

EXHIBIT "A

ARTICLES

[Insert Articles of Incorporation of Association]

Exhibit "A"

**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
HICKORY RIDGE OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.**

In compliance with the requirements of Florida Statutes, Chapter 617, the undersigned incorporator has executed, adopted and caused to be delivered for filing these Articles of Incorporation for the purpose of forming a corporation not for profit and does hereby certify:

**ARTICLE I
NAME OF CORPORATION**

The name of the corporation is HICKORY RIDGE OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC. (hereinafter called the "Association").

**ARTICLE II
PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The principal place of business and the mailing address of the Association is located at 1880 South 14th Street, Suite 103, Fernandina Beach, Florida 32034.

**ARTICLE III
REGISTERED OFFICE AND REGISTERED AGENT**

The street address of the registered office of the Association is Galphin Real Estate Services, CAM, Inc., and the name of the initial registered agent to accept service of process within the State of Florida at that address is: 1880 South 14th Street, Suite 103, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034.

**ARTICLE IV
DEFINITIONS**

Unless otherwise provided herein to the contrary, all terms used in these Articles shall have the same definitions and meanings as those set forth in that certain Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for Hickory Ridge, recorded or to be recorded in the Public Records of Nassau County, Florida, as it may from time to time be amended (hereinafter called the "Declaration").

**ARTICLE V
PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The Association does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit to the Members thereof. The Association shall not pay dividends and no part of any income of the Association shall be distributed to its Members, directors or officers.

The general nature, objects and purposes of the Association are:

- A. To promote matters of common interest and concern of the Owners of property within the real property subject to the terms and provision of the Declaration.
- B. To own, maintain, repair and replace the Common Property, including without limitation the structures, landscaping and other improvements located thereon, for which the obligation to maintain and repair has been delegated to and accepted by the Association.
- C. To operate, maintain and manage the Surface Water or Stormwater Management System in a manner consistent with all permits issued by the St. Johns River Water Management District and the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and all laws and regulations pertaining thereto, and in the enforcement of the Declaration which relate to the Surface Water or Stormwater Management System.
- D. To provide, purchase, acquire, replace, improve, maintain, operate and repair such buildings, structures, landscaping, equipment, and to provide such other services for the benefit of the members of the Association, as the Board of Directors in its discretion determines necessary, appropriate, and/or convenient.
- E. To operate without profit for the sole and exclusive benefit of its Members.
- G. To perform all of the functions contemplated for the Association and undertaken by the Board of Directors pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Declaration.

ARTICLE VI GENERAL POWERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association shall have all the powers of a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Florida, subject only to such limitations upon the exercise of such powers as are expressly set forth in these Articles, the Bylaws, or the Declaration. The Association shall have the power and duty to do any and all lawful things which may be authorized, assigned, required or permitted to be done by the Declaration, these Articles or the Bylaws, and to do and perform any and all acts which may be necessary or proper for, or incidental to, the exercise of any of the duties or powers of the Association for the benefit of the Owners and for the maintenance, operation and improvement of the Property and Areas of Common Responsibility. The Association shall operate, maintain and manage the surface water or stormwater management system(s) in a manner consistent with the St. Johns River Water Management District permit no. 152069-1 requirements and applicable District rules, and shall assist in the enforcement of the Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions which relate to the surface water or stormwater management system. The Association shall levy and collect adequate assessments against members of the Association for the costs of maintenance and

operation of the surface water or stormwater management system.

The general powers that the Association shall have are as follows:

- A. To hold funds solely and exclusively for the benefit of the Members for purposes set forth in these Articles of Incorporation.
- B. To promulgate and enforce rules, regulations, bylaws, covenants, restrictions and agreements to effectuate the purposes for which the Association is organized.
- C. To delegate power or powers where such is deemed in the interest of the Association.
- D. To purchase, lease, hold, sell, mortgage or otherwise acquire or dispose of real or personal property, to enter into, make, perform or carry out contracts of every kind with any person, firm, corporation or association (including without limitation contracts for services to provide for operation and routine custodial maintenance of the Surface Water or Stormwater Management System); to do any and all acts necessary or expedient for carrying on any and all of the activities and pursuing any and all of the objects and purposes set forth in the Declaration and these Articles of Incorporation and not forbidden by the laws of the State of Florida.
- E. To fix assessments to be levied against all or any portion of the Property to defray expenses and costs of effectuating the objects and purposes of the Association and to create reasonable reserves for such expenditures, and to authorize its Board of Directors to enter into agreements with other property owners associations or maintenance entities for the collection of such assessments. The foregoing shall include the power to levy and collect adequate assessments against the Members for the costs of maintenance and operation of the Surface Water or Stormwater Management System. Such assessments shall be used for the maintenance and repair of the Surface Water or Stormwater Management System, including but not limited to, work within retention areas, drainage structures and drainage easements.
- F. To charge recipients for services rendered by the Association and the users of the Association property where such is deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors of the Association and permitted by the Declaration.
- G. To pay taxes and other charges, if any, on or against property owned, accepted, or maintained by the Association.
- H. To borrow money and, from time to time, to make, accept, endorse, execute and issue debentures, promissory notes or other obligations of the Association for monies borrowed, or in payment for property acquired, or for any of the other purposes of

