

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 988

By Vaughan

A RESOLUTION to recognize James H. Lewellen on twenty-seven years of service as the Town Administrator of Collierville.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should specially recognize those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and aplomb throughout their years of public service; and

WHEREAS, James H. Lewellen is one such estimable individual, who has served for more than two and a half decades as the Town Administrator of the Town of Collierville; and

WHEREAS, throughout his distinguished twenty-seven-year career with the Town of Collierville, Mr. Lewellen has provided solid leadership and thoughtful guidance for his fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, a native of Ripley, Mississippi, James Lewellen graduated from Mississippi State University with a bachelor's degree in education and master's degree in public policy and public administration; and

WHEREAS, he served as Director of the Planning and Development Department for the City of Southaven, Mississippi, for two years prior to accepting a position with Germantown as Chief Planner in the Department of Development in 1989; he was promoted to Assistant City Administrator in 1993, and two years later, he began his career with the Town of Collierville in his current position as Town Administrator; and

WHEREAS, since his arrival in 1995, Mr. Lewellen has served under three mayors and witnessed Collierville's population soar from 18,000 to 52,000; the town has grown in other ways under his watch: the budgeted general fund has grown from \$11.2 million to \$61.2 million, and the town's workforce has increased from 241 to 603 total employees; and

WHEREAS, as Town Administrator, James Lewellen helped oversee and develop the first-ever Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which has helped Collierville transform from a developing rural community into a cosmopolitan suburb; and

WHEREAS, his tireless efforts on behalf of Collierville have played a significant role in numerous corporate developments, including FedEx World Technology Center, Baptist Memorial Hospital, and Carriage Crossing moving their headquarters to the town; since the establishment of an Economic Development division in 2014, even more corporations have moved to Collierville, including Orgill, Mueller Industries, MCR Safety, Helena, and Juice Plus; and

WHEREAS, under James Lewellen's adroit leadership, the town has received a AAA bond rating from Moody's Investor Service and has won the distinguished Budget Award for twenty-three consecutive years from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States; and

WHEREAS, during his time as Town Administrator, an Emergency Dispatch Center was built, along with three new fire stations and a fire administration and training building, and the town improved its fire protection ranking from a Class 4 to a Class 2, joining an elite group of only thirty-four communities in Tennessee with this ranking; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lewellen has been integral in historic preservation projects, including the transformation of the Morton Museum of Collierville History and the repurposing of the town's 1935-era historic high school; he also enhanced outdoor recreation in the area, with twenty miles of greenbelt trails, additional acreage, and the opening of the 110-acre Hinton Park in 2015; and

WHEREAS, James Lewellen was at the center of the town's multi-year effort to start a school system in Collierville, playing a key role in organizing a team of consultants and legal counsel, assisting State leaders with the coordination of legislative efforts, and leading town hall

meetings; his efforts proved fruitful in 2013, with the establishment of Collierville Schools, and the following year, the newly formed Collierville Municipal School System held its first classes; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Mr. Lewellen received Rotary Club of Memphis East's Duvavant Public Servant Award in 2014 and that same year was named City Manager of the Year by the Tennessee City Management Association, of which he is a past president; he has also been honored with the H.R. Houston Community Service Award by Leadership Collierville and the H.E. Harrell Education Award by the Collierville Chamber of Commerce, which also named him Person of the Year in 2021; and

WHEREAS, James Lewellen has been a devoted public servant and staunch advocate for the citizens of Collierville for more than two and a half decades, and it is most fitting that he be recognized at this time; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend James H. Lewellen for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee as Town Administrator of the Town of Collierville.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.