



PROCLAMATION

ONE CITY. ONE JACKSONVILLE.

WHEREAS: On Saturday, August 27th, 1960, over 200 Ku Klux Klan members staged a planned assault on African American members of our community. They senselessly attacked any African Americans, white allies, and bystanders they came across with ax handles; and

WHEREAS: Prior to Ax Handle Saturday, local Civil Rights groups began staging sit-ins and other protests opposing racial segregation here in Jacksonville. The local chapter of the NAACP and its youth organization took inspiration from successful protests across the South and coordinated a sit-in at several lunch counters around Downtown Jacksonville and what is now James Weldon Johnson (JWJ) Park; and

WHEREAS: Informed of the protest, 200 armed white men stashed ax handles and other weapons throughout JWJ Park. In response to the peaceful protest, they began attacking any African American residents who happened to be downtown; and

WHEREAS: It is imperative that the City of Jacksonville recognizes its history of institutionalized racism. Moving past the legacy of racism and discrimination requires an acknowledgment of what happened and a commitment to build a better future; and

WHEREAS: We must continue to make Jacksonville a more equal place to live for all our residents, and work to right the past wrongs against our African American citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONNA DEEGAN, by virtue of the authority vested in me as mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, do hereby proclaim August 27, 2023 as

THE 63RD ANNIVERSARY OF AX HANDLE SATURDAY

in Jacksonville and encourage all citizens to recognize the history of racism, racial violence, and discrimination in our community and work to educate, advocate, and empower our residents of all races to build a better, more equal future.



IN WITNESS THEREOF, this 25th Day of Aug. in the year
Two Thousand and Twenty-Three.


MAYOR