

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ED FLYNN, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA,  
DURKAN, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, MEJIA, MURPHY, PEPÉN,  
SANTANA, WEBER, AND LOUIJEUNE



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RENAMING OF THE SOCCER FIELD WITHIN SAUNDERS STADIUM IN HONOR OF BILLY BAKER

- WHEREAS:** Billy Baker was a native Bostonian who was born and raised in South Boston. He owned several businesses and is most known in the neighborhood for bringing soccer to the youth of South Boston. In 1984, Billy gathered a group of parents to work with the Parks and Recreation Department to create a youth soccer league for South Boston. He successfully established the South Boston Youth Soccer League in 1985, whose mission is dedicated to the ongoing development of youth soccer players in an inclusive, safe, affordable and fun environment; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Billy led and served as the South Boston Youth Soccer League President for 35 years until 2020. For over three and a half decades, he worked tirelessly to make the soccer league affordable for every child, and solicited funds from community businesses, merchants, and government officials to purchase jerseys, trophies and year-end gifts. He made sure all children had a pair of shin guards, and that families who could not afford the \$35 league registration fee or those who registered late were never turned away; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Billy was deeply committed to making his dream of youth soccer in South Boston a reality. He worked closely with leagues from suburban communities, attended numerous meetings with Parks and Recreation officials, completed permit applications, prepared for games every Saturday and Sunday morning, recruited coaches and referees, and he also established a sports collaborative with other sports leagues which was instrumental to the opening and operating of a snack bar and restrooms at Saunders Stadium; *and*
- WHEREAS:** At its peak, South Boston Youth Soccer registered nearly 1,300 players per season from ages 3-18 years old. Each season began with an Opening Day Parade of Athletes around the track and field at Saunder Stadium, led by an Honor Guard, where the players would proudly march with teammates and signs representing team mascots. Over the years, these events included many dignitaries, including mayors, senators, other elected officials and professional athletes -but Billy's focus always remained on the players of the South Boston Youth Soccer League.
- WHEREAS:** With little fanfare, and well after his own children had grown up, Billy Baker remained the one constant presence of the South Boston Youth Soccer League. Throughout his life, he consistently devoted his time and efforts at a moment's notice to ensure that children from the neighborhood had the opportunity to participate. The

success of the league today is a testament to his unwavering dedication to bringing soccer to the youth of South Boston and their families. His commitment to the people of South Boston should continue to be celebrated, and he is wholly deserving of having the soccer field within Saunders Stadium at Moakley Park named in his honor; *and*

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:**

That the Boston City Council sends its support for renaming the soccer field within Saunders Stadium to the Billy Baker Soccer Field, and urges that the Boston Parks Department approve this name change request.

**Filed on: September 25th, 2024**