

1 Introduced by Council Members Johnson, Amaro, Salem, Peluso, J.
2 Carlucci, Gaffney, Jr., and Miller and Co-Sponsored by Council Member
3 Pittman:
4
5

6 **RESOLUTION 2025-703-A**

7 A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING AND COMMENDING MELTONIA
8 JENKINS MAY AND THE LEGENDARY JENKINS FAMILY FOR
9 SIXTY-EIGHT YEARS OF UNPARALLELED CULINARY
10 EXCELLENCE, CULTURAL IMPACT, AND COMMUNITY
11 SERVICE THROUGH JENKINS QUALITY BARBEQUE, AND
12 RECOGNIZING THEIR ENDURING LEGACY AS A
13 CORNERSTONE OF JACKSONVILLE HERITAGE; PROVIDING
14 AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
15

16 **WHEREAS**, Jacksonville native Melton Jenkins, Jr. was born on
17 December 14, 1923, and through years of dedicated work and
18 determination, nurtured a dream of creating a family-owned restaurant
19 that would serve not only food but also fellowship to the Jacksonville
20 community; and

21 **WHEREAS**, with just \$125, his father's secret mustard-based
22 sauce, and a prayer, Melton and his wife Willie Mae opened the first
23 Jenkins Quality Barbecue in 1957 on Kings Road near Spires Avenue;
24 and

25 **WHEREAS**, Melton and Willie Mae raised three daughters –
26 Meltonia, Wilhelmina, and Pamela – while building a business rooted
27 in faith, family, and service; Mr. Jenkins himself served faithfully
28 as a deacon at the First New Zion Missionary Baptist Church and
29 supported the broader community through contributions to the Boy
30 Scouts, Edward Waters University, the YMCA, and numerous neighborhood
31 organizations; and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, the Jenkins family grew their enterprise into four
3 beloved Jacksonville locations—two on Kings Road, Pearl Street
4 downtown, and Emerson Street on the Southside—that endured regional
5 growth, historical changes, and economic challenges, while
6 maintaining the quality and consistency that made their restaurants
7 household names; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Jenkins Barbeque became nationally recognized for its
9 oak wood-fired pit cooking and legendary mustard-based sauce, with
10 acclaim from Jacksonville Magazine, Southern Living Magazine, the
11 Forbes Travel Guide, and the Food Network's "50 States of Barbecue";
12 and

13 **WHEREAS**, under the leadership of eldest daughter Meltonia
14 Jenkins May, the Jenkins legacy flourished into the next generations,
15 with children and grandchildren carrying forth the family's culinary
16 and entrepreneurial spirit; and

17 **WHEREAS**, Jenkins Quality Barbecue served as more than a
18 restaurant—it was a gathering place where neighbors, families, and
19 friends shared not only meals but also milestones, traditions, and
20 stories that shaped the cultural fabric of Jacksonville; and

21 **WHEREAS**, after sixty-eight years of continuous service, the
22 Jenkins family announced that Jenkins Quality Barbecue would close
23 its doors in 2025, leaving behind an indelible imprint on the city's
24 history and the hearts of its citizens; now therefore

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

26 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby extends its deepest
27 commendation to Meltonia Jenkins May and the entire Jenkins family
28 for their extraordinary contributions to Jacksonville through sixty-
29 eight years of excellence in food, service, and community uplift,
30 recognizing Jenkins Quality Barbecue as both a local treasure and a
31 national culinary landmark.

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

Form Approved:

/s/Mary E. Staffopoulos

Office of General Counsel

Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

GC-#1712244-v1-2025-703-A.docx