

1 Introduced by Council Members Gaffney and Morgan:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2021-768**

5 A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND MOURNING
6 THE PASSING OF CLARA MCLAUGHLIN; EMERGENCY
7 PASSAGE UPON INTRODUCTION; PROVIDING AN
8 EFFECTIVE DATE.
9

10 **WHEREAS**, Clara McLaughlin was born in Brunswick, Georgia and
11 grew up in Gainesville, Florida. Clara's love for journalism began
12 in her childhood, and while at Lincoln High School she wrote,
13 produced, and distributed the school's only student newsletter. After
14 high school, Ms. McLaughlin attended the Hampton Institute in
15 Virginia, but left to join the Navy as a WAVE and was a yeoman and
16 organist for the Navy Chapel; and

17 **WHEREAS**, after an honorable discharge, Clara McLaughlin used her
18 GI Bill funds to help pay for the rest of her education. Ms. McLaughlin
19 chose Howard University in Washington, D.C. to fulfill her quest to
20 pursue journalism in college, only to find that there was no
21 journalism major at Howard. Undaunted by this obstacle, she initiated
22 the journalism major there, and then graduated with honors with a
23 journalism degree and was one of the founders of the National Black
24 Communications Society. With her leadership and skills, Howard
25 University became the first HBCU to win the All-American Award for a
26 student publication; and

27 **WHEREAS**, in 1976 Clara McLaughlin authored *The Black Parents*
28 *Handbook*, the first book written specifically for black mothers and
29 fathers that covered every aspect of parenthood. In 1979, she felt
30 disdain for how television depicted females of color, so Ms.
31 McLaughlin applied for and was awarded an FCC license, purchased

1 KLMG-TV in Texas, and became the first African American woman to own
2 a television station in the United States; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in 2002 Ms. McLaughlin purchased *The Florida Star*
4 newspaper, Jacksonville's oldest and the widest read African American
5 newspaper in Northeast Florida. Under Clara's leadership *The Florida*
6 *Star* maintained its reputation for journalistic excellence and grew
7 its circulation substantially over the years while being run like
8 family business with a dedicated staff of less than ten. One of Ms.
9 McLaughlin's essential goals with *The Florida Star* was to tell the
10 untold community stories of African Americans in Florida. This year
11 they celebrated the paper's 70th anniversary; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Clara McLaughlin was a host for a weekly radio talk
13 show, and a key figure in numerous civic and community organizations,
14 including MAD DADS, the RealSense Prosperity Campaign, Jacksonville
15 Women's Network, and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority. Ms. McLaughlin was
16 honored for her leadership and service on countless occasions and had
17 the opportunity to share lunch with President Reagan, and meet
18 Presidents Obama, Clinton, and Bush. Clara was recognized with the
19 Distinguished Alumni Award from Howard University, SCLC's national
20 Drum Major for Justice Award, and the U.S. Female Entrepreneur of the
21 year. Houston, Texas honored her twice with a "Clara McLaughlin Day",
22 and Clara received the Diversity Award from the Jacksonville Business
23 Journal and received the 'Key to the city of Jacksonville' in 2015;
24 and

25 **WHEREAS**, Clara McLaughlin was known as a trailblazer, a pioneer,
26 and as one who shattered glass ceilings. She was the first to
27 accomplish so many milestones: the first to write a book for black
28 parents on childcare, the first African American woman to become the
29 CEO of a network-affiliated television station in Texas, and the
30 first African American woman to own a newspaper in Florida. Clara was
31 also a loving mother, a devoted friend, a role model to many, and a

1 pillar of our Jacksonville community. Sadly Clara McLaughlin passed
2 away this week, but the impact she made upon those who knew her will
3 carry on, and her lifetime of achievements will always be treasured
4 and remembered; now therefore

5 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

6 **Section 1.** The City of Jacksonville hereby celebrates Clara
7 McLaughlin's life and numerous accomplishments. Jacksonville City
8 Council extends condolences to Ms. McLaughlin's family and friends,
9 with the hope that the memories of her will provide comfort upon her
10 passing.

11 **Section 2. Requesting emergency passage upon introduction**
12 **pursuant to Council Rule 4.901.** Emergency passage upon introduction
13 of this Resolution is requested in order to convey the community's
14 sympathy to Ms. McLaughlin's family in a timely manner.

15 **Section 3. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
16 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
17 without the Mayor's signature.

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19 Form Approved:

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21 /s/ Paige H. Johnston

22 Office of General Counsel

23 Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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