

1 Introduced by Council Members Carlucci, White, Clark-Murray and
2 Ferraro and Co-Sponsored by Council Members Howland, Becton, Newby,
3 Boylan and Pittman:
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6 **RESOLUTION 2023-289-A**

7 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING THE SERVICE
8 AND LEADERSHIP OF CULLEN CHALKER, JACKSONVILLE
9 FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT'S OLDEST LIVING
10 FIREFIGHTER AND DISTRICT CHIEF; PROVIDING AN
11 EFFECTIVE DATE.
12

13 **WHEREAS**, Cullen Chalker was born on July 10, 1924, in
14 Jacksonville, Florida. After bravely serving our country in World
15 War II, Mr. Chalker returned to his hometown where a job opportunity
16 caught his eye; and

17 **WHEREAS**, Mr. Chalker scored the 12th highest on the
18 Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department's (JFRD) employment exam out
19 of the 150 applicants that summer, and he reported for duty at Engine
20 9 shortly thereafter. This was the beginning of a firefighting career
21 that would span the next 35 years; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Cullen Chalker was an eyewitness to the unfolding of
23 numerous historical events, and he watched as our city changed and
24 grew. He was on the scene during the Roosevelt Hotel fire in 1963,
25 he experienced disturbances in the city during the civil rights
26 movement, and he witnessed Jacksonville's consolidation. The fire
27 department evolved over the years as well, with the introduction of
28 a third shift and the creation of the Rescue Division; and

29 **WHEREAS**, fighting fires is a dangerous profession, and fire
30 men and women put themselves in harm's way to keep the public safe
31 every day. Mr. Chalker had brushes with injury many times, including

1 once when he encountered an explosion at an appliance store at Broad
2 and Adams Streets and thankfully survived relatively unscathed; and

3 **WHEREAS,** Mr. Chalker was promoted to District Chief in 1971,
4 and he retired from duty in 1983 but went on to manage the Jacksonville
5 Firemen's Credit Union for a decade afterwards; and

6 **WHEREAS,** Cullen Chalker is JFRD's oldest living firefighter
7 and District Chief, who dedicated more than three decades of his life
8 to public service. He loved his job, guarded his city, and he truly
9 appreciated his colleagues in all ranks of the Department; now
10 therefore

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

12 **Section 1.** The City of Jacksonville hereby commends retired
13 JFRD District Chief Cullen Chalker for his years of service and
14 leadership in the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department. The City
15 Council extends its gratitude to Mr. Chalker for all that he did to
16 ensure the safety of his fellow firefighters and the residents of
17 Jacksonville.

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

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22 Form Approved:

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24 /s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

25 Office of General Counsel

26 Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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