



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON CITY PROPERTY
DATE: JUNE 30, 2026
TIME: 7:02 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS SHAWN OLIVER, CHAIR; IAN ABREU; NAOMI CARNEY; BRIAN GOMES; JOSEPH LOPES; SCOTT PEMBERTON; RYAN PERERIA; JAMES ROY

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS DEREK BAPTISTE; SHANE BURGO; LEO CHOQUETTE

Councillor Oliver called the City Property Committee meeting to order, took attendance, and explained that the meeting was being recorded and live-streamed. The Clerk read Communications into the record from Councillors Burgo and Choquette explaining their absence. The Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Roy.

COMMUNICATION, Councillor Giesta, submitting a letter from Blair Bailey, General Counsel for the New Bedford Port Authority, regarding the Port Authority's vote to sell the real property known and numbered as 276 MacArthur Drive, incorporating New Bedford Assessors Map 59, Lots 170, 171, 173, 149 and 217. (Matter ID #1582) (Referred – September 25, 2025.)

The Chair recognized Atty. Blair Bailey, General Counsel for the New Bedford Port Authority, who explained that he is coming before the Committee to inform them that the Port Authority will soon issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for property to be sold on the waterfront. He stated that while the Port Authority is an autonomous entity and they are free to issue RFPs independently, he is providing advance notice because once an RFP is selected, the Port Authority will need to come before the Council for approval of the sale.

Atty. Bailey further explained that the property being sold will need approximately \$12 million in upgrades and general repairs. The RFP will require that if the property is purchased, the repairs will be done.

Councillor Lopes asked if the RFP would include language that confirms that the property owners will be responsible for the maintenance, upkeep and repair of the property. He was told yes.

Councillor Pereria asked if the repairs were feasible. He was told that they were, but they were expensive. The Councillor asked if the Port Authority would assist the purchaser with permitting. He was told they would. He asked if there would be a grading system used in awarding the RFP and if the RFP would include language that the business would have to meet the requirements of the designated port area. Atty. Bailey answered yes to both questions.

Councillor Oliver asked Atty. David Gerwatowski, Legal Counsel, what the Council's role is in the process. Atty. Gerwatowski replied that their role would be approving the sale once a proposal is chosen.

On motion by Councillor Periera and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To recommend that the City Council take **"NO FURTHER ACTION"** on the COMMUNICATION, Councillor Giesta, submitting a letter from Blair Bailey, General Counsel for the New Bedford Port Authority, regarding the Port Authority's vote to sell the real property known and numbered as 276 MacArthur Drive, incorporating New Bedford Assessors Map 59, Lots 170, 171, 173, 149 and 217.

COMMUNICATION (Matter ID #0611), Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS for the disposition and development of the former Police Station #2, located at 170 Cove Street (Matter ID #0612); the New Bedford Armory, located at 989 Pleasant Street (Matter ID #0613); the former Phillips Avenue School, located at 249 Phillips Avenue (Matter ID #0614); the former Horatio A. Kempton School, located at 135 Shawmut Avenue (Matter ID #0615); and the former William H. Taylor School, located at 620 Brock Avenue (Matter ID #0616). (Referred – May 12, 2026.)

The Chair recognized Joshua Amaral, Director of the Office of Housing and Community Development, who provided the Committee with an overview of the RFPs and stated that the City is seeking the Council's authorization to proceed with issuing said RFPs.

Mr. Amaral explained that due to a previous issue with another RFP, they had to tweak the clawback language before submitting the request. He went on to say that while it is a rather large number of locations, the intent would likely be to release the RFPs intermittently rather than all at once.

Councillor Lopes asked if the new RPF agreements would still include a clawback provision, should the developer not move forward with their proposal. Mr. Amaral said they would, however, they would be less stringent in allowing the City to work with the developer if an issue arose.

Councillor Pereria asked if the RFPs would require the developer to finish a project in a certain amount of time. He also asked if the Council has the right to reject the proposal if they believe the developer does not have the ability to complete the project in that amount of time. Mr. Amaral replied yes to both questions.

