

IN MEMORIAM



David J. Thompson, the 5th Public Safety Director of the City of Jacksonville, died on May 15, 2026, following a lengthy period of severe medical issues.

Dave began his career with the City in the Highway Department in January 1957, transferring to the Fire Department in August of 1960, when the Department increased staffing and began our current 3-shift rotation.

Shortly after “rookie school”, Dave was assigned to the Marine Activity. He was promoted to Marine Engineer on June 12, 1964. In his early career, Dave enrolled in Jacksonville University, earning an Accounting Degree.

During the Consolidation of the City and County Governments, the Fire Department became a unit of the Department of Public Safety, known as the Fire Division. Dave was temporarily assigned to Fire Headquarters to work on budgets and the organizational structure, merging the Urban District (old City) with the General Services District (old County) and consolidating 16 separate “Fire Departments” into a unified unit. A 5-year plan was developed. As is often the case, well-designed plans are at the mercy of current events. A serious fire at a large apartment complex in Arlington led to the immediate merging of the Urban and General Service Districts. Former General Service District firefighters were placed on the 24/48 schedule from their previously one-on/one-off schedule.

In the first year of Consolidation, the Fire Division hired several hundred new firefighters to increase staffing at the former General Service District stations and to staff the additional Rescue Units being placed in service.

Dave was promoted to Administrative Coordinator in November of 1968, serving as the budget officer to the Director until retiring in January of 1980.

He then began a new phase in his career, as Director of Fire Science Education at then Florida Junior College, now Florida State College – Jacksonville.

Dave returned to the City as Director of Public Safety upon Mayor Tommy Hazouri's election. He was the first Director to have previously served as a firefighter. Dave retired again in October, 1991, following Mayor Ed Austin's election. He worked for the State of Florida for many additional years.

May he rest in Peace.