

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOODS
DATE: MARCH 24, 2021
TIME: 7:01 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 BRIAN GOMES, CHAIRMAN (REMOTELY); NAOMI CARNEY, VICE CHAIRPERSON (REMOTELY); IAN ABREU (REMOTELY); DEBORA COELHO (REMOTELY); HUGH DUNN (REMOTELY); MARIA GIESTA (REMOTELY); SCOTT LIMA (REMOTELY); JOSEPH LOPES (REMOTELY); WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY (REMOTELY); LINDA MORAD (REMOTELY)

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR DEREK BAPTISTE

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Councillor Gomes called the Public Safety Committee Meeting to order and took attendance; everyone was present except for Councillor Baptiste.

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Councillor Gomes asked the Clerk to read into the record two Communications received from Mayor Mitchell and Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro. These Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Giesta. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Dunn, Abreu, Giesta, Council President Lopes, Councillors Lima, Carney, Markey, Gomes and Baptiste, requesting, that Police Chief Cordeiro, Public Information Officer Scott Carola and Police Union President Turgeon be invited to a meeting of the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods to discuss providing the Council and public with a weekly crime report with up to date statistics on violent crime, property crime, and other crime, the crime data should be compiled both in a Citywide and Ward specific format; and further, the report should show trends based on previous weeks (To be Referred to the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods.) (Ref'd 02/25/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu and passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

Councillors Gomes and Dunn expressed their frustration that the Chief was not present at this meeting and that the Mayor would not allow the Chief to participate in the meeting as well. Councillor Dunn expressed his concerns about the recording of the daily crime statistics and the way they are reported to the FBI.

Hank Turgeon, President NBPD Union, said that the good news is that the FBI crime statistics released for the City show a decrease in crime, but he stated the numbers are skewed as it relates to the reality.

On motion by Councillor Dunn and seconded by Councillor Giesta, the Committee VOTED: That Police Chief Cordeiro provide the City Council (by email) with a weekly crime report with up-to-date statistics on violent crime, property crime and other crime and the crime data should be compiled both in a Citywide and Ward specific format. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

On a Related Motion by Councillor Dunn and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To send correspondence to the Chief of Police and the NBPD's Public Information Officer asking that the Committee on Public Safety be provided with an explanation as to the discrepancies between the City's crime statistics reported to the FBI and the City's budget as it relates to the New Bedford Police Department. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Giesta, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter at this time. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Dunn, Abreu, Giesta, Council President Lopes, Councillors Morad, Lima, Carney, Markey and Gomes, requesting that New Bedford Police Department conduct an evaluation of the Shot Spotter program, the efficacy of the program, analyze the data the system gathers, and assess how to ensure that this tool is properly functioning, assuming the Police Department finds the program to be an effective tool, the evaluation should be conducted on an annual basis going forward (To be Referred to Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods, Police Chief Cordeiro and Police Union President Hank Turgeon.) (Ref'd 02/25/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Dunn. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes. (2)

Hank Turgeon, President NBPD Union was asked by Councillor Dunn if the Shot Spotter Program was working in the City, if there was a better crime prevention idea that could be put into effect or was the Shot Spotter Program worth it and he explained that the Shot Spotter Program is a phenomenal tool, when it is working. It is a tool that the City should continue to use.

Councillor Abreu asked if Mr. Turgeon had any insight as to why the City of Fall River did away with the program. Mr. Turgeon surmised that perhaps it had to do with budget issues. However, he went on to say that in the City of New Bedford if the Shot Spotters result in one conviction then it is well worth it. The system has helped the City

in the past and if the system can be funded it should. He also welcomed the visit of Former Police Chief Ronald Teachman, who now works for Shot Spotter, to meet with the City to discuss issues with the system to see if it can be improved.

Councillor Giesta asked if the program should be expanded throughout the City and she was told the Union would support that if it is affordable. He also supported more cameras and body camera, but that the Shot Spotter is a great tool.

Councillor Lopes asked if Mr. Turgeon knew what the percentage of time the Shot Spotters are normally down. Hew did not know this answer, but that when they are up and working, they are an incredible tool.

On a Related Motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Dunn, the Committee VOTED: That the New Bedford Police Department provide the Committee with historical data showing the effectiveness of Shot Spotter and the percentage of times that the system is accurately working properly. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

On motion by Councillor Dunn and seconded by Councillor Giesta, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter at this time. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

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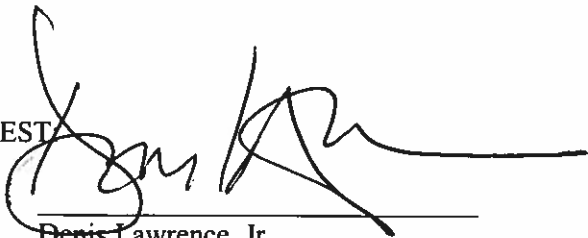
Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Dunn, Abreu, Giesta, Council President Lopes, Lima, Carney, Markey and Gomes, requesting, that New Bedford Police Chief Cordeiro brief the City Council on the recent shootings at the Brickenwood Housing Development and on Tallman Street. (To be Referred to Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods, Police Chief Cordeiro and Police Union President Hank Turgeon.) (Ref'd 02/25/2021) (3)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Dunn, the Committee VOTED: To waive the reading and table this matter at this time. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

Councillor Dunn made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Abreu. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Carney, yes; Coelho, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Lopes, yes; Markey, yes; Morad, yes.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:01 p.m.

ATTEST



Denis Lawrence, Jr.,
Clerk of Committees