

1 Introduced by Council Member Johnson:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2026-471**

5 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING JSO OFFICER
6 AND BISHOP ANTONIO C. RICHARDSON, FOR HIS
7 EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE, COMPASSION, FAITH,
8 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP, AND LIFE-SAVING ACTIONS ON
9 THE DAMES POINT BRIDGE, AND RECOGNIZING HIS
10 OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF
11 JACKSONVILLE THROUGH BOTH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND
12 MINISTRY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
13

14 **WHEREAS**, on April 12, 2026, officers of the Jacksonville
15 Sheriff's Office responded to a critical incident on the Dames Point
16 Bridge involving an individual experiencing severe emotional distress
17 and threatening to jump from the bridge; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Officer Antonio Richardson responded to the scene with
19 extraordinary calmness, compassion, wisdom, and humanity,
20 understanding that the moment required not only law enforcement
21 presence, but genuine human connection, empathy, and hope; and

22 **WHEREAS**, through heartfelt conversation, encouragement, prayer,
23 and extraordinary emotional intelligence, Officer Richardson
24 established trust with the individual and ultimately persuaded the
25 individual to step away from danger, preventing a tragic loss of life
26 and demonstrating the very highest ideals of public service; and

27 **WHEREAS**, the intervention, captured on video and shared widely
28 across national and digital media platforms, brought significant
29 attention to the City of Jacksonville and served as a powerful and
30 moving example of compassion driven policing, mental health crisis
31 intervention, and the profound impact of leading with humanity during

1 moments of despair; and

2 **WHEREAS**, Officer Richardson's actions inspired people throughout
3 the nation and elevated Jacksonville as a city capable of producing
4 leaders who understand that strength is not measured solely by
5 authority, but also by empathy, grace, patience, and the willingness
6 to save a life when it matters most; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Officer Richardson's actions serve as a powerful
8 reminder that law enforcement officers are often called to stand not
9 only as protectors of public safety, but also as guardians of human
10 dignity, compassion, and restoration during moments of profound
11 crisis; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the City Council further recognizes that Office
13 Richardson's remarkable actions were not isolated but rather
14 reflective of a lifetime devoted to faith, leadership, service, and
15 uplifting humanity through both ministry and community engagement;
16 and

17 **WHEREAS**, known throughout Jacksonville and beyond as Bishop
18 Antonio C. Richardson, he serves as the visionary leader of New Life
19 Evangelistic Center and Word Connection Ministries International,
20 organizations headquartered in Jacksonville, that have impacted
21 countless lives through spiritual guidance, leadership development,
22 outreach, mentorship, and transformational ministry; and

23 **WHEREAS**, an earnest preacher since the age of sixteen, Bishop
24 Richardson has dedicated the majority of his life to the advancement
25 of faith, hope, healing, and empowerment, leading New Life
26 Evangelistic Center from humble beginnings in 1993 into a nationally
27 recognized, multi-dimensional ministry known for innovation,
28 outreach, and community impact; and

29 **WHEREAS**, under Bishop Richardson's leadership, New Life
30 Evangelistic Center was recognized among the Top 100 Churches in
31 America in Technology and Innovation by Church Business Magazine,

1 reflecting a ministry committed to both spiritual excellence and
2 forward-thinking engagement with the modern world; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Bishop Richardson is widely respected as a teacher,
4 scholar, mentor, and servant leader, whose ministry extends beyond
5 Jacksonville through conferences, broadcasts, evangelism initiatives,
6 and the oversight of ministries throughout the United States and
7 internationally, including Africa; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Bishop Richardson holds a Bachelor's degree in
9 Religious Education and a Master's degree in Theology from Liberty
10 University, and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity from
11 St. Thomas Christian College, reflecting his lifelong commitment to
12 scholarship, spiritual formation, and servant leadership; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes that Jacksonville is
14 strengthened by leaders who are willing to serve both professionally
15 and personally, and that Officer and Bishop Antonio Richardson
16 exemplifies what it means to lead with courage, conviction, faith,
17 wisdom, and compassion; now therefore

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

19 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby honors and commends
20 Officer Antonio Richardson, also known as Bishop Antonio C.
21 Richardson, for his extraordinary heroism, compassion, faith-centered
22 leadership, and life-saving actions on the Dames Point Bridge, and
23 recognizes his enduring contributions to the spiritual, emotional,
24 and civic well-being of the Jacksonville community. The City Council
25 extends its deepest gratitude and appreciation to Officer and Bishop
26 Richardson for demonstrating the transformative power of service,
27 humanity, leadership, and hope, and for reminding our city and our
28 nation that even in moments of darkness, one compassionate voice can
29 help lead another person back toward the light.

30 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
31 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective

1 without the Mayor's signature.

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3 Form Approved:

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5 /s/ Shannon MacGillis

6 Office of General Counsel

7 Legislation Prepared By: Brandon Russell, City Council Research

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