

BY THE COMMON COUNCIL

Resolution recognizing the Violent Femmes on behalf of the City of Milwaukee and congratulating the band on the 30th anniversary of their platinum-selling self-titled album.

WHEREAS,

THE VIOLENT FEMMES

have entertained audiences across the U.S. and the world for more than 32 years, celebrated the 30th anniversary of the release of their platinum-selling self-titled album in 2013 and returned to their hometown of Milwaukee to headline the opening night of Summerfest on June 26, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Natives to the Milwaukee area and active in a variety of individual musical pursuits, the Violent Femmes coalesced into a band in 1981, as bassist Brian Ritchie was introduced to percussionist Victor DeLorenzo at the Harp Irish Pub, and Ritchie was later introduced to guitarist and songwriter Gordon Gano, who was still a student at Rufus King High School at the time; and

WHEREAS, Gano wrote a number of what would become the band's best-known songs while he was still a student at Rufus King, and invited Ritchie to play with him at his National Honor Society induction for their first show together—but when they diverted from the expected playlist into a rendition of "Gimme the Car," the implied obscenities in the song caused students to break into an impromptu "riot," resulting in Gano's expulsion from the National Honor Society; and

WHEREAS, Following their rejection at an audition for a Milwaukee nightclub gig, the Violent Femmes set up to play on the street outside a Pretenders concert at the Oriental Theatre, and while they busked outside the venue, they were approached by frontwoman Chrissie Hynde, who invited them to open for the Pretenders—the big break that led to the Violent Femmes' first record deal; and

WHEREAS, Featuring many of their most well-known songs, including "Blister in the Sun," "Kiss Off," "Add It Up" and "Gone Daddy Gone," Violent Femmes was released in April 1983, grew in popularity and became the band's best-selling album, the first and only album in Billboard history to enter the charts as a platinum album eight years after its release; and

WHEREAS, Following up their initial success with albums like Hallowed Ground, The Blind Leading the Naked, 3, Why Do Birds Sing?, New Times, Rock!!!! and Freak Magnet, the Violent Femmes released 15 singles and sold more than nine million albums through 2005, entertaining live audiences in more than 30 countries; and

WHEREAS, In an exhibit at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland that showcased famous drummers' sticks, the Violent Femmes' DeLorenzo was represented by the only pair of brushes in the display; and

WHEREAS, Their reciprocal affection for the people and City of Milwaukee evident to all those in attendance, the Violent Femmes returned to their hometown to headline the opening night of Summerfest on June 26, 2013, inviting numerous friends and family members, including the Horns of Dilemma, to accompany them in various songs and delivering a critically-acclaimed performance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee herewith recognizes the Violent Femmes, congratulates the band on the 30th anniversary of their platinum-selling self-titled album and, on behalf of the citizens of Milwaukee, wishes members of the Violent Femmes success and happiness in all their future endeavors; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Violent Femmes.

Introduced and approved on July 2, 2013 by all members of the Milwaukee Common Council: Nik Kovac, Ashanti Hamilton, Joe Davis, Sr., Robert Bauman, Jim Bohl, Milele A. Coggs, Willie C. Wade, Robert G. Donovan, Robert W. Puente, Michael J. Murphy, Joe Dudzik, José G. Pérez,, Terry L. Witkowski, Tony Zielinski, and Willie L. Hines, Jr.