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2 **TREE COMMISSION RESOLUTION**

3 A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING AN OFFICIAL POSITION
4 AGAINST THE PLANTING OF DATE PALMS (PHOENIX
5 DACTYLIFERA) ON PUBLIC PROPERTY WITHIN THE
6 CITY OF JACKSONVILLE OR ANYWHERE ELSE USING
7 APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE TREE FUNDS (15F AND
8 15N); PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

9
10 **WHEREAS**, Date Palms (scientific name: Phoenix Dactylifera)
11 have been planted in the City of Jacksonville for many decades; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Date Palms are not native to the City of Jacksonville
13 or the United States Department of Agriculture Plant Hardiness Zone
14 9a; and

15 **WHEREAS**, a single Date Palm tree costs approximately
16 \$5,000.00; and

17 **WHEREAS**, a single Date Palm costs approximately \$300.00 to
18 \$500.00 per year to maintain and the City already incurs
19 approximately \$45,000 to \$55,000 in annual maintenance costs to
20 maintain City-owned Date Palm; and

21 **WHEREAS**, the maintenance of a Date Palm requires careful
22 pruning and trimming within a specific 3 to 4 week window of time;
23 and

24 **WHEREAS**, if a Date Palm does not receive the required
25 maintenance, the fruit and the large, heavy palm fronds of the tree
26 will fall to the ground, decay and create a mess that could result
27 in damage to property and injury to persons; and

28 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Sec. 25.02(g), *Charter*, a Date Palm
29 cannot be used as a *Mitigation Tree (Replacement Tree)* because it
30 is not expressly identified as such and it is not an "indigenous
31 tree that reaches a height at maturity of at least 45 feet and a

1 spread at maturity of at least 30 feet"; and

2 **WHEREAS**, based on research conducted by the University of
3 Florida IFAS Extension, "Texas Phoenix Palm Decline" or
4 "Lethal Bronzing", is a relatively new bacterial tree disease that
5 kills certain species of palm trees and is spreading throughout
6 Florida and the South; and

7 **WHEREAS**, according to the research, the Date Palm is
8 susceptible to Lethal Bronzing, and the University of Florida IFAS
9 Extension recommends avoiding planting Date Palms due to this
10 susceptibility; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the City has two Tree Protection and Related Expenses
12 Trust Funds- the Charter Fund (15N) and the Ordinance Fund (15F)
13 (collectively "Tree Funds"), both of which are comprised of funds
14 collected by the City for mitigation of the removal of certain
15 trees within in the City and such funds are required to be
16 appropriated for the planting of trees on public property in the
17 City; and

18 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Sec. 94.105(a), *Ordinance Code*, one of
19 the Tree Commission's purposes is to study and make recommendations
20 to the City Council with respect to the planting of trees and the
21 health of the City's tree canopy; and

22 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Sec. 94.106(h), *Ordinance Code*, one of
23 the Tree Commission's duties is to identify issues relative to the
24 health and protection of public trees and recommend solutions to
25 problems identified; and

26 **WHEREAS**, the City of Jacksonville Tree Commission desires to
27 make a recommendation to the Council through the formal resolution
28 process; now therefore

29 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Tree Commission of the City of
30 Jacksonville:

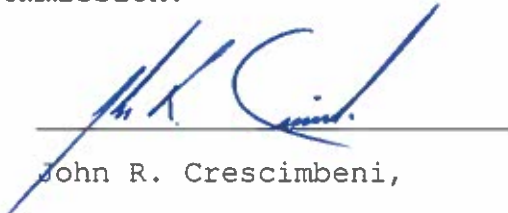
31 **Section 1. Findings.** The Tree Commission finds the

1 foregoing to be true and accurate.

2 **Section 2. Expression of Opposition to the Planting of**
3 **Date Palms in the City of Jacksonville and the Use of Tree Funds to**
4 **Plant Date Palms in Public Property in the City of Jacksonville.**

5 The City of Jacksonville Tree Commission does hereby state its
6 official position in opposition to the future planting of Date
7 Palms or the replacement of existing Date Palms with new Date Palms
8 in the City of Jacksonville and the appropriation of money from
9 the Tree Funds to purchase, plant, or maintain new Date Palms on
10 public property within the City of Jacksonville for the following
11 reasons: 1) Date Palms are expensive to purchase and similar palm
12 trees are available at a lower cost, 2) the maintenance of Date
13 Palms are expensive and time-consuming when compared to other
14 trees; 3) Date Palms are not indigenous to the area and therefore
15 cannot be used as replacement trees using the Charter Tree Fund
16 because they do not provide the required crown spread; and 4)
17 Lethal Bronzing is a threat to Date Palms and the University of
18 Florida IFAS Extension recommends not planting susceptible palm
19 trees.

20 **DONE AND ORDERED** at the March 22, 2018 meeting of the City of
21 Jacksonville Tree Commission.

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23 
24 John R. Crescimbeni,
25 Chairman of the Tree Commission,
26 City Council Member, Group 2 At-Large

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