



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
DATE: AUGUST 17, 2026
TIME: 7:02 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS JOSEPH LOPES, CHAIR; DEREK BAPTISTE; SHANE BURGO; NAOMI CARNEY; SHAWN OLIVER; SCOTT PEMBERTON; RYAN PEREIRA; JAMES ROY

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS IAN ABREU; LEO CHOQUETTE; BRIAN GOMES

Councillor Lopes called the Finance Committee meeting to order, took attendance, and explained that the meeting was being recorded and live streamed. The Clerk read two Communications into the record from Councillors Abreu and Gomes explaining their absence. The Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Pemberton.

Item number seven was taken out of order without objection.

COMMUNICATION, Ryan A. Pavao, First Assistant City Solicitor, submitting ORDERS for the LAYOUT and TAKING of Hillman Street, variable width, from Sta. 72+32.80, at the terminus of Pleasant Street 41.74 feet easterly to terminus at Sta. 72+74.52 at Purchase Street, for the purpose of realigning Hillman Street to the west so that a new signalized intersection can be built. (Matter ID #1224) (Referred – July 16, 2026.) and Orders for REGISTERED LAND, (Matter ID #1225) (Referred – July 16, 2026.) and RECORDED LAND, (Matter ID #1226) (Referred – July 16, 2026.)

Councillor Pereira stated that in the Mayor's Papers received this week, the City Council had received the Appropriation Order relating to this taking of land. He reminded the Committee that the information before them was originally requested by the body. He went on to say he had reviewed the Order and the Appropriation with Attorney David Gerwatowski, Legal Counsel and had been informed all is in order.

On motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Baptiste, the Committee VOTED: to recommend to the City Council ADOPTION of the ORDERS for the LAYOUT and TAKING of Hillman Street, variable width, from Sta. 72+32.80, at the terminus of Pleasant Street 41.74 feet easterly to terminus at Sta. 72+74.52 at Purchase Street, for the purpose of realigning Hillman Street to the west so that a new signalized intersection can be built.

On the question: Councillor Baptiste informed the Committee that he had spoken to Jamie Ponte, Commissioner, Department of Public Infrastructure and believes this to be a good project given that it will connect Hillman Street in its entirety.

On motion by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Pereira, the Committee VOTED: to remove the following item from the table.

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Morad, Gomes, Giesta and Lopes, requesting that Chief Financial Officer Robert Ekstrom, City Solicitor Eric Jaikes and a representative of the Administration appear before the Committee on Finance to discuss options regarding the \$3.5 million settlement to be received from the MBTA; said discussion shall include but not be limited to appropriating the monies to the Stabilization Fund or to a newly created Revolving Fund account with the intention of restricting the funds to create a revenue stream dedicated to paying for ongoing maintenance of the pedestrian bridge currently being constructed across Route 18 that the City of New Bedford will be required to maintain after construction is completed. (Matter ID #1357) (Referred – August 13, 2024.) (October 21, 2024 – remain on the table) (February 19, 2025 – tabled)

The Chair recognized City Solicitor Eric Jaikes who explained this item was originally addressed in February 2025 and that the funds would require approval. However, as no action was taken by the Council, the funds were sent to the General Fund as Free Cash and have long since been spent.

The Chair recognized City Auditor Quillan Lowney. Councillor Pereira asked Mr. Lowney if he would be able to provide the Committee with a breakdown as to where the original \$460k was expended too. Mr. Lowney said he would send that information to the Committee.

On motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: to table the matter at this time.

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER for the TRANSFER of \$37,154.00 from MAYOR PURCHASE OF SERVICES to MAYOR OTHER CHARGES & EXPENSES. (Matter ID #1181) (Referred – July 16, 2026.) and AN ORDER, (Matter ID #1182) (Referred – July 16, 2026.)

City Auditor Quillan T. Lowney was recognized by the Chair.

Councillor Burgo expressed his frustration that the Administration hastily put together their Fiscal Year 2027 budget and had mistakenly placed funding into incorrect categories and it was only recently discovered. This was an error by the Administration that Councillor Burgo found to be concerning. This was not discovered until budget cuts were initiated, and the Administration discovered the error.

Mr. Lowney explained that the budgeted amounts were entered using the wrong codes. The amounts are correct, just coded incorrectly. He went on to say that they have been using a new coding system.

Councillor Burgo asked how long the new coding system has been in use. He was told approximately one year. Councillor Burgo asked if the transfer was not approved right now will any bills not be able to be paid. Mr. Lowney said that at present he does not see that as an issue because we are so new in the fiscal year. He went on to say that in the case of the Assessor's Office they have a negative budget that would have to eventually be addressed.

On motion by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Pemberton, the Committee VOTED: to table the matter at this time.

