

# The Florida Times-Union

Tuesday  
AUGUST 15, 2017  
\$2



**SMOOTH START** Duval County schools open for 129,000 students **Metro, B-1**

**SUSPENDED  
UF RECEIVER  
CALLAWAY  
RUNNING OUT OF  
CHANCES** **Sports, C-1**



**SOME SENIORS SHOULDN'T BE DRIVING,  
BUT WANT TO KEEP INDEPENDENCE**  
**Life, D-1**

## Removing part of history?

Council president calls for Confederate memorial removals

By Nate Monroe & Christopher Hong  
The Times-Union

The president of the Jacksonville City Council called for the removal of Confederate monuments from public property Monday, instantly plunging Florida's most populous city into a volatile debate over the appropriateness of memorializing, without context, Southern generals and soldiers who fought for the preservation of chattel slavery.

Council President Anna Lopez Brosche wants to inventory all Confederate monuments, markers and memorials so they can be moved off public property and into museums or other settings, where they can be "historically contextualized." Her move came Monday in response to tragedy and chaos in Charlottesville, Va., characterized most starkly by the death of a 32-year-old woman after an Ohio man drove his car through a crowd of counter-protesters who challenged a white nationalist rally.

Brosche's proposal would most prominently include moving the 62-foot Vermont granite monument in Hemming Park, installed in 1898, that sits just feet away from City Hall and is topped by the bronze figure of a Confederate soldier in winter uniform, representing the Jacksonville Light Infantry, a Confederate military company.

**MEMORIAL** continues on **A-3**

### COUNCIL MEMBERS' REACT TO BROSCHÉ'S PROPOSAL

**Support:** Garrett Dennis, Reginald Brown, Joyce Morgan, Tommy Hazouiri

**Oppose:** Matt Schellenberg, Bill Gulliford

**Undecided:** Aaron Bowman, Scott Wilson, Jim Love, John Crescimbeni, Greg Anderson

**Others:** Al Ferraro, Lori Boyer, Reginald Gaffney, Katrina Brown, Danny Becton, Doyle Carter and Sam Newby didn't respond to multiple interview requests.



**Above:** The Confederate soldier statue atop Hemming Park's Confederate memorial represents the rank-and-file soldiers. (Florida Times-Union)

**Left:** Defenders of the Confederate monument made their presence known during the Art Walk on Aug. 2, while those who want to see the monument taken down met elsewhere. (Bob Self/Florida Times-Union)



## President acquiesces, denounces hate groups

Remarks amend prior response to tragedy

By Jonathan Lemire  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON | Bowing to pressure from right and left, President Donald Trump condemned white supremacist groups by name on Monday, declaring "racism is evil" after two days of public equivocation and internal White House debate over the deadly race-fueled clashes in Charlottesville, Virginia.

**MORE INSIDE**  
University of Florida prepares for white nationalist leader **A-3**

In a hastily arranged statement at the White House, Trump branded members of the KKK, neo-Nazis and white supremacists who take part in violence as "criminals and thugs."

The groups are "repugnant to everything that we hold dear as Americans," he said.

In his initial remarks on the violence Saturday, Trump did not single out the groups and instead bemoaned violence on "many sides." Those remarks prompted stern criticism from fellow Republicans as well as Democrats, who urged him to seize the moral authority of his office to

**TRUMP** continues on **A-3**

## Scott wants to make it harder to increase taxes

By Jim Turner  
News Service of Florida

TALLAHASSEE | Gov. Rick Scott, expected to run for U.S. Senate next year, wants lawmakers to put on the 2018 ballot a proposed constitutional amendment to make it harder for future legislators to raise taxes.

Scott appeared Monday in the Central Florida community of Lake Mary to announce the proposal, which would require "supermajority" approval from state lawmakers, rather than a simple majority of 50 percent plus one, for tax and fee increases.

"While cutting taxes is important, we must prevent against unfair tax increases

**TAXES** continues on **A-3**

**Weather**  
Not as stormy  
Forecast on **A-2**

94 Today's high  
76 Wednesday morning's low

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## TAXES

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in the future so our progress is not undone,” Scott said in a prepared statement. “It is my goal to make it harder for politicians to raise taxes on Florida families and businesses — and that can be achieved with an amendment to our state’s Constitution.”

If lawmakers go along with the proposal, it would require approval from 60 percent of voters during the November 2018 election.

The governor’s office did not provide full details about the proposal.

The idea drew quick support from House Speaker Richard Corcoran, R-Land O’ Lakes, and House Ways and Means Chairman Paul Renner, R-Palm Coast.

