



# *Proclamation*

**WHEREAS,** World Polio Day is observed annually on October 24th to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis, a highly infectious disease that primarily affects children under the age of five and can cause paralysis and sometimes death, and can lead to lifelong effects in the form of post-polio syndrome; and

**WHEREAS,** on this World Polio Day, we honor the dedication and efforts of healthcare workers, volunteers, and organizations who strive to eliminate this disease, improve global health, and protect the children of the world, and we recognize that Gastonia was at the heart of providing care and rehabilitation at the NC Orthopedic Hospital for children who were affected by polio, especially during polio epidemics in the 1940s and '50s; and

**WHEREAS,** polio cases have been reduced by over 99.9% since 1988, more than 1.5 million lives have been saved, and more than 19 million people are able to walk who may otherwise have been paralyzed, thanks to extensive vaccination and monitoring efforts, led by Rotary International, the World Health Organization, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF, the Gates Foundation, and GAVI (the Global Vaccine Alliance), who together comprise the Global Polio Eradication Initiative; and

**WHEREAS,** wild poliovirus is now endemic in only two countries (Afghanistan and Pakistan), yet remains a threat to re-emerge anywhere until it is fully eradicated everywhere. Therefore, continued vigilance and immunization are essential to ensure that polio does not return to polio-free areas; once accomplished, the worldwide eradication of polio will prevent an estimated 10 million cases of paralysis in children over the next 40 years and will save over \$40 billion in healthcare costs; and

**WHEREAS,** we celebrate the commitment of local Rotarians and Rotary clubs in our community who have consistently been leaders in supporting polio eradication since Rotary's as part of Rotary International, with more than 1.4 members and 46,000 clubs who unite and take action to create lasting change in communities around the world, inspired by the motto of "Service Above Self"; and

**WHEREAS,** the global effort to eradicate polio has been one of the world's most successful public health initiatives. The commitment to eradicating polio is a testament to what can be achieved when communities, governments, and organizations around the world work together toward a common goal.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** I, Richard Franks, Mayor of the City of Gastonia and the City Council of the City of Gastonia, proclaim **October 24th, 2024** as **World Polio Day** in Gastonia, North Carolina and celebrate the role of local Rotary clubs toward the goal of ending polio forever. I encourage all citizens to recognize our local history and the importance of supporting efforts to eradicate polio globally.

**IN WITNESS THEREOF,** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Gastonia to be affixed, this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-four.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Franks, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Suzanne J. Gibbs, City Clerk