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER for the TRANSFER of \$2,000.00 from ASSESSORS PURCHASE OF SERVICES to ASSESSORS OTHER CHARGES & EXPENSES. (Matter ID #1183) (Referred – July 16, 2026.) and AN ORDER, (Matter ID #1184) (Referred - July 16, 2026.)

Councillor Burgo asked Mr. Lowney is this the account he made reference to that \$2,000 amount is a negative figure. Mr. Lowney said this was correct. Councillor Burgo asked with this account being negative on paper right now would any payments coming out of that department be affected if this item was tabled. He was told it would not.

On motion by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Pereira, the Committee VOTED: to table the matter at this time. This motion passed on a roll call vote of Yeas 7, Nays 1 (Councillor Roy OPPOSED.)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER for the TRANSFER of \$650.00 from LABOR RELATIONS PURCHASE OF SERVICES to LABOR RELATIONS OTHER CHARGES & EXPENSES. (Matter ID #1185) (Referred – July 16, 2026.) and AN ORDER, (Matter ID #1186) (Referred – July 16, 2026.)

Councillor Burgo asked Mr. Lowney if a cost of \$650.00 was presented, would it be paid. He was told it would.

On motion by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Pereira, the Committee VOTED: to table the matter at this time. This motion passed on a roll call vote of Yeas 6, Nays 2 (Councillors Carney and Roy OPPOSED.)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER for the TRANSFER of \$157,791.00 from SCHOOL GENERAL EXPENSE to SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION. (Matter ID #1187) (Referred – July 16, 2026.) and AN ORDER, (Matter ID #1188) (Referred – July 16, 2026.)

The Chair recognized David M. Flynn, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, New Bedford Public Schools.

Councillor Burgo asked that in relation to the net school spending (NSS) side of the budget, the Committee is now being told that the amount of \$157,791.00 is no longer needed for the NSS. The Councillor explained his concern, that this is not the case.

Mr. Flynn explained that when City's CFO does his calculations and submits them to the School Department, this is when the CFO determined that the \$157,791 would not be needed by the School Department under the General Expense line and should be transferred to the School Transportation line.

Councillor Roy asked Mr. Flynn if his office supported this transfer request. Mr. Flynn stated he did not have an opinion either way, this was more of an accounting request.

Councillor Baptiste asked whether this transfer was caused by the sale of Trembly Bus Company. He was told no that the company that acquired Trembly Bus is subject to the contract that was in place. He was told there is one year left of that particular contract.

On motion by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Baptiste, the Committee VOTED: to recommend to the City Council ADOPTION of the ORDER for the TRANSFER of \$157,791.00 from SCHOOL GENERAL EXPENSE to SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION. This motion passed on a roll call vote of Yeas 7, Nays 1 (Councillor Roy OPPOSED.)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER for the TRANSFER of \$395,000.00 from ZEITERION THEATRE SUPPLIES to ZEITERION THEATRE PURCHASE OF SERVICES. (Matter ID #1189) (Referred – July 16, 2026.) and AN ORDER, (Matter ID #1190) (Referred – July 16, 2026.)

Councillor Pereira asked City Auditor Lowney if the Order line was put in incorrectly as well. He was told it had been recorded incorrectly. Councillor Pereira asked, since this was a contractual account should it be coded to the 200 account to be correct. He was told that was the case. Councillor Pereira asked if this request is to simply transfer the funds from the 400 account to the 200 account.

Mr. Lowney said that was correct. Councillor Pereira asked if the funds needed to be moved to the correct account to be paid.

Mr. Lowney said that the funds should be moved for proper accounting purposes. Councillor Pereira asked if the Zeiterion Theatre had received any payments yet. He was told no.

Councillor Oliver asked what contract this pertained to. He was told the agreement which helps to support the operations of the Zeiterion Theatre.

Councillor Burgo asked, since the City has not been able to issue payments to the Zeiterion Theatre why did they wait for the coding to be changed. Mr. Lowney said he was told that he was to treat this matter as a sub-functional department so in reporting to the State there is just one line for it. Eventually they do need to change a certain object code and right now they would have to change it to the 400 account to have it properly matched. Councillor Burgo asked if the item was tabled, would the Auditor be able to issue payments to the Zeiterion Theatre. Mr. Lowney said that he would be able to issue payments.

On motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Roy, the Committee VOTED: to recommend to the City Council ADOPTION of the ORDER for the TRANSFER of \$395,000.00 from ZEITERION THEATRE SUPPLIES to ZEITERION THEATRE PURCHASE OF SERVICES.

At this time Councillor Burgo made a motion to Table the item, and was seconded by Councillor Oliver, the Committee VOTED: to table the matter at this time.

This motion to table passed on a roll call vote of Yeas 6, Nays 2. (Councillors Lopes and Roy OPPOSED.)

Councillor Burgo made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Oliver.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

ATTEST:

Denis Lawrence Jr.
Clerk of Committees