

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON MEMORIALS & DEDICATIONS
DATE: MARCH 09, 2021
TIME: 7:07 P.M.
PLACE: HELD REMOTELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS' MARCH 12, 2020 ORDER SUSPENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN MEETING LAW G. L. C. 30A, SECTION 20 AND THE CITY COUNCIL'S VOTE TO WAIVE RULE 21A

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS IAN ABREU, CHAIRMAN (REMOTELY); DEREK BAPTISTE, VICE-CHAIRMAN (REMOTELY); NAOMI CARNEY (REMOTELY); SCOTT LIMA (REMOELY)

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR BRIAN GOMES

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Councillor Abreu called the Memorial & Dedications Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read a Communication from Councillor Brian Gomes explaining he would be late in attending tonight's Committee meeting. This Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Lima and seconded by Councillor Carney. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 4, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Carney, yes and Lima, yes.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Giesta, Abreu, Carney, Gomes, Lima, Morad and Markey, requesting, that the City Council, through its' Special Committee on Memorials and Dedications, work closely with the New Bedford School Committee and City administration to properly honor and celebrate the life, public service and achievements of the late Mayor Frederick M. Kalisz, Jr., LPD, with specific consideration given to re-dedicating one of the three New Bedford Middle Schools in Mayor Kalisz's name due to these schools being the first new City school buildings to be successfully constructed in almost 30 years as a result of the unrelenting leadership and guidance of Mayor Kalisz, who charted a course of action with the goal of improving the quality of education for every New Bedford student and succeeded in reaching this goal which now stands as an important part of our City's history and a remarkable achievement; and whereby it would be a fitting way for New Bedford to honor the life, public service, memory and legacy of its' leader in that historic endeavor by re-dedicating one of these schools in the name of Frederick M. Kalisz, Jr. (To be Referred to the Special Committee on Memorials and Dedications.) (Ref'd 02/11/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lima and seconded by Councillor Carney. This motion was passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 4, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Carney, yes and Lima, yes. (1)

On motion by Councillor Lima and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To receive and place on file the letter submitted by the Mount Vernon Group Architects giving a brief account regarding former Mayor, the late

Frederick M. Kalisz, Jr. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 4, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Carney, yes and Lima, yes.

Colleen Dawicki, School Committee Vice Chairperson was present on Zoom and informed the Committee that the School Committee has guidelines that they are required to follow within their handbook. This can be found on the School Departments website under the School Committee Handbook, policy letter FF. There is an 8-point policy in the naming of school property.

Bruce Oliveira, School Committee, Building Subcommittee Chair, was present on Zoom and he stated that the policy in place, in his interpretation, would not allow the renaming of the middle schools after former Mayor Kalisz. Unless the standing member, that the property is named after, is dishonored. He stated the reason they were able to rename the former Hannigan School after Dr. Jacobs, was because the school was raised and rebuilt and reconfigured. He stated that perhaps the Sea Lab would be a better choice, but that the responsibility of naming properties falls to the School Committee.

Attorney George Leontire, former City Solicitor was also present, remotely, and spoke in favor of the motion. He read the Communication from the Mount Vernon Group that was received and placed on file, earlier in the meeting. He stated that this was an important issue for all who worked with, supported, loved and were friends with former Mayor Kalisz. The family wishes to see Fred's commitment to the City recognized. Mayor Kalisz was an extraordinary Mayor, public servant, person to person and that he cared about everyone in the City. The schools were one of his many accomplishments. It had been thirty (30) years since the City has seen new schools and that Fred made this possible. Attorney Leontire took exception to Mr. Oliveira's comments on the renaming of the Hannigan School, stating that like the Hannigan School the three middle schools were raised and reconfigured and rebuilt, and that the same philosophy that applied to the renaming of the Hannigan School to the Jacob's School applies.