Councillor Pereria asked how the RFPs would be reviewed when submitted. Mr. Amaral said there would be an ad hoc style committee which would consist of City departments, including Planning. There would be a numbering system utilized in grading the RFPs, similar to what is currently used by the City.

Councillor Oliver asked what properties would be listed first. Mr. Amaral said they would immediately list Police Station #2 and the Armory, and added that they would look to release the RFPs at least two at a time.

Councillor Roy asked if most of the units developed would be market value units. He was told yes, that it is easier to get developers to commit to market value units because of the time involved in attempting to secure State and historic tax credits.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Gomes, the Committee VOTED: That the Committee on City Property authorize the City's Purchasing Department to proceed with issuing the Requests for Proposals.

COMMUNICATION, Molly Gilfeather Rodriguez, Chief Procurement Officer, City of New Bedford, to Councillor Shawn Oliver, Chair, City Property Committee, submitting PROPOSALS in response to the City's Request for Proposals for the disposition of Fire Stations #3 and #11; the proposals were evaluated by a committee of three representatives from the City's Office of Housing and Community Development, who unanimously recommend the award of Fire Station #3 to South Coast Investments, Inc. and Fire Station #11 to Gwozdz Development. (Received – May 11, 2026.)

PROPOSAL, submitted by South Coast Investments, Inc., for the development of Fire Station #3, located at 834 Kempton Street. (Received – May 11, 2026.)

PROPOSAL, submitted by Divine Contractors, Inc. / Freedom Realty Group, for the development of Fire Station #3, located at 834 Kempton Street. (Received – May 11, 2026.)

PROPOSAL, submitted by Gwozdz Development, for the development of Fire Station #11, located at 754 Brock Avenue. (Received – May 11, 2026.)

PROPOSAL, submitted by Divine Contractors, Inc. / Freedom Realty Group, for the development of Fire Station #11, located at 754 Brock Avenue. (Received – May 11, 2026.)

The Chair recognized Joshua Amaral, Director of the Office of Housing and Community Development, who reminded the Committee that the RFPs on these items had to be reissued due to the clawback language being too stringent, which resulted in the those being awarded the RFPs the inability to secure bank funding. Changing the clawback language required that the RFPs be reissued and once again be openly offered to the public.

Mr. Amaral went on to explain that more than one applicant submitted proposals for the RFPs. The assigned committee scored the applications using the same principals as in the past. Of the submissions, two developers stood out, with one developer scoring highly advantageous and the other advantageous. Mr. Amaral said those selected RFPs were before the Committee for a vote tonight.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the PROPOSAL submitted by South Coast Investments, Inc. for the development of Fire Station #3, located at 834 Kempton Street, and APPROVAL of the PROPOSAL submitted by Gwozdz Development for the development of Fire Station #11, located at 754 Brock Avenue.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To recommend that the City Council take **“NO FURTHER ACTION”** on the following matters:

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER and a fifteen-year LEASE AGREEMENT between the New Bedford Harbor Development Commission d/b/a New Bedford Port Authority and the Massachusetts Clean Energy for a parcel of undeveloped land on MacArthur Drive across from the Fairfield Inn. (Matter ID #1548) (Referred – September 26, 2024.)

AN ORDER, (Matter ID #1549) (Referred – September 26, 2024.)

GROUND LEASE AGREEMENT, City of New Bedford acting by and through the New Bedford Harbor Development Commission d/b/a New Bedford Port Authority as Landlord and Massachusetts Clean Energy Technology Center as Tenant. (Matter ID #1550) (Referred – September 26, 2024.)

