

REGULAR MEETING
Chambers of the City Council
Thursday, August 20, 2026

CITY COUNCIL
Municipal Building
7:02 p.m.

PRESENT: Council President Pereira, Councillors Abreu, Baptiste, Burgo, Carney,
Choquette, Gomes, Lopes, Oliver, Pemberton and Roy.

LATE: No one.
ABSENT: No one.

Council President Pereira called the meeting to order and presided.

Prayer led by: Reverend Leona Fisher, In the Name of Jesus Church

Councillor Oliver led the Assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
IN CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 20, 2026

**RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY (SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL)
OF THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

WHEREAS, July 4, 2026, marked the 250th Anniversary, or Semiquincentennial, of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia in 1776, signifying the founding of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, The Declaration of Independence proclaimed timeless principles of profound significance to the national heritage of the United States, including that all are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed; and

WHEREAS, The founding of the United States established the principle of federalism, emphasizing a decentralized system of government wherein powers are divided between national and state governments, fostering liberty, accountability, and responsiveness to local communities; and

WHEREAS, This decentralized governance model has allowed for innovation, diverse policy approaches, and stronger accountability to the citizens of each state, ensuring that government remains close to and reflective of the people's will; and

WHEREAS, The founding of the United States initiated a journey toward forming a "more perfect Union," marked by historic achievements, struggles, and progress in realizing the nation's founding ideals for all its citizens; and

WHEREAS, The State of Massachusetts has played a significant role throughout the history of the United States, contributing to the nation's development, culture, economy, and defense through the efforts and sacrifices of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, The Semiquincentennial offers a unique opportunity for the people of Massachusetts to reflect on our shared history, honor the diverse contributions of all Americans, celebrate our heritage of liberty, and look forward to the future we strive to create for subsequent generations; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the New Bedford City Council hereby recognizes and commemorates the **250th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**, celebrated on July 4, 2026; and formally accepts this replica of the Declaration of Independence, presented by State Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral to the New Bedford City Council at a City Council Meeting held on August 20, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the New Bedford City Council encourages all residents, visitors, educational institutions, civic organizations, businesses, and surrounding communities to take the opportunity to view this remarkable piece of American history.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this replica of the Declaration of Independence shall be available for public viewing through December 31, 2026. Thereafter, it shall be permanently displayed in the New Bedford City Council Chambers as a lasting tribute to the principles of liberty, democracy, and the nation's founding for generations to come.

Adopted – Yeas 11, Nays 0.

(#1289)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a VETO of the Ordinance, amending Chapter 19 of the City Code, Relative to PAID FAMILY LEAVE. (Veto received in the City Council Office – July 10, 2026.)

Veto Received and Ordered Spread on the Record – July 16, 2026.

Received and Placed on File. (#1180)

AN ORDINANCE, amending Chapter 19 of the City Code, RELATIVE TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE.

Passed to be a Second Reading – May 28, 2026.

Passed to be Ordained – Yeas 10, Nays 0 - June 25, 2026.

Presented to the Mayor for approval June 29, 2026.

VETO submitted by the Mayor on July 10, 2026.

Veto Received and Ordered Spread on the Records – July 16, 2026.

Passed to be Ordained notwithstanding the disapproval of the Mayor and Rule 40
Waived – Yeas 11, Nays 0. (#0903)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER for the Appropriation of \$39,303.75 from the HousingWorks grant, through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities and within the custody of the Department of Public Infrastructure, to Public Way Layout and Taking Damages for a Future Signalized Intersection at the Intersection of Hillman and Purchase Streets for the Purchase and Pleasant Street Improvements Project.

Received and Placed on File. (#1290)

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
IN CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 20, 2025

ORDERED, that the sum of THIRTY-NINE THOUSAND, THREE-HUNDRED THREE AND ¾ DOLLARS (\$39,303.75) now standing to the credit of the account from the Housing Works grant through the Massachusetts Executive Office of housing and Livable Communities within the custody of the Department of Public Infrastructure-as executed on January 11, 2024, in the amount of \$5,000,000—be appropriated to fund the damages associated with the taking in fee and easements of certain portions of real property located at Map 59 Lot 1, Map 59 Lot 12, and Map 59 Lot 200 (collectively known as “930 Pleasant Street”) for the purpose of later completing roadway reconstruction and associated improvements associated with the laying out and improvement of a new portion of Hillman Street in the City.

PUBLIC WAY LAYOUT AND TAKING DAMAGES FOR A FUTURE SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION AT THE INTERSECTION OF HILLMAN AND PURCHASE STREETS (to be taken from the HousingWorks grant).....\$39,303.75

To be certified and approved by the Department Head.

Adopted – Yeas 11, Nays 0.

Presented to the Mayor for approval August 24, 2026.

