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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JACKSONVILLE VETERANS GROUPS AGREE TO HEMMING PARK RE-NAMING COMPROMISE

JACKSONVILLE, FL, August 4, 2020 – This morning Councilman Rory Diamond met with Jacksonville-area veterans groups advocating for the re-naming of Hemming Park to “Veterans Memorial Park.” While each of the leaders representing a broad range of Jacksonville veterans feel passionately that we must recognize the many sacrifices of our freedom fighters, each of them agreed to support the renaming of Hemming Park to “James Weldon Johnson Park” to recognize the unique contribution Johnson made to our city and nation. Councilman Diamond will introduce an amendment to Bill 2020-357 to include both renaming of Hemming Park for Johnson and the inclusion of a “Veterans Memorial Plaza” within that park in the area around the American and service branch flags.

“This is a great path forward to honor James Weldon Johnson, perhaps Jacksonville’s most famous citizen, and to recognize and honor our veterans,” said Councilman Diamond. “I want to thank these incredible leaders of our veterans community here in Jacksonville for their incredible leadership this morning and their love for our community.” The amendment was supported by Gen. Michael Fleming (Army Ret.) who said, “This isn’t just a compromise, this re-named park and newly designated plaza will be a living representation of the freedom for which our veterans fought and the more perfect union for which James Weldon Johnson lived.”

Veterans leaders supporting the renaming of the park and the designation of the plaza are: **Robert P. Adelhelm**, founder of Veterans 4 Veterans; **Dan Bean**, Chairman, Mission United Northeast Florida; **Anthony D’Aleo**, President, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1046; **Lynn Seckinger**, President, Semper Fidelis Society; **Steven Spickelmeir**, Chairman Veterans Council Duval County.

Councilman Diamond is available for comments today. To schedule an interview please send a request to rdiamond@coj.net.

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