“I’m proud to offer my support to Governor Scott on this bold initiative and will do all I can to see that it is successful,” said Corcoran, who is considering a gubernatorial run in 2018, in a prepared statement.

Republican Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam, who is running for governor next year, also voiced support.

Meanwhile, Senate Appropriations Chairman Jack Latvala, R-Clearwater, who opened a gubernatorial campaign account Friday, thanked Scott for the proposal, but then pointed

to his own priorities for the 2018 legislative session, such as combatting the opioid epidemic and boosting jobs in parts of the state.

“Over 20 a day dying on opioids 36 counties lost jobs last twenty years,” Latvala tweeted. “Those are my priorities right now.”

The governor’s office didn’t offer a definition of a supermajority, which typically is at least two-thirds of the lawmakers casting votes. Also, it didn’t outline whether all taxes and fees would fall under the proposed constitutional amendment or just certain types of taxes and fees.

A news release said more details will be available in the coming weeks.

If such a proposal is ultimately approved, Florida would join states such as Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Louisiana, Mississippi and Oregon that require a two-thirds or three-fifths majority for all or some tax increases, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Scott also intends to make a similar request to the state Constitution Revision Commission, which is putting together proposed constitutional amendments to go before voters in 2018.

Already on the ballot for 2018 is a Corcoran priority that would let voters decide if homeowners should receive bigger property-tax breaks.

## UF girds for alt-right leader’s possible visit

By Dara Kam

The News Service of Florida

**TALLAHASSEE** | The University of Florida is coordinating with local and state law-enforcement officials in anticipation of the potential appearance in Gainesville of a white nationalist leader affiliated with this weekend’s deadly confrontation in Charlottesville, Va.

UF President Kent Fuchs sent an email to staff this weekend, alerting them that National Policy Institute President Richard Spencer, who made an appearance at the Charlottesville event, could speak at the university next month.

Spencer is a leader in the “alt-right” movement,

blamed for a deadly outbreak following a “Unite the Right” rally Saturday in Charlottesville that left one person dead after a car plowed into a group of counterprotesters.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott has been in contact with University of Florida officials regarding Spencer’s potential visit.

“Governor Scott has spoken with University of Florida President Kent Fuchs and Alachua County Sheriff Sadie Darnell to offer any support from the state, if needed. Regardless of how the university decides to move forward, Florida has zero tolerance for violence of any kind. Safety is always the governor’s foremost concern,” John Tupps, Scott’s

communications director, wrote in an email Monday.

Fuchs said in this weekend’s email to staff members that Spencer could make a Sept. 12 appearance.

“For many in our community, including myself, this speaker’s presence would be deeply disturbing. What we’ve watched happen in Charlottesville, Va. in the last 24 hours, is deplorable,” Fuchs said in the Saturday message. “I again denounce all statements and symbols of hate. The University of Florida is a community of learners, educators and scholars. We encourage open and honest dialogue, and we strive to build an inclusive environment where hate is not welcome.”

But, Fuchs added, “While this speaker’s views do not align with our values as an institution, we must follow the law, upholding the First Amendment not to discriminate based on content and provide access to a public space.”

University of Florida spokeswoman Janine Sikes stressed that the event has not been finalized.

“This is a tentative event at this point,” Sikes said. “Nothing has been signed. This is not a ‘go’ yet.”

Like other speakers, Spencer would have to pay for the rental of the space as well as security costs, which have not been determined, according to Sikes.

## TRUMP

Continued from A-1

condemn hate groups.

Trump’s softer statement on Saturday had come as graphic images of a car plowing into a crowd in Charlottesville were playing continually on television. White nationalists had assembled in the city to protest plans to take down a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, and counterprotesters gathered in opposition. Fights broke out, and then a man drove into the opponents of the white supremacists. One woman was killed and many more badly hurt. Twenty-year-old James Alex Fields Jr. of Ohio is charged with second-degree murder and other counts.

Loath to appear to be admitting a mistake, Trump was reluctant to adjust his remarks.

The president had indicated to advisers before his initial statement Saturday that he wanted to stress a need for law and order, which he did. He later expressed anger to

those close to him about what he perceived as the media’s unfair assessment of his remarks, believing he had effectively denounced all forms of bigotry, according to outside advisers and White House officials.

Several senior advisers, including new chief of staff John Kelly, had urged him to make a more specific condemnation, warning that the negative story would not go away and that the rising tide of criticism from fellow Republicans on Capitol Hill could endanger his legislative agenda, according to two White House officials.

The outside advisers and officials demanded anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Aides were dispatched to Sunday talk shows but struggled to explain the president’s position. A stronger statement was released — but attributed only to an unnamed spokesperson.

