

1 Introduced by Council Member Boylan and Co-Sponsored by Council
2 Members Becton and Morgan:

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5 **RESOLUTION 2023-95-A**

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 **WHEREAS**, his philanthropic achievement was recognized in his
2 receiving the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville's prestigious
3 "Art of Giving Award" in 2019; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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26 Form Approved:

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28 /s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

29 Office of General Counsel

30 Legislation Prepared By: Jeff Clements, City Council Research

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