

A Resolution



adopted by *The City Council*
of the *City of Chicago, Illinois*

TRIBUTE TO NORBERT TATRO

WHEREAS on August 26, 2023, at the age of 80, Norbert Tatro, a distinguished television news producer and writer, whose remarkable career spanning more than a quarter century, passed away after suffering a stroke. He left an indelible mark on the world of journalism and his enduring impact touched the lives of all fortunate enough to have known him; and

WHEREAS Norbert Tatro started his remarkable life's journey in Milwaukee. He started his lifelong career after earning a Bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism from the University of Iowa in 1964, and attaining a Master's degree in broadcast journalism from Northwestern University's prestigious Medill School of Journalism in the following year. Norb, as he was affectionately known, began at a television station in his hometown of Milwaukee before his tenure as a producer at WBBM-TV, the CBS outlet in this city. By 1968, his competence and dedication led to co-producing the station's 10 p.m. newscast, marking the outset of his outstanding career in the television industry. Norb briefly returned to Milwaukee before joining the staff of WMAQ-TV, the NBC affiliate in Chicago; and

WHEREAS Norb's unruffled and focused demeanor displayed in the frenetic pace of a big-city newsroom endeared him to his colleagues. This exceptional calmness in the face of fast-paced news production was fondly remembered by former WMAQ-TV reporter Barry Bernson, who epitomized him as the one who guided and supported his fellow journalists through multiple challenges with wisdom and grace. His tenure at WMAQ-TV in Chicago encompassed a broad spectrum of news stories. In 1977, he was an integral part of a team that earned a local Emmy for their coverage of a breaking news story involving a hostage situation during a South Side currency exchange robbery. Rich Samuels, a former reporter for WMAQ-TV and for the PBS Chicago outlet WTTW, lauded Norb as one of the most competent, dedicated, and even-tempered journalists he had the privilege to work alongside, a testament to Norb's ability to bring out the best in his colleagues despite the pressures of deadlines and limited resources; and

WHEREAS, by 1981, Norb extended his journalistic horizons by joining the Chicago bureau of NBC News, where he covered an expansive 11-state territory for the "NBC Nightly News" and the "Today" show. His unwavering dedication to his craft took him to locations as distant as Argentina during the Falkland Islands conflict. However, the work that Norb found most meaningful involved highlighting the struggles of auto plant workers and Midwestern farmers during the farm crisis of the 1980s. His dedication was recognized with a national news and documentary Emmy award in 1985 for his outstanding contributions to the "NBC Nightly News". In the late 1980s, Norb returned to Chicago's local NBC news operation, where he was known for his straightforward and no-nonsense approach to journalism, delivering the essential facts with precision and clarity; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement from NBC in 1997, Norb Tatro embarked on a new chapter in his life as an educator, imparting his knowledge and experience to future generations. He taught journalism at Truman State University in Missouri and at Roosevelt University in Chicago, influencing and inspiring the next wave of journalists; and

WHEREAS, an avid skier and runner, Norb accomplished numerous runs in the Boston Marathon during the 1980s and 1990s, exemplifying his enduring spirit. In the spirit of giving back, Norb established a \$5,000-a-year scholarship at Mason City High School, designed to support students interested in pursuing college coursework in music or journalism, a testament to his dedication to the next generation; and

WHEREAS the Honorable Bennett R. Lawson, Alderman of the 44th Ward, has informed this august body about this iconic figure of Chicago journalism who is survived by his wife of 27 years, Elaine Feldman; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the mayor and members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered this 1st Day of November 2023, do hereby extend our sincerest sympathies to Norbert Tatro's wife, his colleagues, and the many friends whose lives he touched.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to Elaine Feldman.

BENNETT R. LAWSON
Alderman – 44th Ward