Tougher condemnations began Sunday night with Vice President Mike Pence, traveling in South

America, declaring that “these dangerous fringe groups have no place in American public life.”

On Monday, Trump had planned to interrupt his 17-day working vacation at his New Jersey golf club to travel to Washington for an announcement he hoped would showcase some tough talk on China’s trade practices.

But by the time he arrived at midmorning, it was clear all other messages would be drowned out until he said more about Charlottesville.

Trump returned to a White House undergoing a major renovation. With the Oval Office unavailable, he worked from the Treaty Room as aides drafted his remarks.

Reading from a teleprompter, he made a point of beginning with an unrelated plug for the strength of the economy under his leadership. Then, taking pains to insist “as I said on Saturday,” Trump denounced the hate groups and called for unity.

“We must love each other, show affection for each

other and unite together in condemnation of hatred, bigotry and violence,” he said.

Trump for the first time mentioned Heather Heyer by name as he paid tribute to the woman killed by the car.

At the trade event later in the day, he was asked why it took two days for him to offer an explicit denunciation of the hate groups.

“They have been condemned,” Trump responded before offering a fresh criticism of some media as “fake news.” He followed with a tweet declaring “the #fakenews will never be satisfied.”

Trump noted the Justice Department has opened a civil rights investigation.

His attorney general, Jeff Sessions, said earlier Monday on ABC’s “Good Morning America.” “You can be sure we will charge and advance the investigation toward the most serious charges that can be brought, because this is an unequivocally unacceptable and evil attack that cannot be accepted in America.”



Gov. Rick Scott wants to put on the 2018 ballot a proposed constitutional amendment to make it harder to raise taxes. (Chris Urso/Tampa Bay Times)

## MEMORIAL

Continued from A-1

“It’s really important to me that we recognize that we have part of the community who sees the monuments, markers and memorials as part of our history, part of our heritage,” Brosche said. “It’s also really important to me to recognize that there’s a part of the community that views these memorials and markers as a symbol of times that evokes some really negative emotions, and pain and hurt.”

The Times-Union asked all 19 council members to discuss their positions on removing confederate monuments and markers.

Four council members said they supported Brosche’s proposal and another two said they opposed it. Five council members approached Brosche’s announcement more cautiously, saying they believed it was time for the city to discuss the monument’s future, but held off on saying whether they supported it.

Seven council members didn’t respond.

Mayor Lenny Curry — who decried the white supremacists and other hate-groups in Charlottesville — said he would not use the bully pulpit of his office to advocate one way or another, while the city’s business leaders — who are often influential on matters of city policy — expressed an openness Monday to hearing out the proposal.

Jacksonville, one of the few major cities in America with a Republican-controlled City Council and mayor’s office, is deeply rooted in Southern culture, boasting less palm trees than the pine forests and oaks more characteristic of the Deep South.

A half-century ago, white and black voters overwhelmingly approved a plan consolidating the city and county, forever changing the political landscape in the city, but Jacksonville still remains divided by boundaries of race and wealth.

The city came under a series of four Union occupations during the Civil War, which, according to an account in The Florida Historical Quarterly, had left Jacksonville a “desolate, nearly empty city” with “at least a third of Jacksonville’s main business area ... in ashes.”

Jacksonville has numerous Confederate markers, from

Confederate Park, to schools named after prominent generals, to roads, as well as a neighborhood called Confederate Point.

Brosche said she hasn’t decided how to address those other traces of the Confederacy woven into the city’s fabric. She said her proposal is simply a first step.

“I don’t even know what monuments, memorials and markers are on public property,” Brosche said. “I’m not going to let the overwhelming evaluation cause me not to move forward on step 1. I don’t have an answer to how far it goes.”

There has been a relatively low-key but growing grassroots effort to address the city’s monuments that grew louder since the events in Virginia over the weekend. Brosche said after the chaos in Charlottesville, she decided to take the simmering issue head on.

### SUPPORT IN CITY HALL?

Curry — a rising star in Florida Republican politics who understands how to use the considerable power vested in the Jacksonville mayor’s office — has avoided taking positions on divisive issues in the past, arguing he wants to remain focused on two priorities that greatly affect many of the city’s black neighborhoods: public safety and at-risk children.

For now, Curry will sit out the debate over Confederate monuments.

“I encourage them to have the debate and if they pass legislation, I’ll look at it,” Curry said. “It wouldn’t be appropriate for me to inject into their priorities.”

