

Introduced by Council Members Johnson and Diamond and Co-Sponsored
by Council Members Amaro, Arias, Boylan, J. Carlucci, Carlucci,
Carrico, Clark-Murray, Freeman, Gaffney, Jr., Gay, Howland, Lahnen,
Miller, Peluso, Pittman, Salem and White:

RESOLUTION 2025-790-A

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND HONORING KAREN
BOWLING FOR HER EXEMPLARY CAREER IN PUBLIC
SERVICE, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND EDUCATION, AND
ACKNOWLEDGING HER ROLE AS A PIONEER IN THE
HISTORY OF OUR CITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE
DATE.

WHEREAS, Karen Bowling's life and career reflect a steadfast
commitment to this community, demonstrating vision, service,
leadership, and innovation across sectors; and

WHEREAS, a proud alumna of the University of North Florida, Ms.
Bowling began her professional journey in broadcast journalism as an
intern at WTLV-TV 12 in Jacksonville, setting the foundation for a
lifelong path of public engagement; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Bowling transitioned into healthcare marketing and
administration, and ultimately co-founded the walk-in urgent care
network Solantic, serving as its CEO for a decade, building a
successful enterprise while contributing to expanded access to
healthcare in Northeast Florida; and

WHEREAS, following the sale of Solantic, Ms. Bowling joined
Mayor Alvin Brown's Administration in July 2011 as Deputy Chief
Administrative Officer of Jacksonville, and in 2012 was elevated to
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO); as the second woman ever to serve
in that role in the City of Jacksonville, she steered municipal

1 operations through periods of economic challenge, fiscal constraint,
2 and organizational change; and

3 **WHEREAS**, as CAO, Ms. Bowling's leadership was marked by her
4 ability to synthesize complex policy, balance competing demands, calm
5 tensions, and ensure that city services were responsive to residents
6 in need; and

7 **WHEREAS**, after her tenure as CAO for Mayor Brown, Ms. Bowling
8 served as public affairs director at the firm Foley & Lardner, before
9 returning to academia and economic development; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in January 2019, Ms. Bowling was appointed as the first
11 Director of the University of North Florida (UNF) Center for
12 Entrepreneurship & Innovation, helping to establish a new anchor for
13 mission-driven innovation in Jacksonville and Northeast Florida; and

14 **WHEREAS**, shortly thereafter, Ms. Bowling was tapped to serve as
15 the first Vice President of Jobs at UNF, an initiative to connect
16 students and alumni to employers through internships, externships,
17 career immersion, and job placement; and

18 **WHEREAS**, in these roles at UNF, Karen Bowling forged strategic
19 partnerships with business leaders, community organizations, and
20 public sector stakeholders strengthening Jacksonville's economic
21 ecosystem and expanding opportunity pipelines; and

22 **WHEREAS**, beyond these institutional roles, Ms. Bowling has given
23 generously of her time and leadership on a wide array of civic boards
24 and commissions: she serves on the 4th Circuit Judicial Nominating
25 Commission, the Florida State College District Board of Trustees
26 (past Chair), and has served on the Board of Security Devices
27 International, among others; As well, Ms. Bowling is a graduate of
28 Leadership Jacksonville and Leadership Florida, credentials
29 exemplifying her resolve to lead and invest in the civic fabric of
30 our region; and

31 **WHEREAS**, at the invitation of Mayor Donna Deegan in 2023, Karen

Bowling returned to City Hall as Chief Administrative Officer once again, bringing institutional knowledge, quiet professionalism and steady leadership to the new administration; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Bowling is set to conclude her service as Chief Administrative Officer effective October 24, 2025, leaving behind a legacy of competence, collaborative governance, and boundary-breaking public leadership; now therefore

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

Section 1. The City Council hereby commends and honors Karen Bowling for her exceptional career of service, across entrepreneurship, higher education, and municipal government, and for her role in shaping Jacksonville's future. The Council acknowledges and celebrates her leadership in building bridges, her role expanding opportunity for the UNF Ospreys, and her record of public, private, and civic stewardship. The Council extends its deepest gratitude for all that Ms. Bowling has done to elevate our city and to open pathways for the next generation of leaders, and further expresses best wishes for her continued success, impact, and fulfillment in the chapters yet to come.

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

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