

### **Resolution 23-**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, wish to recognize Judy Ryals, President and CEO of the Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), who will retire on the 30th day of September, 2023, after more than 45 years of dedicated service; and

**WHEREAS**, Judy Ryals joined the Bureau in 1978 and is the longest serving director of a tourism agency in the State of Alabama. She has been appointed by six different governors to serve on the Advisory Board of the Alabama Bureau of Tourism & Travel and currently serves as Chairman. While the significance of Judy's accomplishments is difficult to measure, the impact of her efforts will be appreciated for years to come; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Ryals stands out within the Tourism industry, rightly considered a giant among her peers. She has received significant and well-earned recognition throughout her career. On two occasions she received the Award of Excellence from Alabama Travel Council and then in 2018 she was bestowed the State Lifetime Achievement Award by Governor Kay Ivey. She was one of the first females to serve as a board member of the International Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus, which is now Destinations International; and

**WHEREAS**, she has served on the Board of Directors of many statewide boards including the Alabama Council of Association Executives, Alabama Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus and Alabama Travel Council. She received the state's top award and was inducted into the Alabama Tourism Hall of Fame, the first CVB representative to receive this award. Under her leadership the Huntsville CVB was chosen as organization of the year by the Alabama tourism industry as well as by Alabama Mountain Lakes Association, the north Alabama regional tourism marketing organization; and

**WHEREAS**, with her diligent guidance the CVB has grown from 3 staff members and a budget under \$300,000 to 16 full-time and 30 part-time staff members with a budget of \$3.3 million. She was instrumental in implementing the lodging recruitment tax which has provided funding to key convention and sports groups, bringing a new level of tourism to the city. Judy's vision and resolve contribute to the ongoing success of our community; and

**WHEREAS**, She is a graduate of the University of Alabama where she received a degree in public relations in 1976. Mrs. Ryals, an Alabama native, is married to Davis W. Ryals, Jr. The couple has two sons, Bo and Matt, and four grandchildren, Ella, Davis, Hayes and Carter; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, gratefully acknowledge the dedication and commitment of Mrs. Judy Ryals to the City of Huntsville and for everything she has contributed to the City. The City Council and Mayor extend their best wishes on her retirement and in all future endeavors.

**ADOPTED** this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2023.

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President of the City Council of the  
City of Huntsville, Alabama

**APPROVED** this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2023.

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Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama