



EMBARGOED UNTIL 5 a.m. EST Wednesday, Aug. 17, 2022

New UNF Poll Shows Waters Narrowly Ahead of Burton for Sheriff *Runoff election likely in November*

The Public Opinion Research Lab (PORL) at the University of North Florida recently conducted a poll of likely primary voters in Duval County. Likely primary voters include those who indicated they will definitely vote in the August 23 primary election, or already voted. Respondents were asked about their vote choices in the primary election, the upcoming mayoral race as well as potential stadium improvements.

Respondents were asked about the special election to elect a new Jacksonville Sheriff, after Mike Williams's resignation in June amid concerns over his residency in Nassau County. When asked about their vote choice, 41% of respondents said they would vote for Republican TK Waters, followed closely by 39% for Democrat Lakesha Burton. Trailing behind the two frontrunners are Democrats Ken Jefferson (8%), Tony Cummings (5%), and Wayne Clark (4%).

"With TK Waters and Lakesha Burton neck-in-neck in a crowded field, there's a good chance this race will go to a runoff in November," commented Dr. Michael Binder, PORL faculty director and UNF professor of political science. "If that happens, it will add a very competitive local race to the midterm elections."

Also on the ballot is a referendum proposing a property tax increase to fund Duval County schools, including teacher pay increase and program improvements. When asked about this referendum, 51% percent of respondents said they would vote in favor of the millage increase, with 45% indicating a vote against it. Support for the measure is split along party lines, with 71% of Democrats supporting, and 63% of Republicans opposed.

"I was a bit surprised the numbers were so close with only a slight majority indicating a 'yes' vote for the millage increase," said Binder. "I thought it would be polling higher, but it's not entirely surprising to see a partisan split here, especially since public education has become so politicized the last couple years."

In addition to items currently on the ballot, respondents were asked about the 2023 Jacksonville Mayoral election. They were asked to choose from a list of candidates who have either already filed to run in the election or have publicly expressed intention to run. Democrat Donna Deegan has the most support with 31%, followed by Republican Daniel Davis in a distant second with 11%, and Democrat Audrey Gibson with 10%. Twenty percent of respondents said they don't know or refused to answer.

"We're still seven months out and this list of candidates will undoubtedly change as we get closer to the mayoral race in 2023," said Binder. "For now, at least, Donna Deegan is the clear frontrunner with a 20-point lead."

Respondents were also asked whether they would support the City of Jacksonville splitting the cost of a new or improved stadium with the Jaguars, to which most respondents said they were opposed. Sixty-seven percent said they were opposed to spending \$375 million of public funds on a new roof for the stadium, with 32% supporting. When asked about spending up to \$850 million of public funds on a new stadium, 80% were opposed, while just 19% expressed support.

“Not much has changed since the last time we polled on this issue in February when most Duval voters opposed splitting the \$1 billion cost of a new stadium,” Binder noted. “Folks seem slightly more open to spending taxpayer dollars on a new roof but still a wide majority are opposed. Although a few more wins by the Jags could certainly change these numbers a little.”

Methodology

The UNF PORL Duval Primary Poll consists of a random sample of 491 likely primary voters in Duval County, and was conducted August 8 through August 12, 2022, by the Public Opinion Research Lab (PORL) at the University of North Florida. The survey was administered through email via Qualtrics, an online survey platform. The sampling frame was comprised of registered Duval County voters in the July 2022 update of the Florida voter file, who either had a listed email address or could be matched using a commercial database. Aristotle’s Match-It service was used, which matched respondents to email addresses using the name and physical address listed in the voter file. The survey had a 6.7% response rate.

The data were weighted to partisan registration, age, race, sex, and education. Education weights were created from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) 2020 estimates for the percent of college-educated individuals over the age of 25. Partisan registration, sex, race, and age weights were created from the July 2022 update of the Florida Voter File to match likely registered voters in Duval County.

All weighted demographic variables were applied using the SPSS version 26 rake weighting function, which will not assign a weight if one of the demographics being weighted on is missing. The margin of sampling error (including an estimated design effect) for the total number of likely voters in the sample is +/- 5.9 percentage points

The PORL is a full-service survey research facility that provides tailored research to fulfill each client’s individual needs from political, economic, social, and cultural projects. The PORL opened in 2001 and is an independent, non-partisan center, a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research Transparency Initiative and a member of the Association of Academic Survey Research Organization. As members of AAPOR, the PORL’s goal is to support sound and ethical practices in the conduct of survey and public opinion research. For more information about methodology, contact Dr. Michael Binder at porl@unf.edu or (904) 620-2784.

