

1 Introduced by Council Member Dennis & Co-Sponsored by Council
2 Member Hazouri:

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5 **RESOLUTION 2020-596-A**

6 A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RETURN OF THE
7 HEMMING CONFEDERATE MONUMENT STATUE AND PLAQUE
8 DEDICATED TO THE CITY AND STATE BY THE HEMMING
9 FAMILY, AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEMMING FAMILY;
10 DIRECTING LEGISLATIVE SERVICES TO FORWARD THE
11 RESOLUTION UPON ADOPTION TO THE STATE FOR
12 CONSIDERATION OF RETURNING THE CONFEDERATE
13 MONUMENT STATUE AND PLAQUE TO THE HEMMING
14 FAMILY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

15
16 **WHEREAS**, for more than 120 years James Weldon Johnson Park,
17 formerly known first as St. James Park and then in more recent
18 history as Hemming Park, was the home of a Confederate Monument
19 gifted to the City by former Jacksonville resident and Confederate
20 veteran Charles C. Hemming; and

21 **WHEREAS**, the monument, made by George H. Mitchell of Chicago,
22 was placed in James Weldon Johnson Park in 1898 and consisted of a
23 62-foot high marble and bronze monument crowned with a single
24 Confederate soldier in winter uniform standing at ease and on the
25 top of die stones containing plaques honoring local soldiers, one
26 recognizing soldiers of the Navy and one to the soldiers of Florida
27 (collectively "Statue and Plaques"); and

28 **WHEREAS**, Charles C. Hemming's father was John C. Hemming, born
29 in England but later became a resident of Jacksonville in the
30 1840s, where he held several public offices in his adopted town
31 including town councilman and public auctioneer; and

1 **WHEREAS**, following the Civil War and a lucrative career as a
2 banker, Charles C. Hemming made a gift of the Confederate Monument
3 to Jacksonville to honor his fellow veterans, dedicating to all
4 Florida soldiers and sailors that served during the war; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the Confederate Monument (including Statue and
6 Plaques) was officially unveiled in a grand ceremony on June 16,
7 1898 and was officially accepted by Governor William D. Bloxham,
8 entrusted to the citizens of Jacksonville, and has the unique
9 distinction of being the only structure in the path of the 1901
10 fire to survive completely intact; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the value of the Confederate Monument at the time it
12 was constructed and donated was \$20,000, which in today's value
13 would be more than \$500,000; and

14 **WHEREAS**, on June 9, 2020, the City removed the Statue and
15 Plaques from James Weldon Johnson Park; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the Hemming Family has requested that the Statue and
17 Plaques be returned to the Hemming Family so that they can maintain
18 and preserve them as family historical artifacts, as indicated in
19 the attached letter incorporated herein as **Exhibit 1**; and

20 **WHEREAS**, in recognition of the contributions of John C.
21 Hemming and his son Charles C. Hemming to the City of Jacksonville,
22 and considering that the Statue and Plaques are no longer being
23 used by the State or City for public purposes and have been removed
24 from James Weldon Johnson Park, the Council desires that the State
25 and the City consider returning the Statue and Plaques to the
26 Hemming Family as they have requested; now therefore

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

28 **Section 1. Supporting the return of the Confederate**
29 **Monument Statue and Plaque to the Hemming Family per their request.**

30 The Council hereby supports the request of the Hemming Family to
31 return the Statue and Plaques which were removed from James Weldon

1 Johnson Park on June 9, 2020, finding that there is no public
2 purpose to the State or City retaining the Statue and Plaques and
3 that the Hemming Family's request to have the Statue and Plaques
4 returned to them would be appropriate for maintaining them as
5 private family historical artifact as they have requested. The
6 Administration is encouraged to review the request of the Hemming
7 Family and to forward the Hemming Family's request to the State
8 with a recommendation to the State to return the Statue and Plaques
9 to the Hemming Family, assuming there is no legal impediment to do
10 so.

11 **Section 2. Direction to circulate Resolution to State of**
12 **Florida Secretary of State and the Duval Delegation.** Upon adoption
13 of this resolution, Legislative Services is directed to forward
14 copies of this resolution to the State of Florida Secretary of
15 State and to each of the members of the Duval Delegation.

16 **Section 3. Effective Date.** This ordinance shall become
17 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
18 without the Mayor's signature.

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20 Form Approved:

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22 /s/ Paige H. Johnston

23 Office of General Counsel

24 Legislation Prepared By: Paige H. Johnston

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