

PRESS RELEASE

February 21, 2019

ROMAINE GRAHAM SWORN-IN AS ESSEX COUNTY AT-LARGE FREEHOLDER



Pictured are (from left to right), Freeholder At-Large Romaine Graham and Irvington Chief Municipal Court Judge Hon. Chandra Cole. PHOTO BY JEFFREY CORA

(Newark, NJ) – On Wednesday, February 20, 2019, the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders welcomed their newest member, Romaine Graham of Irvington, as the new At-Large Freeholder in Essex County. A longtime resident of Irvington since 1969, Romaine Graham has served her community with commitment and diligence.

Freeholder Graham is filling the vacant seat of Freeholder Lebbey C. Jones who recently passed. A longtime Irvington resident, as well as an activist in the Civil Rights Movement during the 60s, she was a staunch supporter of all initiatives that she deemed beneficial to Irvington and the Essex County community.

Since 2011, and until recently, Freeholder Graham served as a Member of the Irvington Board of Education. Prior to joining the Board of Freeholders, she held the rank of President and presided over many committees formed by the Board, in addition to receiving many awards from the School Board.

Freeholder Graham was introduced into politics in the early 1980's by the late Irvington Democratic Committee Chairman and Freeholder D. Bilal Beasley, who was instrumental in bringing her to the forefront. Her electoral career began in June 2010, when she won a position in Irvington's Democratic County Committee representing the North Ward, 9th District. Currently, she represents the North Ward, 2nd District and holds the position of North Ward Chair.

To start the ceremony, Freeholder President Brendan W. Gill welcomed Freeholder Graham to the Board and spoke glowingly about her record of service. He touched on the significance of the strong ties she has to Irvington, similar to her predecessor the late great Freeholder Jones, and how those ties would ensure that the concerns of Irvington citizens would continue to be passionately represented on the Board.

Freeholder Vice President Wayne L. Richardson also extended Freeholder Graham a warm welcome. He offered greetings to the guests and dignitaries in attendance before introducing Irvington Chief Municipal Court Judge Hon. Chandra Cole to administer the oath of office.

Also taking part in the festivities were Irvington Mayor Tony Vauss and Essex County Democratic Committee Chairman Leroy J. Jones, Jr. They spoke about Freeholder Graham's commitment to public service, her dedication to the township of Irvington, her track record of achievements at the municipal level, and how that will be vital in helping county government accomplish its goals.

The ceremony was well attended by a spirited group of family and friends. Not only were they there for support, they were also wearing newly designed Freeholder Graham sweatshirts for the occasion. Also in attendance, and wearing the same sweatshirts, were Irvington elected officials Councilwoman Renee C. Burgess, Councilman Vernal Cox, Councilwoman Dr. October Hudley, and Councilwoman Sandra R. Jones.

Freeholders At-Large Patricia Sebold and Rufus I. Johnson, District 1 Freeholder Robert Mercado, District 3 Freeholder Tyshammie L. Cooper, District 4 Freeholder Leonard M. Luciano, and District 5 Freeholder Carlos M. Pomares were also in attendance.

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