About University of North Florida

The University of North Florida is a nationally ranked university located on a beautiful 1,381-acre campus in Jacksonville surrounded by nature. Serving 17,000 students, UNF features six colleges of distinction with innovative programs in high-demand fields. UNF students receive individualized attention from faculty and gain valuable real-world experience

engaging with community partners. A top public university, UNF prepares students to make a difference in Florida and around the globe. Learn more at www.unf.edu.

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As you may know, former Jacksonville Sheriff Mike Williams retired from office in June of this year. As a result, a special election will be held in the August 23rd primary to elect a new sheriff. If the special election were held today, which of the following candidates would you vote for?

	Total n=491	Party			Sex		College		Race/Ethnicity				Age					
		Dem n=207	Rep n=193	NPA/Oth n=91	M n=273	F n=218	No n=137	Yes n=349	White n=426	Afr Am/Black n=41	Hisp n=10	Other n=14	18-24 n=9	25-34 n=26	35-44 n=50	45-54 n=57	55-64 n=100	65+ n=249
Lakesha Burton (DEM)	39%	74%	5%	40%	28%	49%	39%	40%	22%	73%	36%	59%	36%	61%	72%	34%	25%	18%
Wayne Clark (DEM)	4%	5%	<1%	15%	3%	5%	5%	3%	6%	2%	-	3%	23%	7%	<1%	6%	<1%	2%
Tony Cummings (DEM)	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	3%	6%	3%	5%	32%	3%	9%	7%	-	4%	2%	7%
Ken Jefferson (DEM)	8%	12%	4%	11%	13%	4%	9%	7%	5%	16%	-	9%	14%	-	8%	4%	7%	16%
TK Waters (REP)	41%	1%	84%	25%	46%	36%	41%	41%	60%	4%	32%	24%	14%	23%	18%	46%	63%	55%
Don't know/Refusal	3%	3%	3%	6%	4%	2%	3%	4%	5%	-	<1%	3%	5%	-	3%	7%	3%	3%

A referendum will be presented to Jacksonville voters in the August 23rd primary election that reads:

Shall the Duval County School District levy an ad valorem operating millage of 1 mill annually to attract and retain high-quality teachers and staff through additional compensation, enhance art, music and athletic programs, and provide proportionate funding for charter schools, in order to continue and sustain improvements in the quality of Duval County's school system.

	Total n=491	Party			Sex		College		Race/Ethnicity				Age					
		Dem n=207	Rep n=193	NPA/Oth n=91	M n=273	F n=218	No n=137	Yes n=349	White n=426	Afr Am/Black n=41	Hisp n=10	Other n=14	18-24 n=9	25-34 n=26	35-44 n=50	45-54 n=57	55-64 n=100	65+ n=249
YES, for additional millage	51%	71%	28%	63%	46%	55%	45%	63%	43%	61%	57%	71%	100%	74%	72%	35%	21%	42%
NO, against additional millage	45%	29%	63%	37%	51%	39%	51%	37%	52%	39%	17%	29%	-	18%	28%	60%	78%	53%
Don't know/Refusal	4%	1%	9%	-	3%	5%	4%	1%	5%	-	26%	-	-	8%	-	5%	2%	6%

If the 2023 Jacksonville mayoral election were held today, which of the following candidates would you vote for?