the Association, and to secure the payment of such obligations by mortgage, pledge, or other instrument of trust, or by lien upon, assignment of or agreement in regard to all or any part of the property rights or privileges of the Association wherever situated.

I. To merge with any other association which may perform similar functions located within the same general vicinity of the Property.

J. To make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations governing the use of Common Property/Elements and any property owned by the Association.

K. To maintain, repair, replace, operate and manage the Common Property.

L. To employ personnel, agents or independent contractors to perform the services required for the proper operation of the Common Property.

M. To exercise architectural control over Improvements within the Property pursuant to the rights granted to the Association in the Declaration.

N. In general, to have all powers conferred upon a corporation by the laws of the State of Florida, except as prohibited herein and by the terms and conditions set forth in the Declaration.

ARTICLE VII MEMBERSHIP

A. **Members.** Every person or entity who is a record Owner of a fee interest in any Lot in the Property shall be a Member of the Association. Declarant shall also be a Member for so long as Declarant owns any portion of the Property. Notwithstanding anything else to the contrary set forth in this Article, any such person or entity who holds such interest merely as security for the performance of an obligation shall not be a Member of the Association. The Association membership of each Owner (other than Declarant) shall be appurtenant to and may not be separated from the Lot giving rise to such membership, and shall not be transferred except upon the transfer of title to said Lot and then only to the transferee of title thereto. Any prohibited separate transfer shall be void. Any transfer of title to a Lot shall operate automatically to transfer the membership in the Association appurtenant thereto to the new Owner thereof.

B. CLASSES

The Association shall have two (2) classes of voting membership:

1. Class "A." Class "A: Members shall be all Owners, with the exception of Declarant for so long as Declarant retains Class "B" voting rights. Each Class "A" Member shall have one (1) vote for each Lot owned by that Member.

2. Class "B." The sole Class "B" Member shall be Declarant. Declarant shall

be entitled to three (3) votes for each Lot in the Property owned by Declarant, plus three (3) votes for each potential subdivision lot that has not yet been annexed but which could be developed upon the lands eligible for annexation to the Property under the terms of the Declaration.

(a) Termination of Class "B" Membership. As each Lot in the Property is conveyed by Declarant to a Class "A" Member, Declarant's votes for that Lot shall lapse. The Class "B" membership shall terminate and become converted to Class "A" membership upon the earlier of the following:

- (i) When the total outstanding Class "A" votes in the Association equals or exceeds the total outstanding Class "B" votes; or
- (ii) Ten (10) years from the date of recording this Declaration; or
- (iii) At such earlier time as Declarant, in its sole discretion, may so elect.

Upon the happening of any one of these events, Declarant shall call a special meeting of the Members to advise of the termination of Class "B" membership.

When the total outstanding Class "A" votes in the Association equals or exceeds the total outstanding Class "B" votes; or ten (10) years from the date of recording the Declaration; or At such earlier time as Declarant, in its discretion, may so elect. Upon the happening of any one of these events, Declarant shall call a special meeting of the Members to advise of the termination of Class "B" membership. Each vote in the Association must be cast as a single vote, and fractional votes shall not be allowed. If joint or multiple Owners are unable to agree among themselves as to how their vote is to be cast, or if more than one (1) Class "A" vote is cast for any Lot, none of the votes for that Lot shall be counted. If any Owner casts a vote on behalf of a Lot, it shall be conclusively presumed that Owner was acting with the authority and consent of all other Owners of that Lot. If more than one Class "A" vote is cast for a particular Lot, none of said votes shall be counted and said votes shall be deemed void.

