

1 Introduced by Council Member Dennis:  
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4 **RESOLUTION 2020-596**

5 A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RETURN OF THE  
6 HEMMING CONFEDERATE MONUMENT STATUE AND PLAQUE  
7 DEDICATED TO THE CITY AND STATE BY THE HEMMING  
8 FAMILY, AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEMMING FAMILY;  
9 DIRECTING LEGISLATIVE SERVICE TO FORWARD THE  
10 RESOLUTION UPON ADOPTION TO STATE FOR  
11 CONSIDERATION OF RETURNING THE CONFEDERATE  
12 MONUMENT STATUE AND PLAQUE TO THE HEMMING  
13 FAMILY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.  
14

15 **WHEREAS**, for more than 120 years James Weldon Johnson Park,  
16 formerly known first as St. James Park and then in more recent  
17 history as Hemming Park, was the home of a Confederate Monument  
18 gifted to the City by former Jacksonville resident and Confederate  
19 veteran Charles C. Hemming; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the monument, made by George H. Mitchell of Chicago,  
21 was placed in James Weldon Johnson Park in 1898 and consisted of a  
22 62-foot high marble and bronze monument crowned with a single  
23 Confederate soldier in winter uniform standing at ease and on the  
24 top of die stones containing plaques honoring local soldiers, one  
25 recognizing soldiers of the navy and one to the soldiers of Florida  
26 (collectively "Statue and Plaques"); and

27 **WHEREAS**, Charles C. Hemming's father was John C. Hemming, born  
28 in England but later became a resident of Jacksonville in the  
29 1840s, where he held several public offices in his adopted town  
30 including town councilman and public auctioneer; and

31 **WHEREAS**, following the Civil War and a lucrative career as a

1 banker, Charles C. Hemming made a gift of the Confederate Monument  
2 to Jacksonville to honor his fellow veterans, dedicating to all  
3 Florida soldiers and sailors that served during the war; and

4 **WHEREAS,** the Confederate Monument (including Statue and  
5 Plaques) was officially unveiled in a grand ceremony on June 16,  
6 1898 was officially accepted by Governor William D. Bloxham,  
7 entrusted to the citizens of Jacksonville, and has the unique  
8 distinction of being the only structure in the path of the 1901  
9 fire to survive completely intact; and

10 **WHEREAS,** the value of the Confederate Monument at the time it  
11 was constructed and donated was \$20,000, which in today's value  
12 would be more than \$500,000; and

13 **WHEREAS,** on June 9, 2020, the City removed the Statue and  
14 Plaques from James Weldon Johnson Park; and

15 **WHEREAS,** the Hemming Family has requested that the Statue and  
16 Plaques be returned to the Hemming Family so that they can maintain  
17 and preserve them as family historical artifacts, as indicated in  
18 the attached letter incorporated herein as **Exhibit 1**; and

19 **WHEREAS,** in recognition of the contributions of John C.  
20 Hemming and his son Charles C. Hemming to the City of Jacksonville,  
21 and considering that the Statue and Plaques are no longer being  
22 used by the State or City for public purposes and have been removed  
23 from James Weldon Johnson Park, the Council desires that the State  
24 and the City consider returning the statue and plaques to the  
25 Hemming Family s they have requested; now therefore

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

27 **Section 1. Supporting the return of the Confederate**  
28 **Monument Statue and Plaque to the Hemming Family per their request.**

29 The Council hereby supports the request of the Hemming Family to  
30 return the Statue and Plaques which were removed from James Weldon  
31 Johnson Park on June 9, 2020, finding that there is no public

1 purpose to the State or City retaining the Monument and Plaques and  
2 that the Hemming Family's request to have the Statue and Plaques  
3 returned to them would be appropriate for maintaining them as  
4 private family historical artifact as they have requested. The  
5 Administration is encouraged to review the request of the Hemming  
6 Family and to forward the Hemming Family's request to the State  
7 with a recommendation to the State to return the Statue and Plaques  
8 to the Hemming Family, assuming there is no legal impediment to do  
9 so.

10 **Section 2. Direction to circulating Resolution to State**  
11 **of Florida Secretary of State and the Duval Delegation.** Upon  
12 adoption of this resolution, Legislative Services is directed to  
13 forward copies of this resolution upon adoption to the State of  
14 Florida Secretary of State and to each of the members of the Duval  
15 Delegation.

16 **Section 3. Effective Date.** This ordinance shall become  
17 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective  
18 without the Mayor's signature.

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20 Form Approved:

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22 /s/ Paige H. Johnston

23 Office of General Counsel

24 Legislation Prepared By: Paige H. Johnston

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