	Total n=491	Party			Sex		College		Race/Ethnicity				Age					
		Dem n=207	Rep n=193	NPA/Oth n=91	M n=273	F n=218	No n=137	Yes n=349	White n=426	Afr Am/Black n=41	Hisp n=10	Other n=14	18-24 n=9	25-34 n=26	35-44 n=50	45-54 n=57	55-64 n=100	65+ n=249
Omega Allen (NPA)	2%	-	-	19%	-	4%	4%	-	<1%	8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LeAnna Cumber (REP)	7%	<1%	15%	6%	9%	6%	5%	13%	-	4%	11%	-	15%	1%	8%	9%	6%	-
Donna Deegan (DEM)	31%	63%	2%	24%	30%	31%	30%	32%	23%	42%	35%	46%	77%	39%	50%	29%	12%	19%
Daniel Davis (REP)	11%	<1%	24%	6%	10%	13%	11%	12%	17%	2%	-	9%	14%	4%	3%	11%	16%	19%
Al Ferraro (REP)	8%	1%	15%	7%	14%	3%	8%	9%	12%	2%	-	-	-	1%	10%	12%	10%	8%
Audrey Gibson (DEM)	10%	21%	2%	2%	10%	10%	7%	16%	1%	33%	-	-	5%	4%	8%	13%	9%	14%
Frankie Ray Keasler, Jr. (REP)	<1%	-	1%	2%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	-	-	-	-	-	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%
Darcy G. Richardson (NPA)	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	-	-	-	-	1%	-	<1%	<1%	<1%
Theresa Ann Richardson (DEM)	<1%	-	-	<1%	-	<1%	-	<1%	<1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<1%
Someone Else	10%	3%	17%	11%	11%	10%	13%	6%	13%	7%	9%	3%	-	7%	16%	12%	15%	
Don't know/Refusal	20%	13%	25%	24%	16%	23%	22%	13%	22%	7%	52%	31%	5%	23%	22%	11%	31%	19%

Would you support or oppose the city of Jacksonville splitting the costs with the Jaguars on a new roof for the stadium, spending up to \$375 million of public funds?

	Total n=491	Party			Sex		College		Race/Ethnicity				Age					
		Dem n=207	Rep n=193	NPA/Oth n=91	M n=273	F n=218	No n=137	Yes n=349	White n=426	Afr Am/Black n=41	Hisp n=10	Other n=14	18-24 n=9	25-34 n=26	35-44 n=50	45-54 n=57	55-64 n=100	65+ n=249
Strongly support	7%	6%	5%	19%	13%	2%	6%	10%	6%	12%	-	-	-	4%	13%	7%	3%	8%
Somewhat support	25%	33%	23%	7%	35%	17%	25%	27%	21%	42%	26%	-	17%	21%	33%	24%	16%	32%
Somewhat oppose	18%	16%	20%	17%	14%	21%	15%	18%	23%	7%	26%	14%	39%	20%	12%	11%	19%	20%
Strongly oppose	49%	45%	50%	57%	37%	60%	53%	45%	48%	40%	48%	86%	44%	56%	41%	53%	62%	41%
Don't know/Refusal	1%	-	3%	<1%	2%	<1%	2%	1%	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	5%	<1%	<1%

Would you support or oppose the city of Jacksonville splitting the costs with the Jaguars on a new stadium, spending up to \$850 million of public funds?

	Total n=491	Party			Sex		College		Race/Ethnicity				Age					
		Dem n=207	Rep n=193	NPA/Oth n=91	M n=273	F n=218	No n=137	Yes n=349	White n=426	Afr Am/Black n=41	Hisp n=10	Other n=14	18-24 n=9	25-34 n=26	35-44 n=50	45-54 n=57	55-64 n=100	65+ n=249
Strongly support	6%	5%	4%	19%	11%	2%	4%	9%	4%	13%	-	-	-	4%	9%	9%	1%	6%
Somewhat support	13%	18%	11%	2%	15%	11%	10%	18%	12%	20%	<1%	-	17%	17%	5%	10%	11%	18%
Somewhat oppose	11%	9%	14%	6%	15%	7%	10%	13%	13%	8%	17%	3%	-	7%	20%	6%	10%	14%
Strongly oppose	69%	68%	68%	74%	57%	80%	74%	59%	69%	59%	83%	97%	83%	73%	65%	71%	76%	62%
Don't know/Refusal	1%	-	3%	<1%	2%	<1%	1%	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5%	1%	<1%

Nature of the Sample	
MoE = +/- 5.9	
Likely Primary Voters	n=491
Party Registration	
Democrat	44%
Republican	44%
NPA/Other	12%
Sex	
Male	47%
Female	53%
Race/Ethnicity	
White	60%
African American/Black	27%
Hispanic/Latino	5%
Other	8%
Education	
No Bachelor's Degree	63%
Bachelor's Degree	37%
Age	
18-24	5%
25-34	17%
35-44	17%
45-54	19%
55-64	15%
65+	27%