

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Telephone: (716) 286-4310

September 29, 2023

The City Council
Niagara Falls, New York

RE: *Dedicating the 1300 Block of Calumet Avenue as “Eddie L. Palmore Drive”*

Council Members:

As you know, Eddie L. Palmore was a revered member of the Niagara Falls community. His life, service, dedication, and commitment to our City is well known, but his story deserves to be retold.

Eddie L. Palmore was born the eldest child of Frank and Viola Davis Palmore on May 29, 1927, in Andalusia, Alabama. He attended the all-black Covington County Training School. During his twelfth-grade year he was drafted into the Army and received training at Fort Benning and Fort McCullen, Georgia. On July 1, 1947, he obtained his honorable discharge from the Army. After a brief return to Andalusia, he and his younger brother, Charles, left Alabama and moved to Niagara Falls, New York.

Due to being drafted into the Army before finishing high school, Eddie attended Niagara Falls High School and completed all required courses and graduated in 1950. His love for numbers and accounting drew him to attend Niagara University and Bryant and Stratton Business School. His brother Charles introduced him to a gentleman named Mr. Kelly who owned a furniture business and desperately needed someone to help with the financial books. The two gentlemen met, and an instant bond was created; Eddie was hired as the furniture store’s salesperson and accountant. The Pine Avenue business was booming, and Eddie thoroughly enjoyed working with and for Mr. Kelly.

In 1962, while developing the business plans to start a tax business, he was offered an accountant position at General Motors’ (“GM”) Harrison Radiator Division in Lockport, New York. He enjoyed his work, colleagues and responsibilities at GM and remained there until his retirement in 1980. During his tenure at GM, in 1970, his dream of having a business was realized - along with Mr. Arthur Ray, he opened *Palmore and Ray Income Tax Consultants*. This business was located on Highland Avenue, in the heart of the black community. This partnership brought incredible income tax accounting services to the community. Even after the partnership dissolved, the business continued, and Eddie moved his office within his home on Calumet Avenue until 1980.

When Eddie moved to Niagara Falls, he joined the New Hope Baptist Church under the ministry of Rev. R.C. Craven. There he served on the Trustee Board and the Fundraising

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Committee. Later, while his wife and children attended St. Peter's Episcopal Church, he led his family in 1978 to join the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Rev. Matthew J. Bushelon. He served faithfully for forty-two years as Chair and or Vice-Chair of the Trustee Board. One of his favorite sayings was, "I'm Blessed by the Best."

Eddie was also dedicated to public service. He was appointed by Governor Nelson Rockefeller to serve on the New York State Public Employment Relations Board. This position was vital in negotiating contracts for the City of Niagara Falls and the Niagara Falls Board of Education. From May 1965 to February 1966, Eddie received a leave of absence from General Motors to serve as the Deputy Treasurer for the City of Niagara Falls. Later, Governor Hugh Carey appointed him to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority Board of Commissioners. There were also multiple boards and commissions that Eddie participated in, including the Niagara Falls Housing Authority, Niagara Falls Community Center, and the Niagara Falls Empire Zone.

Eddie devoted his life to protecting civil liberties and voting rights. He was a life member of the NAACP. He actively participated in cases in New York State and Voting Rights concerns. He was selected to participate in a special Martin Luther King non-violent community training in Atlanta during the mid-1970s. In a collaborative effort with community leaders, Eddie helped to organize the Niagara Improvement Association, which was a community political empowerment base. Eddie was proud of this great work, and his spirit for better government never died and was recognized not only here in our city, but throughout the country. In fact, a few days after his 93rd birthday, he received a special call from then-Vice President Joe Biden wishing him a happy belated birthday.

Eddie passed away on September 26, 2020. He was married to Edith V. (Roberts) Palmore for 65 years. He was the father of three daughters, Renee Palmore Beaman, Jennifer Palmore Jones, and the late Yvette Palmore Casey and left behind four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. His legacy of love and dedication to family, faith and community was such that it will never be forgotten.

Based upon the foregoing, I hereby request that the City of Niagara Falls honor Eddie L. Palmore in an appropriate fashion. Accordingly, it is proposed that the City recognize Mr. Palmore by designating the 1300 block of Calumet Avenue with the honorary name of "Eddie L. Palmore Drive."

Will the Council approve and authorize the Mayor to direct staff so that this designation can be implemented through the appropriate City departments.

Submitted By:

ROBERT M. RESTAINO
Mayor