

1 Introduced by Council Members Howland, Salem, and DeFoor:  
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4 **RESOLUTION 2023-191**

5 A RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE PASSING OF  
6 GUITARIST GARY ROSSINGTON, A FOUNDER AND THE  
7 LAST SURVIVING MEMBER OF LEGENDARY JACKSONVILLE-  
8 BASED SOUTHERN ROCK BAND LYNYRD SKYNYRD;  
9 PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.  
10

11 **WHEREAS,** Gary Rossington was born in Jacksonville in 1951 and  
12 learned to play guitar at an early age. In the summer of 1964, he met  
13 Ronnie Van Zant and Bob Burns while playing on opposing baseball  
14 teams in a summer league and an informal guitar jam session led the  
15 three to form a band; and

16 **WHEREAS,** with the addition of Alex Collins and Larry Junstrom  
17 they played under a series of band names including My Backyard, The  
18 Noble Five, and The One Percent before eventually settling on the  
19 iconic Lynyrd Skynyrd name in 1969; and

20 **WHEREAS,** in the early 1970s the group added bandmates Alan  
21 Collins, Leon Wilkeson, Billy Powell and Ed King and developed the  
22 hard-driving mix of blues, country, and rock that would become their  
23 signature sound and began touring nationally (including opening for  
24 The Who in 1973 on their U.S. "Quadrophenia" tour) and recording  
25 albums that produced million-selling hits such as Free Bird and Sweet  
26 Home Alabama; and

27 **WHEREAS,** with a changing cast of players the band continued to  
28 produce best-selling albums and chart-topping hits until a tragic  
29 plane crash in 1977 took the lives of Ronnie Van Zant and Steve  
30 Gaines, backup singer Cassie Gaines, and the band's road manager Dean  
31 Kilpatrick. The group disbanded after the tragedy until an intended

1 one-time reunion concert tour and album in 1987 with several new  
2 members proved so successful that it created a second generation of  
3 Lynyrd Skynyrd that resumed touring and recording and performs to  
4 this day to great acclaim; and

5 **WHEREAS,** in 2006, Lynyrd Skynyrd, one of the many influential  
6 bands originating in Jacksonville, was inducted into the Rock and  
7 Roll Hall of Fame in recognition of the band's importance to and  
8 influence on American music; and

9 **WHEREAS,** the City Council has learned with sadness of the  
10 recent passing of Gary Rossington, a founder and the last surviving  
11 member of the original band, which brings a close to the original  
12 Lynyrd Skynyrd era; now therefore

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

14 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby commemorates the passing  
15 of guitarist Gary Rossington and, with his death, the end of an era  
16 for the Lynyrd Skynyrd band. Mr. Rossington and his bandmates changed  
17 the face of music through their pioneering of the Southern Rock sound  
18 and brought tremendous fame to Jacksonville, their hometown, for  
19 which city residents are justifiably proud.

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

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24 Form Approved:

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27 Office of General Counsel

28 Legislation Prepared By: Jeff Clements, City Council Research

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