

2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

21200320D

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 548

Offered February 22, 2021

Commending Keith E. Barker.

Patron—O'Quinn

WHEREAS, Keith E. Barker, who diligently served at the pleasure of the Galax City Council and the citizens of Galax as city manager for nearly 29 years, retired in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Keith E. Barker moved to Galax with his family at an early age and graduated from Galax High School in 1982; he subsequently graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University with a bachelor's degree in architecture in 1987, then began working at Echols-Sparger, an architecture firm in Marion, where he commuted daily for a number of years; and

WHEREAS, Keith E. Barker began his career with the City of Galax in 1992 as a licensed building official, spearheading a team focused on housing projects in blighted areas of the city and making significant improvements to enhance the quality of life for many residents; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, Keith E. Barker became the assistant city manager and continued to participate in and lead many great projects and initiatives, including the downtown revitalization and storm water and utility system improvements, and began serving on various boards focused on local and regional economic development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Keith E. Barker was appointed as city manager in 2009 and inspired others through his visionary leadership style, team approach to problem solving, and commitment to building a strong future for all Galax residents; he remained focused on maintaining economic growth both locally and regionally, improving facilities and infrastructure within the city, and securing and managing grant funding for various projects; and

WHEREAS, among Keith E. Barker's proudest accomplishments are the rehabilitation of housing developments, the Bottom Area Project, additions and renovations to Galax Elementary School, and the partnership between God's Storehouse Soup Kitchen and the City of Galax to renovate the Old Town Market building into a community center; and

WHEREAS, several notable projects began under Keith E. Barker's diligent leadership, including the future development of the historic T.G. Vaughan Building, the housing development on the Kipling Lane property, and commercial development of the Galax East Site, all of which hold great potential for economic development and housing opportunities to help the City of Galax prosper in the future; and

WHEREAS, in Keith E. Barker's own words: "I don't think any project or opportunity in Galax can be attributed to a single person or manager, but is always the result of a great team of individuals interested in serving our community"; and

WHEREAS, respected for his expertise, Keith E. Barker held leadership positions on numerous committees, including the Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority, Wired Road Authority, Virginia Industrial Development Alliance, and Ninth District Development Financing, along with many local management boards; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Keith E. Barker hereby be commended for his service to the residents of the City of Galax on the occasion of his retirement as Galax city manager; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Keith E. Barker as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his leadership and dedication to service and best wishes for his well-earned retirement.

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