

**CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION
LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY**



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2020-357

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council Members Dennis, Diamond; Co-sponsors: Carlucci, Freeman, Bowman, and Morgan

Date of Introduction: June 23, 2020

Committee(s) of Reference: NCSPHS

Date of Analysis: June 24, 2020

Type of Action: Renaming of a park

Bill Summary: This bill renames Hemming Park located Council District 7, in the heart of downtown Jacksonville, as the James Weldon Johnson Park.

Background Information: The park is 1.54 acres of land between Hogan Street North to the west, Duval Street West to the north, Laura Street North to the east, and Monroe Street West to the south. The park will be renamed after James Weldon Johnson, a Jacksonville native, and distinguished author, diplomat, and lawyer. The Johnson Family lived in the downtown area, a short distance from Hemming Park. James Weldon Johnson's accomplishments include the composition of 'Lift Every Voice and Sing' with his brother Rosamond Johnson. The song was initially performed on February 12, 1900, with 500 students, at Staton School to honor Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Due to its popularity, the song would later be adopted and promoted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as the "Negro National Anthem." Mr. Johnson was a prominent voice in various public capacities, a profound educator, and a diplomatic civil rights leader. Under President Theodore Roosevelt, Mr. Johnson was appointed United States Consul to Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Policy Impact Area: James Weldon Johnson Park

Fiscal Impact: Undetermined

Analyst: Mitchell