

HARVEY JOHNSON, JR.
Mayoral Announcement Speech
Jackson Convention Center
January 31, 2009
12:00 p.m.

Good afternoon, friends and fellow Jacksonians. I am so proud to stand here with you today in front of the beautiful new Jackson Convention Center, because it was five years ago that we all stood together in an act of self-determination and hope, and sent a message that we could bring new jobs to Jackson . We sent a message that Jackson would house a facility that would bring millions of dollars into our city's economy. We sent a message to the naysayers and the pundits that not only could we be a destination for tourists, conventioners, trade shows and other one-of-a-kind events, but we could get things done!

This is but one of the many steps we took together to put Jackson on the right path...to enact REAL change for our city.

It is at this location that I stand with you today – in front of this beautiful building that represents a labor of love and of determination that began with our administration. It is at this Convention Center that we brought forth together, that I announce my intention to run for Mayor of the city of Jackson.

My decision to ask for your trust, once again, comes after a lot of prayer, and a lot of soul-searching. During the eight years I served in office, there were many, many successes for which I remain very proud. Much of what

we were able to accomplish together was hard-fought, but our accomplishments were all achieved with dignity, and with a heartfelt belief in Jackson and her people.

I have learned from both our successes and our short comings. I have listened and I have learned - while both in and out of office.

We are now faced with a unique challenge and the singular opportunity – to get Jackson Back on Track!

We've all witnessed, in the historic election of President Barack Obama, the breath of a campaign that departed from division and fear, and relied upon the multitude of voices, young and old, rich and poor, black and white, speaking of a longing for change, of hope, of community and with a spirit of service and unity.

I have long embraced these ideals... and they will not only guide our campaign, but will be our cornerstone once I reach the office of Mayor.

And I promise you this: Together WE CAN get Jackson BACK on TRACK!

The city of Jackson is at a pivotal moment in time. Our downtown is undergoing a true renaissance. We are poised to capitalize on so many opportunities, and we must respond to the lingering problems that our city

faces. But we need someone with a proven track record, the experience, the know-how and the judgment to govern our city.

I'm running for Mayor because I love this city and my experience serving the citizens of Jackson makes me believe that, together, we can get Jackson back on track and shape the future of our city with a new optimism, a new direction, and renewed hope.

Bullet Points of Action Plans

- Government is for the people and by the people and elected officials **MUST BE TRANSPARENT**. I will introduce a new level of transparency and accountability to city government in Jackson. We will employ the City Stat system that removes the veil from over city government and allows everyone to see the progress their city workers are making, and thus holding them accountable. Our citizens deserve nothing less.
- We **WILL** recruit and train more Police Officers.
- We **WILL** reinstate the Crime Prevention Unit.
- We **WILL** establish a Victims Rights Office in the Police Department.
- We **WILL** fully staff the fire department.
- We **WILL** ensure that our children are well-educated and prepared to compete once they leave our public school system.

- We WILL fully staff our grants development department with effective, experienced grant writers and managers.
- We WILL revamp our planning department to meet the new challenges for business development.
- We WILL invest in youth development, youth jobs and elderly services.
- We WILL improve our neighborhoods...tearing down bad housing and building affordable housing, while rehabilitating older houses.
- We WILL create jobs, and make sure Jacksonians are put to work.

It will take all of us to put Jackson **BACK ON TRACK**. And all of Jackson will have a seat around the table as we move forward.

Young adults – the young men and women who have so much energy and promise – Jackson is your home and you have a seat at the table. We can work together to forge a city that will keep you here...starting your adult lives in our neighborhoods...frequenting our attractions and restaurants...and building our workforce, while you begin to build your families.

Our community is filled with a diverse, richly textured tapestry of people who all deserve to be heard - who all want a city that thrives and exists to

provide them with a functioning city government, with affordable and decent city services, a city not burdened by crime and crumbling infrastructure, a city made up of a strong local economy, where a livable wage can be earned. You ALL have a seat at the table.

To our elderly and underserved – you too have a seat at the table. We owe it to you to ensure that your needs are met. We must proclaim that each and every single person is a person of value in the city of Jackson!

Business Community...you have a seat at the table. Let's join together and work towards building innovative economic development projects that bolster your profit margins and enhance the quality of life for our citizens at the same time. Let's partner to craft better business development ordinances...let's devise smart, novel financing packages like we did with Union Station and like we began with the King Edward development to bring world-class opportunities to our workforce and our community. Let us tap into and explore the abundance of resources and potential we have in the city of Jackson.

I don't have all the answers, and we certainly won't always agree, but my pledge is to do my level best to listen to your concerns, your ideas and work with you to devise action.

I'm going to need your prayers and I'm going to need your support as we move forward from today.

May God bless all of you, and God bless the City of Jackson.