Approved August 25, 2026. (#1291)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER for the proposed lease assignment between Friend Street Realty LLC and Comcast LLC.

Received and Placed on File. (#1292)

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
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ORDERED, that Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor of the City of New Bedford, is hereby authorized to consent to the assignment of the Ground Lease between FSR LLC and Comcast LLC and to execute all agreements, certificates, notice, and other documents necessary or appropriate to effectuate such assignment, substantially in the forms presented to the City Council, with such non-material additions, deletions, and modifications as the City Solicitor deems necessary or appropriate, subject to approval as to form by the City Solicitor.

Adopted.

Presented to the Mayor for approval August 24, 2026.

Approved August 25, 2026. (#1293)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a SEWER ABATEMENT REQUEST for TARKILN HILL REALTY CORP, 627 Tarkiln Hill Road, New Bedford, MA, in the amount of \$26,574.44.

Abatement Granted – Yeas 11, Nays 0.

Presented to the Mayor for approval August 24, 2026.

Approved August 25, 2026. (#1294)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a SEWER ABATEMENT REQUEST for TAMARA RAMSAY, 161 Campbell Street, New Bedford, MA, in the amount of \$1,607.07.

Abatement Granted – Yeas 11, Nays 0.

Presented to the Mayor for approval August 24, 2026.

Approved August 25, 2026. (#1295)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a SEWER ABATEMENT REQUEST for SHAVORYIA MCELROY, 234 Austin Street, New Bedford, MA, in the amount of \$235.00.

Abatement Granted – Yeas 11, Nays 0.

Presented to the Mayor for approval August 24, 2026.

Approved August 25, 2026. (#1296)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the REAPPOINTMENT of SCOTT GRANT, New Bedford, MA to the CONSERVATION COMMISSION; this term will expire June 2029.

Rule 38 Waived, Reappointment Confirmed and Rule 40 Waived – Yeas 11, Nays 0.

(#1297)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the REAPPOINTMENT of REBECA LINHART, New Bedford, MA to the CONSERVATION COMMISSION; this term will expire June 2029.

Rule 38 Waived, Reappointment Confirmed and Rule 40 Waived – Yeas 11, Nays 0.

(#1298)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of BRIAN J. SOUSA, New Bedford, MA to the ELECTION COMMISSION; this term will expire April 2029.

Referred to the Committee on Appointments and Briefings.

(#1299)

COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the REAPPOINTMENT of JOSEPH LATIMER, New Bedford, MA as a CONSTABLE.

Received and Placed on File. (#1300)

AN APPLICATION, JOSEPH LATIMER, New Bedford, MA, REAPPOINTMENT as a CONSTABLE.

Confirmed. (#1301)

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting that the Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods immediately meet with Police Chief Jason Thody, a representative from the Mayor's Office, and a representative from Flock Safety; this meeting is to bring all parties together for the purpose of enhancing policies and procedures and strengthening community trust around the use of these cameras; the policy is transparent, with every search being logged and additional safeguards in place, not only to protect the civil rights of the citizens but for the Police Department as well. (To be Referred to the Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods.)

Tabled. (#1302)

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Burgo, Lopes and Abreu, requesting that the Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods meet with representatives of the New Bedford Police Department, the City Solicitor, the Information Technology Department, and any other appropriate officials to discuss the City's use of law enforcement surveillance technologies, including but not limited to automated license plate reader (ALPR) systems, Flock Safety cameras, public safety camera networks, and any other technologies capable of collecting or retaining data on the movement of vehicles or individuals; and further, that the Committee review the City's policies governing the collection, retention, sharing, security, and deletion of data generated by such technologies; the circumstances under which such data may be accessed or shared with outside law enforcement agencies; the safeguards in place to protect residents' constitutional rights and privacy; and whether additional local policies or ordinances are warranted to promote transparency, accountability, and public confidence while preserving the legitimate public safety benefits these technologies provide. (To be Referred to the Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods.)

Tabled. (#1303)

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Burgo, Abreu and Lopes, requesting that the Committee on Ordinances consider whether the appropriate policy outcome is either the complete removal and abolition of automated license plate reader systems and other similarly invasive surveillance technologies within the City of New Bedford, or, in the alternative, establishing "Municipal Automated License Plate Reader Privacy and Transparency Standards". (To be Referred to the Committee on Ordinances.)

Tabled. (#1304)

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Choquette, requesting that the City of New Bedford immediately cease the use of Flock cameras *and that the New Bedford Police Department take down, physically obstruct or cover all ALPR technology equipment* citywide until which time permanent legislation can be enacted as to their use.

Tabled. (#1305)

On a motion, the Council then adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

ATTEST:

DENNIS W. FARIAS, CITY CLERK/
CLERK OF THE CITY COUNCIL

