

RESOLUTION NO. RS2019-1600

A resolution honoring journalist Joey Garrison upon the occasion of his departure for Boston, Massachusetts following a decade of reporting and journalism excellence in Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, Joey Garrison, a native of Franklin and a graduate of Rhodes College in Memphis, is an award-winning reporter whose career in journalism began at the *Green Hills News*, followed by three years at *The City Paper*. He eventually became lead Metro government reporter at *The Tennessean* where he has served for the past six and a half years; and

WHEREAS, in the course of a journalism career spanning more than a decade in Nashville, Mr. Garrison reported on local politics, Metro government, Tennessee politics, and K-12 education. He attended and reported upon literally hundreds of Metro Council and MNPS school board meetings, as well as a litany of other Metro board and commission meetings, while also reporting from the 2016 DNC Presidential Convention in Philadelphia, President Donald Trump's inauguration, and countless other locations; and

WHEREAS, through diligent, thoughtful, and honest reporting, Mr. Garrison developed a respected reputation as the go-to source for the latest city hall developments, in-depth analysis of current events, and thorough coverage of policy debates. He brought a deep institutional knowledge to his assignments, often writing the obituaries of several of Nashville's larger political figures who died in recent years; and

WHEREAS, readers of *The Nashville Scene* twice named Mr. Garrison as the city's top political reporter, and *The Washington Post's* "The Fix" blog named him as a top political reporter in Tennessee. Through no coincidence, *The Tennessean* won the Tennessee Press Association's top education reporting award during years when Mr. Garrison was the newspaper's education reporter; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Garrison covered the administrations of three mayors and multiple Metro elections during a period where Nashville underwent tumultuous changes. His first major assignment involved the debate surrounding financing of the Music City Center; and his subsequent assignments led him to prepare the first drafts of history upon Nashville's defining moments, including Mayor Karl Dean's efforts to redevelop the fairgrounds; the financing of First Tennessee Park and Ascend Amphitheater; Mayor Megan Barry's resignation; the public referendum on a \$5.4 billion transit plan; the city-financed Major League Soccer stadium; Nashville's struggle to regulate short-term rental properties and electric scooters; the city's shrinking affordable housing stock amid rapid gentrification; redevelopment of the city's former convention center; the proposal to develop Fort Negley park; and several park land acquisitions and land swaps; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing unsurpassed coverage of developments in Nashville, Mr. Garrison also served as a key member of *The Tennessean's* political team that covered statewide elections, including the 2018 races for U.S. Senate and governor; and

WHEREAS, during his assignment as an education reporter, Mr. Garrison astutely traced the rapid influx of privately-led, publicly-financed charter schools into Nashville that brought unprecedented sums of money into local school board races, setting off intense debate over the future of Nashville's public school system. Mr. Garrison also reported closely on the controversial rein of former Tennessee education Commissioner Kevin Huffman, who pushed a reform-minded agenda that proved polarizing; and

WHEREAS, in his limited free time, Mr. Garrison is known to his friends and admirers as an avid sports fan, an excellent dancer, and a connoisseur of fine beers and other beverages; and

WHEREAS, despite Mr. Garrison's keen reporter's eye, he was nevertheless scooped by perhaps the only thing that could beat him to a story -- true love. Smitten by the most irresistible of sources, he will soon

leave Nashville to be with his beloved fiancé Laura in Boston where he will serve as *USA Today's* Boston correspondent reporter.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as formally honoring Joey Garrison for over a decade of excellence in journalism, for his integrity in reporting, for educating his devoted readers in civic affairs, and – most importantly – for his tireless devotion to the truth.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Clerk be directed to submit a copy of this Resolution to Mr. Joey Garrison.

Section 3. That this Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

Nancy VanReece

Jeremy Elrod

Mina Johnson
Members of Council