It’s a posture similar to the one he took when the council debated earlier this year whether it should expand its human-rights ordinance to protect LGBT people from discrimination. Curry let the council take the lead on that issue. The council passed the expansion proposal and Curry allowed it to become law without his signature.

Comments from council members show Brosche’s proposal will not sail through without some scrutiny.

Councilman Bill Gulliford dismissed her idea as a “knee-jerk reaction” and said the monument in Hemming Park is not offensive. He said removing the monuments would be sanitizing history.

Unlike high-profile monu-

ments in other major cities, the statue in Hemming Park does not memorialize a specific Confederate general, but rather rank-and-file soldiers. The park is named after Civil War veteran Charles C. Hemming, who donated the statue.

“That doesn’t represent an individual, it represents a Confederate soldier, many Confederate soldiers,” Gulliford said. “Many of them were defending what they believed to be an invasion of their homeland.”

Other council members were more open to supporting Brosche’s idea.

“I think it was bold leadership on her part,” said Councilman Garrett Dennis.

Councilman Aaron Bowman said he wants to hear from people on both sides of the issue before making a decision.

“I think I’m certainly leaning to wanting to do the right things for all residents, and if that means taking some stuff down and moving it, I’ll support that,” said Councilman Aaron Bowman. “There’s probably some that serve a purpose and there are probably some that need to go.”

Councilman John Crescimbeni said he supports having the conversation about relocating the monuments. However, he said if the city decides to do that, it should apply the same policy to other monuments that pay tribute to other troubling historical figures.

“I do have concerns about where does it end. There’s a lot of things in our landscape, notwithstanding references to the Confederacy, that remind of us things that we wouldn’t be proud of if they occurred today,” he said. “I would rather develop a policy that didn’t tolerate any of that rather than singling out recognition of a period of history.”

It’s not the first time city officials have grappled with Confederate legacy.

In 2014, after years of debate, Duval’s school board renamed Nathan B. Forrest High to Westside High — casting aside the namesake known as a slave, Confederate general, and co-founder and leader of the Ku Klux Klan.

Board rules now prevent naming schools after people, dead or alive, but several Jacksonville schools retain the names of Confederate generals. The board would have to vote to change any of those names.

### BUSINESS LEADERS WILL WEIGH IN

Jacksonville business leaders — often right-of-center, but progressive on many policy issues — have played a critical role in policy debates throughout the city’s modern era, most recently helping muscle through the law that extended local discrimination protections to Jacksonville’s LGBT community.

The city’s two influential business groups — the JAX Chamber and the Civic Council, a private group of powerful CEOs — said they would be directly engaged on the issue.

“We commend Mayor Lenny Curry and City Council President Brosche for taking the lead to thoughtfully consider removal of Confederate monuments from local public property, particularly in light of the tragic events of last weekend,” Civic Council Chairman Ed Burr said in a statement. “The Civic Council will evaluate and weigh in on any legislation introduced on the matter.”

The chamber could begin to shape a position on the issue as soon as this week.

“I have spoken with our board chair Darnell Smith and we plan to discuss this issue at our next meeting,” Daniel Davis, president of the JAX Chamber, said in a statement.

“The violence in Charlottesville was disgusting, hateful and does not represent who we are as a country,” Davis said. “The JAX Chamber has historically taken a stand on civil rights issues in this community and I would expect us to be at the forefront of any discussion on removing Confederate monuments from city property.”

A spokesman for Jaguars owner Shad Khan didn’t directly say whether he supports removing the monuments, but indicated a supportive posture.

“Mr. Khan’s life story and stance on HRO speaks for itself on all matters of justice and equality,” said Jim Woodcock, Khan’s spokesman, using the acronym for Jacksonville’s human-rights ordinance, the law that protects local residents from various forms of discrimination.

Khan was a leading voice on the successful effort earlier this year to expand the ordinance to include LGBT people. He enlisted his top lobbyist to work reluctant City Council members.

### WHAT THEY’RE SAYING



“These monuments are part of our history, but make many feel unsafe and uncomfortable. But I believe we, as a council, owe it to the city for a safe, public form to discuss this.”

— Councilman Tommy Hazouri



“This is history. Part of history is learning from history and not making the same mistake. No one is perfect. All human beings are flawed and we should recognize that.”

— Councilman Matt Schellenberg



“I want to hear all the arguments. ... I think I understand both sides. I may not. There may be some nuances that I haven’t heard. Right now I’m in the learning stages.”

— Councilman Jim Love



“I strongly believe we need to have a dialogue. I want to understand why people are offended. I want to understand why people want them to stay up. I want our city to be an open and welcoming city, but I also want to have a balance with our history.”

— Councilman Aaron Bowman