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**ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY OF ESSEX COUNTY**

**ORDINANCE NO. 0-2024-00002 AUTHORITY FOR ORDINANCE: N.J.S.A. 40A:41A-38(G)**

**PROPOSED BY: COUNTY EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY FOR ACTION: E.C.A.C. 2-11(M)  
AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS E.C.A.C. 2-39I**

**ORDINANCE NAMING THE FOOTBALL FIELD IN ESSEX COUNTY VAILSBURG PARK AS THE "ESSEX COUNTY RAHEEM MORRIS FOOTBALL FIELD" IN HONOR OF NEWARK NATIVE AND NFL COACH RAHEEM MORRIS**

**WHEREAS**, the Essex County Board of County Commissioners is vested with the exclusive power to name county buildings, roads and other facilities by ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, the Essex County Executive has presented a proposal to name the football field in Essex County Vailsburg Park in Newark as the "Essex County Raheem Morris Football Field" in honor of Newark native and current LA Rams Defensive Coordinator Raheem Morris; and

**WHEREAS**, Essex County Vailsburg Park is part of the historic Essex County Parks System. Under the leadership of Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. and the Board of County Commissioners, there has been an ongoing initiative to revitalize the Parks System and provide modern athletic and recreation facilities for the public. Included in that initiative is the project that updated Vailsburg Park with a new football/soccer field, baseball field, softball field and rubberized running track. The facilities are available to community members and local recreation programs and serve as the home base for student athletic programs at the Essex County Donald M. Payne, Sr. School of Technology as well as the other county vocational schools; and

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris was born in Newark and participated in youth recreation programs organized by Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., who at the time was employed by The North Ward Center. Morris was among the young athletes who traveled to New York City and Puerto Rico on trips organized by DiVincenzo and was part of the North Ward Center's Small Fry program that won a

national basketball championship. Mr. Morris has said that the experiences he had with this athletic program continue to influence him to this day; and

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris played safety at Hofstra University from 1994 to 1997. During his college playing career, the Hofstra Pride made its first-ever appearance in the I-AA playoffs in 1995 and returned again in 1997, losing both times to Delaware in the first round. Upon graduating, Mr. Morris became a graduate assistant coach at Hofstra the next year where he was responsible for coaching the offensive scout team, developing scouting reports and analyzing video and computer data; and

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris continued his collegiate coaching career by becoming a defensive backs coach and special teams assistant at Cornell University in 1999 and returned to his alma mater at defensive backs coach before beginning his career as a coach in the National Football League as defensive minority intern with the New York Jets in 2001; and

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris joined the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 2002 as a defensive quality control coach, helping the team have the top-ranked defense and win the team's first-ever league championship in Super Bowl XXXVII. He earned more responsibility as a defensive assistant and then as the assistant defensive backs coach before returning the college ranks as the defensive coordinator for Kansas State University; and

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris returned to the Buccaneers as defensive backs coach after one season with Kansas State. He then became the defensive coordinator in 2008 and then served as the Head Coach from 2009 to 2012; and

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris became the defensive backs coach for the Washington Redskins (now named the Commanders) and then joined the Atlanta Falcons where he served in various coaching capacities on both offense and defense before being named interim Head Coach in 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris joined the staff of the Los Angeles Rams in 2021 as defensive coordinator and helped the team win Super Bowl LVI, which was the third Super Bowl in which Mr. Morris coached and the second that he won.

**WHEREAS**, Raheem Morris helped save a child from drowning in a Las Vegas pool in May 2023 while he was vacationing with his family. As a lifeguard performed CPR on the 3-year-old, Mr. Morris retrieved the AED and administered aid to the child.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF ESSEX** as follows:

1. That the football field in Essex County Vailsburg Park be named as the "Essex County Raheem Morris Football Field" in honor of Newark native and NFL Coach Raheem Morris.
2. That a public hearing on this Ordinance shall be held on February 7, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at the Hall of Records, Room 506, 465 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Blvd., Newark, NJ.
3. That the Clerk of the Board shall publish and post notice of this Ordinance as required by N.J.S.A. 40:41A-142.
4. That this Ordinance shall take effect at the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
5. That upon adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be forwarded to Commissioner President Carlos M. Pomares, Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., Essex County Administrator Robert Jackson, Parks Director Dan Salvante, Essex County Public Works Director Sanjeev Varghese and Raheem Morris.

Approved as to form and legality

ESSEX COUNTY COUNSEL

**RECORD OF VOTE: X=Vote N.V.=Abstention ABS=Absent**

**FIRST READING**

Moved by Commissioner Richardson  
Seconded by Commissioner Copper

**SECOND READING**

Moved by Commissioner Richardson  
Seconded by Commissioner Mercado

Commissioner	Yes	No	N.V.	ABS	Commissioner	Yes	No	N.V.	ABS
COOPER, V.P.	✓				COOPER, V.P.	✓			
GILL	✓				GILL	✓			
GRAHAM				✓	GRAHAM	✓			
LUCIANO	✓				LUCIANO				✓
MERCADO	✓				MERCADO	✓			
MURRAY-THOMAS	✓				MURRAY-THOMAS	✓			
POMARES, President	✓				POMARES, President	✓			
RICHARDSON	✓				RICHARDSON	✓			
SEBOLD	✓				SEBOLD	✓			

Date Mailed to Municipal Clerks 1-18-24  
Date Public Hearing 2-7-24  
Date Published 1-23-24

Date Mailed to Municipal Clerks 2-16-24  
Date Published 2-21-24

It is hereby certified that the foregoing Ordinance was

adopted ( ) defeated ( ) tabled by roll call vote at regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Essex, New Jersey, held on 1/17/24

Carlos M. Pomares, President

It is hereby certified that the foregoing Ordinance

was  adopted ( ) defeated ( ) tabled by roll call vote at regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Essex, New Jersey, held on 2/7/24

Carlos M. Pomares, President

The foregoing Ordinance has been duly presented to me on Feb 8, 2024  
I hereby  approve ( ) disapprove the same on Feb 15, 2024  
Returned and filed

Deborah Davis Ford, Clerk

Joseph N. DiVincenzo Jr., County Executive

Ordinance – Essex County Raheem Morris Football Field  
12/21/2023