

IN THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

A RESOLUTION honoring the life and legacy of Anita J. Dixon-Brown.

RESOLUTION NO. 22151, February 2, 2026

INTRODUCED BY Megan L. Smith, Donna Peyton and Venessa Huskey, County Legislators

WHEREAS, Anita J. Dixon-Brown (September 26, 1956 – January 4, 2026) was a nationally and internationally respected educator, cultural advocate, preservationist, and visionary leader whose life's work was dedicated to sustaining and elevating the African American experience, particularly through music, history, education, and cultural tourism; and,

WHEREAS, Ms. Dixon-Brown was the founder of Creative City KC, Inc. and the principal architect behind Kansas City, Missouri becoming the first City of Music in the United States admitted into the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, a historic achievement that elevated Kansas City's cultural standing on the global stage; and,

WHEREAS, through her advocacy, Ms. Dixon-Brown preserved and promoted Kansas City's unique contributions to Black American music, illuminating the interconnected roots of gospel, blues, ragtime, and Kansas City Swing as foundational to global jazz, while championing both legendary musicians and emerging artists who sustained and evolved the Kansas City sound; and,

WHEREAS, Ms. Dixon-Brown began her career in cultural tourism in 1992 with the founding of Passage Unlimited, the Kansas City region's first full-time African American heritage tour company, and was widely recognized for advancing heritage tourism as a tool for economic

independence, historical awareness, and cultural preservation; and,

WHEREAS, she played a pivotal role in the passage of H.R. 1635, the National Network to Freedom Act, helping preserve and interpret the sites and history of the Underground Railroad through her advocacy in Washington, D.C., and her work with national leaders and institutions; and,

WHEREAS, Ms. Dixon-Brown was a tireless advocate for equitable access to music education, leading efforts that resulted in the American Music Apprenticeship Program (AMAP) being recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor, establishing musicianship as an apprenticeship-eligible profession for the first time in American history; and,

WHEREAS, her work spanned continents and cultures, building lasting international relationships through UNESCO, inspiring creatives from Europe, Africa and the Americas, and positioning Kansas City as a respected and active global cultural partner; and,

WHEREAS, Ms. Dixon-Brown received numerous honors throughout her career, including Business Woman of the Year (Black Chamber of Commerce, 2005), the APEX Award for Heritage Tourism (2012), Donnelly College Alumni Hall of Fame (2014), Historic Kansas City Preservation Award (2018), and the Sound Diplomacy Public Service Award for Leading Music Cities Professionals (2020); and,

WHEREAS, beyond her professional achievements, Anita J. Dixon-Brown was a teacher, mentor, prolific orator, spiritual witness to history, and lifelong learner whose work embodied

the UNESCO principle of universal access to knowledge, leaving an enduring imprint on generations of students, artists, policymakers, and cultural advocates; and,

WHEREAS, despite facing significant health challenges, Ms. Dixon-Brown continued to serve Kansas City and its people with tenacity, vision, and grace until the very end of her life; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that Jackson County Legislature hereby honors and commemorates the extraordinary life, service, and legacy of Anita J. Dixon-Brown, recognizing her immeasurable contributions to Kansas City, to Black American cultural preservation, and to the global creative community; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this body expresses its deepest condolences to the Dixon-Brown family, her colleagues at Creative City KC, and the many individuals across the world whose lives were enriched by her leadership, scholarship, and unwavering commitment to justice, culture, and education; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be presented to Creative City KC, Inc. and the family of Anita J. Dixon-Brown as a lasting expression of gratitude, remembrance, and respect.

Effective Date: This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage by a majority of the Legislature.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Bryan Canish
County Counselor

Certificate of Passage

I hereby certify that the attached resolution, Resolution No. 22151 of February 2, 2026, was duly passed on February 2, 2026 by the Jackson County Legislature. The votes thereon were as follows:

Yeas 9

Nays 0

Abstaining 0

Absent 0

2.2.2026
Date

Mary Jo Spino
Mary Jo Spino, Clerk of Legislature