

1 Introduced by Council Members Johnson and Diamond:  
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4 **RESOLUTION 2025-790**

5 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND HONORING KAREN  
6 BOWLING FOR HER EXEMPLARY CAREER IN PUBLIC  
7 SERVICE, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND EDUCATION, AND  
8 ACKNOWLEDGING HER ROLE AS A PIONEER IN THE  
9 HISTORY OF OUR CITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE  
10 DATE.  
11

12 **WHEREAS**, Karen Bowling's life and career reflect a steadfast  
13 commitment to this community, demonstrating vision, service,  
14 leadership, and innovation across sectors; and

15 **WHEREAS**, a proud alumna of the University of North Florida, Ms.  
16 Bowling began her professional journey in broadcast journalism as an  
17 intern at WTLV-TV 12 in Jacksonville, setting the foundation for a  
18 lifelong path of public engagement; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Ms. Bowling transitioned into healthcare marketing and  
20 administration, and ultimately co-founded the walk-in urgent care  
21 network Solantic, serving as its CEO for a decade, building a  
22 successful enterprise while contributing to expanded access to  
23 healthcare in Northeast Florida; and

24 **WHEREAS**, following the sale of Solantic, Ms. Bowling joined  
25 Mayor Alvin Brown's Administration in July 2011 as Deputy Chief  
26 Administrative Officer of Jacksonville, and in 2012 was elevated to  
27 Chief Administrative Officer (CAO); as the second woman ever to serve  
28 in that role in the City of Jacksonville, she steered municipal  
29 operations through periods of economic challenge, fiscal constraint,  
30 and organizational change; and

31 **WHEREAS**, as CAO, Ms. Bowling's leadership was marked by her

1 ability to synthesize complex policy, balance competing demands, calm  
2 tensions, and ensure that city services were responsive to residents  
3 in need; and

4 **WHEREAS**, after her tenure as CAO for Mayor Brown, Ms. Bowling  
5 served as public affairs director at the firm Foley & Lardner, before  
6 returning to academia and economic development; and

7 **WHEREAS**, in January 2019, Ms. Bowling was appointed as the first  
8 Director of the University of North Florida (UNF) Center for  
9 Entrepreneurship & Innovation, helping to establish a new anchor for  
10 mission-driven innovation in Jacksonville and Northeast Florida; and

11 **WHEREAS**, shortly thereafter, Ms. Bowling was tapped to serve as  
12 the first Vice President of Jobs at UNF, an initiative to connect  
13 students and alumni to employers through internships, externships,  
14 career immersion, and job placement; and

15 **WHEREAS**, in these roles at UNF, Karen Bowling forged strategic  
16 partnerships with business leaders, community organizations, and  
17 public sector stakeholders strengthening Jacksonville's economic  
18 ecosystem and expanding opportunity pipelines; and

19 **WHEREAS**, beyond these institutional roles, Ms. Bowling has given  
20 generously of her time and leadership on a wide array of civic boards  
21 and commissions: she serves on the 4th Circuit Judicial Nominating  
22 Commission, the Florida State College District Board of Trustees  
23 (past Chair), and has served on the Board of Security Devices  
24 International, among others; As well, Ms. Bowling is a graduate of  
25 Leadership Jacksonville and Leadership Florida, credentials  
26 exemplifying her resolve to lead and invest in the civic fabric of  
27 our region; and

28 **WHEREAS**, at the invitation of Mayor Donna Deegan in 2023, Karen  
29 Bowling returned to City Hall as Chief Administrative Officer once  
30 again, bringing institutional knowledge, quiet professionalism and  
31 steady leadership to the new administration; and

1       **WHEREAS**, Ms. Bowling is set to conclude her service as Chief  
2 Administrative Officer effective October 24, 2025, leaving behind a  
3 legacy of competence, collaborative governance, and boundary-breaking  
4 public leadership; now therefore

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

6       **Section 1.**       The City Council hereby commends and honors  
7 Karen Bowling for her exceptional career of service, across  
8 entrepreneurship, higher education, and municipal government, and for  
9 her role in shaping Jacksonville's future. The Council acknowledges  
10 and celebrates her leadership in building bridges, her role expanding  
11 opportunity for the UNF Ospreys, and her record of public, private,  
12 and civic stewardship. The Council extends its deepest gratitude for  
13 all that Ms. Bowling has done to elevate our city and to open pathways  
14 for the next generation of leaders, and further expresses best wishes  
15 for her continued success, impact, and fulfillment in the chapters  
16 yet to come.

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

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21 Form Approved:

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23 /s/ Shannon MacGuilllis

24 Office of General Counsel

25 Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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