COMMUNICATION, Councillors Giesta and Morad, submitting a copy of a Communication/Email from the Honorable Richard T. Moses, in opposition to the fifteen-year Extended Lease Proposal for the Homers Wharf parking lot to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. (Matter ID #2035) (Referred – November 26, 2024.)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting two REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS (DRAFTS), for the disposition and development of the former Horatio A. Kempton School, located at 135 Shawmut Avenue, and the former William H. Taylor School, located at 620 Brock Avenue. (Matter ID #2077) (Referred – December 12, 2024.) (February 12, 2025 – tabled) (March 19, 2025 – Remain in Committee)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, (DRAFT), for the disposition and development of the former Horatio A. Kempton School, located at 135 Shawmut Avenue. (Matter ID #2078) (Referred – December 12, 2024.) (February 12, 2025 – VOTE: send a communication to all department heads inquiring if the property is needed for municipal purposes; tabled) (February 13, 2025 – communication sent to all department heads inquiring if there was a need for the property; no response received indicating a need.) (March 19, 2025 – VOTE: To determine that the property is not needed for municipal purposes; VOTE: That the City offer the property for lease or sale; VOTE: That the Purchasing Dept. proceed with issuing the RFP; Remain in Committee.)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, (DRAFT), for the disposition and development of the former William H. Taylor School, located at 620 Brock Avenue. (Matter ID #2079) (Referred – December 12, 2024.) (February 12, 2025 – VOTE: send a communication to all department heads inquiring if the property is needed for municipal purposes; tabled) (February 13, 2025 – communication sent to all department heads inquiring if there was a need for the property; no response received indicating a need.) (March 19, 2025 – VOTE: To determine that the property is not needed for municipal purposes; VOTE: That the City offer the property for lease or sale; VOTE: That the Purchasing Dept. proceed with issuing the RFP; Remain in Committee.)

COMMUNICATION, Councillors Giesta and Morad, submitting a PETITION of opposition relating to the 15 year lease agreement of the Homer's Wharf parking area to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. (Matter ID #0023) (Referred – January 09, 2025.)

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Carney, Abreu and Giesta, requesting that City Solicitor Eric Jaikes appear before the Committee on City Property to explain the delay with the Purchase and Sale Agreements, which were awarded to Gwozdz Development, Inc., South Coast Investments, Inc., and Historic Built, for Fire Station #3, located at 834 Kempton Street, Fire Station #11, located at 754 Brock Avenue and Police Station #2 located at 170 Cove Street. (Matter ID #1258) (Referred – July 17, 2025) (July 30, 2025 – RELATED MOTION requesting the issuance of a new RFP for Fire Station #3 and Fire Station #11 with the reverter clause removed; RELATED MOTION requesting that Atty. Jaikes reissue the Purchase and Sales Agreement to award the bid winner of Police Station #2; Remains in Committee.)

RELATED MOTION, Councillors Pereira and Gomes, requesting, the issuance of a new RFP for Fire Station #3 and Fire Station #11 with the reverter clause removed, except for a Purchase and Sales Agreement regarding the securing of financing, contingent upon the withdrawal of the bids by the awardees; and further, that the Purchasing Department expedite said process as quickly as lawfully allowed. (Referred from Committee – July 30, 2025.)

RELATED MOTION, Councillors Morad and Lopes, requesting that the Committee on City Property instruct Atty. Jaikes to immediately issue the Purchase and Sales Agreement to award the bid winner (Ravi Parmar, Historic Built) of Police Station #2, located at 170 Cove Road, per the conditions of the original RFP. (Referred from Committee – July 30, 2025.)

COMMUNICATION, Ravi Parmar of Historic Built emailed City Solicitor Jaikes regarding the clawback/reverter provision in the RFP for Police Station #2 on Cove Road. Mr. Parmar stated that, due to this provision, he is unable to secure financing and therefore cannot proceed with the purchase and sale of the property. (Emailed to Councillor Giesta – December 08, 2025.)

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Pemberton and Oliver, requesting, that the Committee on City Property meet to begin the process of disposition for the Phillips Avenue Elementary School, located at 249 Phillips Avenue. (Matter ID #0030) (Referred – January 08, 2026.) (February 19, 2026 – VOTE: That a communication be sent to all department heads to determine whether the property is needed for municipal purposes; remain in Committee)

Councillor Abreu made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Roy.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

ATTEST:

Denis Lawrence Jr.
Clerk of Committees