

RESOLUTION 2002 - 19

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF ACQUIRING SUFFICIENT LAND AND MAKING THE NECESSARY SITE IMPROVEMENTS TO FORT MOSE AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS GREAT HISTORICAL TREASURE LOCATED WITHIN THE BORDERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY AND ENCOURAGE SUPPORT TO MAKE THE HISTORIC FORT MOSE SITE KNOWN TO THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD.

WHEREAS, Fort Mose was established in 1738 as the first free community of ex-slaves in what now the United States, and thus may be considered the birthplace of African American freedom; and

WHEREAS, soon after its founding as the northern defense of the city its military worth was proven in 1740 when the Battle of Fort Mose was the turning point in General Oglethorpe's raid on St. Augustine. The fort was destroyed at that time, but a second Fort Mose was built nearby in 1752; and

WHEREAS, Fort Mose and its site figured in later episodes of history, including the American Revolution, The War of 1812, the Flagler Era Development of St. Augustine, the Florida Land Boom of the 1920's and the Civil Rights Movement; and

WHEREAS, Fort Mose represents an important link in the intertwined histories of the United States, Spain, Africa and Cuba; and

WHEREAS, Fort Mose has attracted the attention of internationally known scholars and chroniclers including Carter G. Woodson, Zora Neale Hurston, Irene Aloha Wright, Kathleen Deagan, and Jane Landers; and

WHEREAS, Fort Mose was recognized as a National Historic Landmark by the US Department of the Interior in 1995; and

WHEREAS, the site of the second Fort Mose is owned by the Florida Park Service, and its Citizen Support Organization, the Fort Mose Historical Society has been working diligently since its founding in 1996 to seek sufficient land, appropriately located, to build a museum and accommodate visitors so that this will no longer be a part of our "hidden history"; and

WHEREAS, Fort Mose offers the hope of being one of the leading attractions of this area in the 21st century and beyond.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA recognizes the importance of acquiring sufficient land and making the necessary site improvements to take advantage of the Great Historical Treasure of National and International significance located within the borders of St. Johns County; and be it further resolved that we encourage all relevant government agencies to cooperate in these efforts, commend to business, individuals and organizations the importance of charitable support to make Fort Mose and its story available, accessible and known to the people of the world.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, State of Florida, this 5th day of February, 2002.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By: Marc Jacalone
Marc Jacalone, Chair

ATTEST: Cheryl Strickland, Clerk

By: Patricia DeGrande
Deputy Clerk

RENDITION DATE 2-7-02

