

1 Introduced by Council Member Johnson and Co-Sponsored by Council
2 Members Salem, Miller, Freeman, Gay, Amaro, Howland and Pittman:

3
4
5 **RESOLUTION 2025-792-A**

6 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND CELEBRATING OCTOBER
7 2025 AS GULLAH GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE MONTH,
8 ACKNOWLEDGING THE VIBRANT HISTORY,
9 CONTRIBUTIONS, AND LIVING LEGACY OF THE GULLAH
10 GEECHEE PEOPLE, RECOGNIZING JACKSONVILLE'S ROLE
11 WITHIN THE GULLAH GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE
12 CORRIDOR AND AFFIRMING THE CITY'S COMMITMENT TO
13 PRESERVE, CELEBRATE, AND PROMOTE THIS UNIQUE
14 AMERICAN HERITAGE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

15
16 **WHEREAS**, October is officially recognized in Florida, Georgia,
17 South Carolina, and North Carolina as *Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage*
18 *Month*, honoring the descendants of West and Central Africans enslaved
19 on the rice, indigo, and Sea Island cotton plantations of the lower
20 Atlantic coast; and

21 **WHEREAS**, the Gullah Geechee people, through struggle and
22 survival, gave rise to a distinct culture that has shaped the American
23 story – marked by a unique creole language, resilient oral traditions,
24 sacred folklore, renowned craftsmanship such as sweetgrass basket-
25 weaving, low-country cuisine rooted in West African traditions, and
26 a profound spiritual and ecological connection to land and sea; and

27 **WHEREAS**, Jacksonville stands proudly within the federally
28 recognized *Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor*, a National
29 Heritage Area designated by Congress and managed by the Gullah Geechee
30 Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission in partnership with the
31 National Park Service; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, the City of Jacksonville honors this history through
3 public spaces, including Freedom Park, which is recognized as a part
4 of the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Trail within the Jacksonville
5 Parks system, serving as a living memorial to resilience, community,
6 and freedom; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Gullah Geechee Heritage Month is not only a celebration
8 of history but also an affirmation of living culture, through events
9 such as the Annual Gullah Fest, where traditions are not simply
10 remembered but reborn, sustaining a community whose stories echo from
11 the shores of Sapelo to the banks of the St. Johns; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the local Gullah Geechee community of Jacksonville will
13 host the Annual Gullah Fest on October 11, 2025, a cultural
14 celebration showcasing traditional foods, music, crafts, and
15 storytelling, offering residents and visitors an opportunity to
16 experience the living heritage of the Gullah Geechee people; and

17 **WHEREAS**, the City Council of Jacksonville recognizes that the
18 preservation of Gullah Geechee heritage is not just about protecting
19 the past, but about elevating the future, supporting authentic Gullah
20 Geechee businesses, artists, and educators whose work continues to
21 shape the cultural and economic vitality of our city; now therefore

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

23 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby recognizes October 2025
24 as Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Month in the City of Jacksonville.
25 The Council celebrates the immeasurable contributions of Gullah
26 Geechee people to our city, our state, and our nation, and affirms
27 its commitment to advancing awareness, education, preservation, and
28 celebration of Gullah Geechee heritage across Jacksonville, in
29 partnership with community organizations, cultural institutions, and
30 the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission. All
31 residents are invited to engage in the cultural events, learning

opportunities, and celebrations that honor this proud heritage.

Section 2. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective without the Mayor's signature.

Form Approved:

/s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

Office of General Counsel

Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

GC-#1717544-v1-2025-792-A_Scriv_Corr.docx