

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Soul Food and Music Festival began as a vision shared by community supporters and volunteers known as “Breaking Away the Cycle of Pain” (BATCOP), who sought to create an event that would bring residents together in fellowship, celebration, and community pride; and

WHEREAS, the founding group included Janice Allen, Charles Battle, Mary Ford, Clarence Hampshire, Sr., Felecia Hampshire, Roosevelt Page, Donna Reese, John Sanders, Matthew Tinney, Jr., and Delphine Williams, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, the organizers established the festival at Vera Francis Hall Park as a day of food, music, games, and community activities, including a parade, with the goal of uniting the community and fostering a sense of pride among its citizens; and

WHEREAS, in 2008–2009, the organization became known as “Soul Food Festival, Inc.,” and the festival has continued to grow from its humble beginnings to an event supported by more than 50 volunteers and embraced by members of the community; and

WHEREAS, throughout its history, the Soul Food Festival has provided an opportunity to recognize and celebrate significant milestones in Green Cove Springs, including the dedication of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard in 2002, the dedication of the amphitheater at Vera Francis Hall Park in 2005, and the opening of the Augusta Savage Mentoring Center; and

WHEREAS, for 25 years, the Soul Food and Music Festival has served as a celebration of culture, heritage, fellowship, and community pride, bringing together residents and visitors in the spirit of unity and celebration.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Darren Stutts, mayor of the City of Green Cove Springs, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim October 3, 2026, as **“Soul Food and Music Festival Day”** in the City of Green Cove Springs, in celebration of the festival's 25th anniversary and its enduring contribution to the community.

DONE AND PROCLAIMED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, IN REGULAR SESSION THIS 15TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2026.

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA



Darren Stutts, Mayor

ATTEST:

Erin West, City Clerk