

1 Introduced by Council Members Howland, Salem, and DeFoor and  
2 Co-Sponsored by Council Members Clark-Murray, Ferraro, and Becton:  
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5 **RESOLUTION 2023-191-A**

6 A RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE PASSING OF  
7 GUITARIST GARY ROSSINGTON, A FOUNDER AND THE  
8 LAST SURVIVING MEMBER OF LEGENDARY JACKSONVILLE-  
9 BASED SOUTHERN ROCK BAND LYNYRD SKYNYRD;  
10 PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.  
11

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

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

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

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

1 Kilpatrick. The group disbanded after the tragedy until an intended  
2 one-time reunion concert tour and album in 1987 with several new  
3 members proved so successful that it created a second generation of  
4 Lynyrd Skynyrd that resumed touring and recording and performs to  
5 this day to great acclaim; and

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

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

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

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

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

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25 Form Approved:

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27 /s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

28 Office of General Counsel

29 Legislation Prepared By: Jeff Clements, City Council Research

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