lawrence Welk Show" in Cass County, North Dakota.

Signed,

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Tony Grindberg, Cass County Commission Chairman