



PROCLAMATION

Honoring the 150th Anniversary of the Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station in Rodanthe and Declaring October 2024 as Life-Saving Service Commemoration Month

WHEREAS, during the late 1700s and early 1800s, an increase in maritime trade resulted in the greater possibility of near-shore shipwrecks occurring along the East Coast of the United States; AND

WHEREAS, at that time, large sections of the Eastern Seaboard were sparsely populated, leaving sailors with little hope of being rescued should their ship begin to sink—and a very small chance of survival if they made it to shore due to the isolated nature of the beaches; AND

WHEREAS, in 1848 the foundation for the future United States Life-Saving Service was laid when the United States government provided a New Jersey congressman with funding to provide life-saving services in this state; AND

WHEREAS, increasing maritime activity subsequently resulted in a greater loss of lives and vessels along the Eastern Seaboard, and dramatic events involving these losses demonstrated the need for a formal life-saving service to be established; AND

WHEREAS, on April 20, 1871, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$200,000 in funding for life-saving purposes, and that same year, a network of existing volunteer life-saving stations along the East Coast were formally organized as a separate agency of the U.S. Department of Treasury, resulting in the official establishment of the United States Life-Saving Service; AND

WHEREAS, by 1874, funds were appropriated to begin building seven life-saving stations along the coast of North Carolina, the first of which to be completed was the Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station in Rodanthe, which was commissioned on December 4, 1874; AND

WHEREAS, construction of all seven life-saving stations—Chicamacomico, Jones Hill, Caffey's Inlet, Kitty Hawk, Nags Head, Oregon Inlet and Little Kinnakeet—was completed by October 1874; AND

WHEREAS, a series of additional stations continued to be constructed from the North Carolina/Virginia state line to northern border of South Carolina, eventually totaling 29 stations that were located an average of six miles apart from one another; AND

WHEREAS, over the course of its 44 years in operation before it was merged with the Revenue Cutter Service and became the United States Coast Guard, the United States Life-Saving Service responded to 28,121 vessels—and of the 178,741 lives that were in peril at sea, crew members successfully saved a record number of 177,286 lives; AND

WHEREAS, we note that October 2024 is the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the United States Life-Saving Service to the coast of North Carolina; AND

WHEREAS, we reflect upon the rich heritage of the men and women of Nags Head and Dare County who sacrificed comfort and risked their own personal safety to save the lives of strangers in danger at sea; AND

WHEREAS, we acknowledge the tireless work that continues to preserve the heritage, stories, and legacies of the United States Life-Saving Service in North Carolina, ensuring that the heroism of these men is never forgotten;

WE, THE TOWN OF NAGS HEAD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, do hereby recognize and celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station in Rodanthe and also proclaim October 2024 as "Life-Saving Service Commemoration Month" in Nags Head in honor of those who so bravely served in the United States Life-Saving Service along our shoreline.

This the 7th day of August 2024.

Benjamin Cahoon, Mayor
Town of Nags Head

ATTEST:

Carolyn F. Morris, Town Clerk