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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Archer Lodge Mayor / Town Administrator Mike Gordon Receives the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award

ARCHER LODGE, NC – At the August 3, 2026, meeting of the Archer Lodge Town Council, former Mayor and Town Administrator Mike Gordon received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award, the highest civilian honor given by the Governor of North Carolina. The Town of Archer Lodge nominated Mr. Gordon, and the award was presented by Rep. Donna White on behalf of Gov. Josh Stein. Rep. White stated, "In grateful recognition of your exemplary service to the State of North Carolina and your many contributions to your community and fellow citizens…you are hereby proclaimed an honorary ambassador of goodwill and are entitled to all the privileges thereof, which means you can just keep volunteering and working, and working and working."

Created in 1963, the Long Leaf Pine Award recognizes people who have made major contributions to the state and their communities through exemplary service, extra career effort, or 30 or more years of state service.

Mike Gordon has dedicated his life to serving both the State of North Carolina and the people of Johnston County. His career in public service began with 24 years of honorable service in the North Carolina Army Active Guard-Reserve from 1980 to 2004, where he retired as a senior Non-Commissioned Officer.

Following his military service, Mike devoted decades to strengthening the Archer Lodge community, including:

- Serving 19 years with the Archer Lodge Volunteer Fire Department, including 10 years as its president;

- Tenure as president of the Johnston County Firemen's Association;
- Over 25 years of service to the Archer Lodge Community Center, including 14 years as its president;
- Playing a key role in the establishment of the Archer Lodge Water District;
- Deep involvement in veterans' causes; and
- Active membership in White Oak Baptist Church.

From 2009 to 2018, Mike Gordon served as Mayor of Archer Lodge, guiding the town through a period of significant growth and transition with a steady hand and a deep respect for the community's character. In 2019, he became the town's first Town Administrator, serving until 2023 and again served as Interim Town Administrator from September 2025 to February 2026, providing experienced leadership during another important transition.

Throughout his military, professional and civic life, Mike demonstrated exceptional leadership, professionalism, and a deep commitment to duty. He is widely respected as a man of integrity, humility, and sound judgment—someone who consistently puts the needs of his community above his own and leads not for recognition, but out of a genuine desire to serve.

A Congressional Record submission commemorating the award was also presented by Ms. Kim Barnes, a representative of US Senator Thom Tillis's Office who is from Archer Lodge. She stated, "When I found out that this was in the works, I knew we had to take this one step further and cement your body of work into the Congressional Record."

After receiving the award, Mike Gordon stated, "Wow! This is a little overwhelming…it's like my father once told me, 'We're all here on this earth for a short time, and you better make the best of it while you're here.' Archer Lodge is truly in my heart. My father also always told me to leave it a little bit better than you found it; and so along with a lot of help from the folks up here and in this room, that's all I've ever tried to do is to make it a little better than I found it. And I hope you do. Thank you for everything."

The Council then expressed appreciation for Mr. Gordon's long history of service to the town. Mayor Matt Mulhollem stated, "That's outstanding! I couldn't imagine a more fitting person to be honored with that award. We appreciate all you've done."

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For more information on the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award, visit https://longleafpinesociety.org/.

Photo attached.