ARTICLE VIII BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The affairs of this Association shall be managed and administered by a Board of Directors consisting of three (3), five (5), or seven (7) members. Initially, the Board shall consist of three (3) members, with the number in subsequent years to be determined by the members of the Board; provided that there shall always be an odd number of directorships created. The number of directors may be changed by amendment to the Bylaws of the Association. The names and addresses of persons who are to act in the capacity of director until appointment or election of their successors are:

NAME**ADDRESS**

Jay Mock

P.O. Box 706
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Nick Gillette

20 South 4th Street,
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Jay Mock

P.O. Box 706
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Any other provision of this Article to the contrary notwithstanding, Owners other than Declarant shall be entitled to elect at least a majority of the members of the Board of Directors not later than three (3) months after ninety percent (90%) of the Lots for all phases of Hickory Ridge that will ultimately be operated by the Association have been conveyed to Owners. Until then, Declarant shall be entitled to appoint all members of the Board of Directors. Thereafter, Declarant shall be entitled to elect at least one member of the Board of Directors as long as Declarant holds for sale in the ordinary course of business at least five percent (5%) of the Lots in all phases of Hickory Ridge. After Declarant relinquishes control of the Association, Declarant may exercise the right to vote any Declarant-owned voting interests in the same manner as any other Owner, except for purposes of reacquiring control of the Association or selecting the majority of the members of the Board of Directors. Interim vacancies in the Board of Directors shall be filled by Declarant until Declarant has no authority to appoint Directors and thereafter by the majority of the remaining Directors, and any such appointed Director shall serve for the remaining term of his predecessor. After Declarant relinquishes its right to appoint the Board of Directors, the Members shall elect the directors by majority vote, for staggered terms of three (3) years each. To create the staggered terms, at the first election following turnover, the Members shall elect one (1) director for a term of three (3) years, one (1) director for a term of two (2) years, and one (1) director for a term of one (1) year. The candidate with the highest number of votes will fill the three-year term seat; the candidate with the next highest number of votes will fill the two-year term seat, and the candidate with the third highest number of votes will fill the one-year term seat. Thereafter, each director will be elected for three-year terms. In the event that the number of people comprising the Board of Directors is changed, such change in number shall be implemented in such a manner as to have as nearly equal in number as possible the number of directors whose terms expire in any given year.

**ARTICLE IX
OFFICERS**

The day-to-day affairs of the Association shall be administered, subject to the direction and authority of the Board of Directors, by the officers of the Association, which may include a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and such other officers as

permitted by the Bylaws. The officers shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and they shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors. The names and addresses of the officers who shall serve until their successors are designated by the Board of Directors are as follows:

NAME

ADDRESS

Jay Mock

P.O. Box 706
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Nick Gillette

20 South 4th Street,
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Jay Mock

P.O. Box 706
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

**ARTICLE X
EXISTENCE AND DURATION**

Existence of the Association shall commence with the filing of these Articles of Incorporation with the Secretary of State, Tallahassee, Florida. The Association shall thereafter exist in perpetuity.

**ARTICLES XI
AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these Articles shall be proposed and adopted in the following manner:

A. Notice. Notice of a proposed amendment shall be included in the notice of any meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be considered and shall be otherwise given in the time and manner provided in Chapter 617, Florida Statutes. Such notice shall contain the proposed amendment or a summary of the changes to be affected thereby.

B. Adoption. Amendments shall be proposed and adopted in the manner provided in Chapter 617, Florida Statutes. Subject to the terms of Articles XIV, any amendment to these Articles of Incorporation shall require the assent of two thirds (2/3) of the votes of the entire membership without regard to class.

C. Recording. A copy of each amendment shall be filed with the Secretary of State pursuant to the provisions of applicable Florida law, and a copy certified by the Secretary of State shall be recorded in the public records of Nassau County, Florida with an identification on the first page thereof of the book and page of said public records where the Declaration was recorded.

- D. Limitations. No amendment shall be made that is in conflict with the Declaration.

ARTICLE XII BYLAWS

The Bylaws of the Association shall be adopted by the Board of Directors and may be altered, amended, or rescinded in the manner provided in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII INDEMNIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

The Association shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless any person of the Association who is made a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or contemplated action, suit or proceedings, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that he is or was a director, officer, committee member, employee or agent of the Association:

From and against expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees for pretrial, trial, or appellate proceedings), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with an action, suit, or proceeding (other than one by or in the right of the Association), if he acted in good faith, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceedings, he had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful; and from and against expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees for pretrial, trial, or appellate proceedings) actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the defense or settlement of an action or suit by or in the right of the Association, if he acted in good faith.

The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith, or, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, that such person had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.

Notwithstanding any other provision hereof to the contrary, no indemnification shall be made in respect of any claim, issue, or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable for gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of his duty to the Association.

Any indemnification under this Article (unless ordered by a court) shall be made by the Association only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the director or officer, committee member, employee or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in this Article. Such determination shall be made (a) by the Board of Directors by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of Directors who were not parties to such action, suit, or proceeding, or (b) if such quorum is not obtainable, or even if obtainable and a

quorum of disinterested Directors so directs, by a majority vote of Members of the Association.

Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit, or proceeding shall be paid by the Association from time to time as incurred rather than only after the final disposition of such action, suit, or proceeding. Payment of such expenses shall be authorized by the Board of Directors in each specific case only after receipt by the Association of an undertaking by or on behalf of the director or officer to repay such amounts if it shall later develop that he is not entitled to be indemnified by the Association.

The indemnification provided by this Article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which the Association's directors, officers, committee members, employees or agents may be entitled under the Association's bylaws, agreement, vote of Members or disinterested directors, or otherwise, both as to actions in their official capabilities and as to action in another capacity while holding such offices or positions, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a director, officer, committee member, agent or employee and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such a person.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, indemnification provided under this Article shall not include indemnification for any action of a director, officer, committee member, agent or employee of the Association for which indemnification is deemed to be against public policy. In the event that indemnification provided under this Article is deemed to be against public policy, such an event shall not invalidate or affect any other right or indemnification herein provided.

The Association shall have the power, but shall not be obligated, to purchase and maintain indemnification insurance to provide coverage for any liability asserted against any director, officer, committee member, agent or employee of the Association in any of his capacities as described in this Article, whether or not the Association would have the power to indemnify him or her under this Article.

Any person requesting indemnification shall first look to any insurance maintained by the Association for indemnification against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement (as described above). The Association shall be obligated to indemnify such person (if entitled to indemnification by the Association) only to the extent such insurance does not indemnify such person. In the event that any expenses, judgments, fines, or amounts paid in settlement are paid pursuant to insurance maintained by such Association, the Association shall have no obligation to reimburse the insurance company.

ARTICLE XIV INCONSISTENCY

In the event of any inconsistency between the terms and provisions contained in the

Declaration and those contained in these Articles of Incorporation, the terms and provisions of the Declaration shall prevail.

ARTICLE XV REQUIRED APPROVALS

Notwithstanding anything in these Articles to the contrary, as long as there exists a Class "B" membership, if any one or more of HUD, FHA or VA requires approval or consent by it or them to annexation of additional property, any merger or consolidation involving the Association, the placing of any mortgage lien on the Common Property, dedication to the public of any Common Property, any amendment of the Declaration or these Articles, or dissolution of the Association, by any one or more of said agencies as a condition of making, insuring or purchasing loans on Dwellings in the Property, and any such loan has been approved, insured or purchased by the applicable agency at the time of the proposed annexation, merger, consolidation, mortgaging, dedication, amendment or dissolution, then the required consent or approval shall be obtained.

ARTICLE XVI DISSOLUTION

In the event of termination, dissolution or final liquidation of the Association, the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the surface water or stormwater management system must be transferred to and accepted by an entity which would comply with Section 62-330.310 F.A.C., and be approved by the St. Johns River Water Management District prior to such termination, dissolution or liquidation.

ARTICLE XVII INCORPORATOR

The name and street address of the sole incorporator to these Articles of Incorporation is as follows:

SIMMONS 9, LLC
20 S/ 4TH STREET
FERNANDINA BEACH, FL. 32034

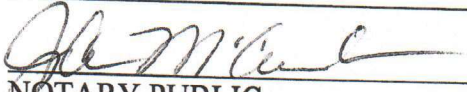
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, for the purpose of forming this corporation under the laws of the State of Florida, the undersigned, constituting the sole incorporator of this Association, has executed these Articles of Incorporation this 6 day of

June, 20 17

Name: Nick G. Miller
As Manager of Simmons 9, LLC
Incorporator

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF Nassau

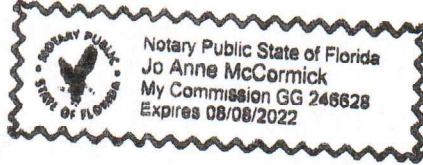
The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were acknowledged before me this 6
day of June, 2019, by Nich Bellette, as Manager of
Simmon 9, LLC, who is personally known to me ☒ or has produced
_____ for identification.



NOTARY PUBLIC

Print Name:

My Commission Expires:



**CERTIFICATE DESIGNATING REGISTERED AGENT FOR SERVICE OF
PROCESS**

Pursuant to Chapters 48 and 617, Florida Statutes, the following is submitted in compliance with said Acts.

HICKORY RIDGE OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC., desiring to organize as a corporation under the laws of the State of Florida, with its registered office at 1880 South 14th Street, Suite 103, Fernandina Beach, Florida 32034 has named Galphin Real Estate Services CAM, Inc., located at the above-registered office, as its Registered Agent to accept service of process within this State.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Having been named to accept service of process for the above-stated corporation at the place designated in this Certificate, I hereby accept to act in this capacity and agree to comply with the provisions of said Acts relative to keeping open said office.

Registered Agent: _____

Name: _____

_____ Galphin Real Estate Services CAM, Inc.

Dated: _____, 2019