

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON CITY PROPERTY
DATE: MARCH 23, 2022
TIME: 7:02 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 WITH AN EXTENSION SIGNED ON JUNE 16, 2021, AND THE CITY COUNCIL'S VOTE TO WAIVE RULE 21A ON JANUARY 13, 2022

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS MARIA GIESTA, CHAIRPERSON (REMOTELY); WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY, VICE CHAIRMAN (REMOTELY); IAN ABREU (REMOTELY); DEREK BAPTISTE (REMOTELY); SHANE BURGO (REMOTELY); NAOMI CARNEY (REMOTELY); HUGH DUNN (REMOTELY); BRIAN GOMES (REMOTELY); SCOTT LIMA (REMOTELY); RYAN PEREIRA (REMOTELY)

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR LINDA MORAD

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Councillor Giesta called the City Property Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read a Communication from Councillor Morad explaining her absence from this meeting. This Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Carney and seconded by Councillor Burgo. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yea; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a Purchase & Sale Agreement between the City and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the sale of the New Bedford Armory building at 989 Pleasant Street (Ref'd 02/24/2022) was received and placed on file by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Carney. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes. (1, 1a)

Christina Connelly from the Mayor's Office was present and explained the order would allow the city to enter into a purchase and sales agreement with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the sale of the New Bedford Armory building at 989 Pleasant Street. She explained the city would purchase the property for \$10,000 and the state would invest \$3.3 million dollars in much needed roof repairs, which would aid the city in selling the property. If approved the city would take possession of the property and eventually RFP it for sale to be developed.

Many of the Councillors spoke in favor of the taking of the property. They were informed that once the property is taken by the city, the city has estimated a yearly expense of \$5,000 which would be applied to snow removal, grass cutting, etc. They were also informed that the state had already begun the process in securing companies to repair the roof and are moving towards having this done. The Administration estimated the turn around time for the building to be between 6-12 months. Ms. Connelly was hesitant to suggest what the property would eventually be used for, she stated that this would be ultimately up to the Property Committee.

Ms. Connelly was asked what would happen to the property if it was not sold on the first RFP process, she stated that it could be "moth balled" put on hold until they were in the position to sell it. That it would be all buttoned up and secured and have low maintenance issues until it was sold.

On motion by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To recommend that the City Council ADOPT the ORDER authorizing the Mayor to execute the Purchase and Sale Agreement between the City and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the sale of the New Bedford Armory building at 989 Pleasant Street. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Gomes, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the sale and development of an Advanced Manufacturing Campus on 100 acres of the Whaling City Golf Course property on Hathaway Road (Ref'd 02/24/2022) was received and placed on file by Councillor Carney and seconded by Councillor Burgo. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 8, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes; with Councillors Baptiste and Gomes not present for the vote. (2, 2a)

Attorney Gerwatowski informed the Committee that they should move ahead and seek out answers to the questions as it relates to the RFP. However, the Committee will need to send out a Communication to all City Department Heads asking if they have a need for the property, prior to granting permission for the RFP to be issued, and that the Commission would not be allowed to vote on the RFP until they hear back from city departments.

Derek Santos, Director of the New Bedford Economic Development Council gave an overview of the RFP presented before the Committee, seeking their authority to seek out sale offers for the sale and development of an Advanced Manufacturing Campus on 100 acres of Whaling City Golf Course property on Hathaway Road. Mr. Santos' outline included the logistics, timeline of the RFP, when the public would be able to have input and how items like public safety, traffic pattern concerns would be addressed. He went on to explain this is a long-term plan and construction would most likely not start until next year. Mr. Santos was asked who would be responsible for the traffic study; he explained that would be charged to the developer as a part of the RFP process. He was also asked what the price would be per acre, he stated the sale of such property is at an all time high which is why they are pushing to move the RFP process forward. Mr. Santos

also explained that the studies for the property was done in advance and was paid for by the Mass Development Commission.

The Committee asked who was responsible for the preparation of the RFP. They were told city staff, the Solicitor's Office, the NBEDC and outside Counsel from KP Law, Attorney Shirin Everett.

Neil Mello of the Mayor's Office stated there was a total of ten (10) departments, which also included the CFO Office, the Department of Stewardship, park staff, golf course operations. They are confined the RFP will address all the Administration's objectives and yes, it is a piece of positive marketing for the city once this RFP's approved and put forth.

James Olivera, Director of the City Workforce Program was recognized and explained that his quasi-governmental agency stood ready to assist in job training for whatever businesses would occupy the commercial park.

On motion by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: That the Clerk of Committees notify Department Heads of each City Department that the City Property Committee is requesting each Department Head respond whether their respective department believes the above-referenced property is needed for municipal purposes; and further, that they respond by March 30, 2022. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 8, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes; and Councillors Baptiste and Gomes not present for the vote.

This matter remains in Committee.

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On motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To waive the reading, follow the Chair's recommendation on matters three (3), four (4) and five (5) and recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action". This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 8, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes; with Councillors Baptiste and Gomes not present for the vote. They are as follows:

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Rebeiro, requesting, that the Committee on City Property meet with representatives of the Zeiterion Theatre, Inc., and the City Administration to discuss the potential for a long-term lease, possibly up to 99 years, of the building at Purchase Street currently being used as the Zeiterion Theatre Performing Arts Center. (Ref'd 05/09/19) (3)

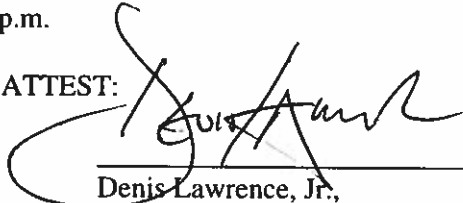
Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the Administration explain the large increase in costs for membership at the Woodcock Rifle Range that has been implemented on members; and further, that this increase be reconsidered unless the Administration can express why the increase has been implemented and what benefits does it provide to the membership. (Referred to the Mayor and Committee on City Property.) (Ref'd 06/27/19) (10/22/19-tabled) (4)

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Abreu, requesting, that the Park Board explore possible uses of land in and around the Pulaski Park and School area for parking and/or alternative access roads and determine whether the land is Article 97 land, and if so, develop some viable options for developing said road or parking; and further, that the Park Board report its findings to the Chair of the Committee on City Property, Councillor Naomi R. A. Carney. (Ref'd from Committee 07/16/19) (10/22/19-tabled) (09/27/2021 – tabled) (5)

Councillor Abreu made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Carney. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 8, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes; with Councillors Baptiste and Gomes not present for the vote.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:04 p.m.

ATTEST:



Denis Lawrence, Jr.,
Clerk of Committees