

1 Introduced by Council Member Boylan:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2023-95**

5 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING DONALD C.
6 BOWDEN FOR HIS CREATIVE AND GENEROUS
7 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MANDARIN MUSEUM &
8 HISTORICAL SOCIETY ("MMHS"), THE MANDARIN
9 COMMUNITY, AND THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE;
10 PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
11

12 **WHEREAS**, Donald C. Bowden is a life-long resident of Mandarin
13 whose family roots in Mandarin date to the late 1700s; and

14 **WHEREAS**, after retiring from a successful career in the pump and
15 well business, he found a unique way to give back to the Mandarin
16 community, making and painting concrete frogs and placing them along
17 the rural roads in Mandarin to simply make people smile; and

18 **WHEREAS**, in 2015, he began making frogs to sell to benefit the
19 Mandarin Museum & Historical Society ("MMHS") and its renovation and
20 restoration of the historic St. Joseph's Mission Schoolhouse for
21 African-American Children following its relocation to the City's
22 Walter Jones Historical Park; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the frogs immediately became popular and much sought-
24 after to the point that he has created and sold over 10,000 frogs,
25 together with additional sea turtles and squirrels, with all of the
26 proceeds going to MMHS; and

27 **WHEREAS**, Donald Bowden has refused any reimbursement or
28 compensation for his time and materials and has raised over \$150,000
29 in support of MMHS and its mission and programs, including an
30 expansion of the Mandarin Museum building owned by the City; and

31 **WHEREAS**, his philanthropic achievement was recognized in his

1 receiving the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville's prestigious
2 "Art of Giving Award" in 2019; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Donald Bowden's "Mandarin Frogs" have brought the
4 Mandarin community together in its enthusiasm for his unique folk art
5 and through monthly frog painting parties at MMHS, where citizens can
6 create their very own Mandarin Frogs; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Donald Bowden is now known as Mandarin's "Frog Man,"
8 serving as a goodwill ambassador for the Mandarin community, not only
9 in Jacksonville, but well beyond, as his frogs have found their way
10 to many other states and several foreign countries; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in 2022, Donald Bowden was chosen to receive the
12 Nextdoor 100 Award, honoring the top 100 "Super Amazing Neighbors"
13 in the United States; now therefore

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

15 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby honors and commends
16 Donald C. Bowden, Mandarin's "Frog Man," on his generosity in using
17 his unique talents to bring so much joy to people, while providing
18 significant financial support to the Mandarin Museum & Historical
19 Society. His selfless generosity and giving spirit serve as an
20 example to his fellow Jacksonville citizens.

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

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25 Form Approved:

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27 /s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

28 Office of General Counsel

29 Legislation Prepared By: Jeff Clements, City Council Research

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