Attorney Matt Thomas, former City Solicitor was also present, remotely, and spoke in favor of the motion. He stated that Mayor Kalisz was a special person in the history of New Bedford. He truly lifted the spirit of the City and provided hope to young people and students growing up in the City. He stated a number of accomplishments of the Kalisz Administration, which included: Brownfields remediation, harbor dredging, freight and passenger services, the Whales Tooth parking lot, designed to support future MBTA rail service, the development of the 54th Regiment Plaza, the Ft. Tabor Park, Riverside Park and Buttonwood Park development. Fred was about making peoples lives better. He lived and grew up in the City and never left. He was a true son of New Bedford.

Jane Gonsalves, former Ward 5 City Councillor was present, remotely, and spoke in favor of the motion. She considered Mayor Kalisz a dear friend, who she had the privilege of serving with. He is well deserving of such an honor. She explained the development of Downtown is credited to him, as he pushed for mixed-use zoning. This has allowed Downtown to become the beautiful, hip area that it is today.

Denis Lawrence, Jr., Clerk of Committees and former Councillor at Large, spoke in favor of the proposal and described how he was elected at the same time Fred was elected as Mayor and they met each other on the City Hall steps before going in, shook

hands and Fred said "Now let's work to make New Bedford a better place." He believes that the naming of a School Department facility is a fitting tribute to his memory and all that he did for the City of New Bedford during his four-terms as Mayor.

Councillor Giesta, not a member of the Committee, but a maker of the motion, was present remotely and spoke in favor of the motion. She told of how she first met Fred when she was a young student at UMass Dartmouth. She told of how she reached out to him when she was planning to run for office, and he provided words of encouragement and advice. She would like to see that both the City and the School Committee work to rename a school in his honor.

Councillor Markey, not a member of the Committee, but a maker of the motion, was present remotely, and spoke in favor of the motion.

Councillor Baptiste, spoke in favor of the motion and provided an emotional description of how he came to know Fred Kalisz as a young man, and how Fred showed up in a neighborhood that no one would expect him to and approach young people to ask how he could help improve their neighborhood. Fred took a shot on a young Councillor Baptiste, which in turn allowed him to want to pursue a life of public service. He received his first award from Mayor Kalisz, as a Hero of New Bedford, that Fred was that kind of person. Councillor Baptiste stated that Mayor Kalisz is more than deserving of this honor.

Councillor Lima, stated he did not know Mayor Kalisz well, as he was not living in the City during the time of his tenure as Mayor. He stated once elected, he would often come in contact or speak with Fred and he would offer up friendly conversation and advice, most importantly was to never let the paperwork pile up. He wholeheartedly supports this motion.

Councillor Carney spoke in favor of this motion. She stated she had the pleasure of serving with Fred during her first tenure as a City Councillor in 2005, Fred was a good Mayor and a champion of the youth of this City.

Councillor Abreu spoke in favor of the motion as well. He said that Fred was his Mayor while he was growing up, that he spoke at his graduation. He was a person who knew the Council and knew the rules and was always available to discuss and dispense advice, which Councillor Abreu would without hesitation take advantage of.

Andrew O'Leary from the School Department was present remotely and stated that he attended to listen in and use the time to learn.

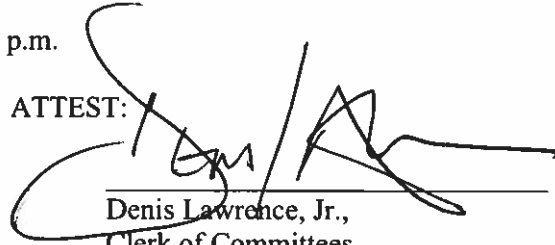
On motion by Councillor Lima and seconded by Councillor Baptiste, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to request the School Committee to explore the feasibility of naming or renaming a public school building or facility after the late Mayor Frederick M. Kalisz, Jr. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 4, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Carney, yes and Lima, yes.

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Councillor Lima made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Baptiste. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 4, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Carney, yes and Lima, yes.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DL", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Denis Lawrence, Jr.,
Clerk of Committees