

**NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MEETING:** COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOODS  
**DATE:** NOVEMBER 21, 2022  
**TIME:** 7:13 P.M.  
**PLACE:** CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

**PRESENT:** COUNCILLORS BRIAN GOMES, CHAIRMAN; SHANE BURGO, VICE CHAIRMAN; IAN ABREU; DEREK BAPTISTE; NAOMI CARNY; HUGH DUNN; MARIA GIESTA; SCOTT LIMA; WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY; LINDA MORAD; RYAN PEREIRA

**ABSENT:** NO ONE

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Councillor Gomes called the Public Safety & Neighborhoods Committee Meeting to order and took attendance; everyone was present.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Pereira, Morad, Lima, Giesta, Carney, Baptiste, Council President Abreu and Councillor Gomes, requesting, that Jana Linhart, Project Services Manager, Eversource Energy and Anthony Veilleux, Community Relations Representative, Eversource Energy, appear before the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods, to discuss the "Eversource Energy Acushnet to New Bedford Line Maintenance Project", said project is proposed to replace an existing transmission line from the Beech Street Substation in Acushnet to the Pine Street Substation in New Bedford; and further, the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods intends to discuss with the representatives of Eversource Energy the deplorable condition of New Bedford streets resulting from the company's previous projects and routine maintenance of underground transmission lines and equipment (To be Referred to the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods, the Department of Public Infrastructure, Eversource Energy and a member of our State Legislative Delegation.) (Ref'd 10/13/2022) (10/28/2022 – Returned Unsigned) was received and placed on file by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Baptiste. (1)

Anthony Veilleux, Community Relations Representative, Eversource Energy, was present and introduced Tom Costa, Eversource Manager, Gas Construction. An in-depth conversation took place with nearly all Committee members expressing their disappointment and anger towards the way Eversource has been conducting business along with the terrible condition of the patch job construction work that has been taking place throughout the city.

The Committee stated that most of their calls received from constituents are Eversource related. They expressed that there appears to be some form of disconnect between Eversource and the construction companies they hire to dig up the city streets. The Committee called for better communication and oversight on site jobs. Mr. Costa acknowledged that Eversource could do a better job and perhaps working with the city they could come up with a better way to oversee construction in the city. The Committee called for a tour of the city with Eversource to view the issues and Eversource agreed with this proposal.



Justin Chicca of DPI was present to answer questions from the Committee. Councillor Morad asked if DPI has completed the list of Eversource projects held throughout the city over the past three (3) years. He told her they had not yet finished but hoped to have it done shortly.

Philip Barthel of Eversource was present and gave an overview of the Acushnet to New Bedford Line Maintenance Project. This project will replace an existing transmission line from the Beech Street Substation in Acushnet to the Pine Street Station in New Bedford. They will be replacing lines that vary from 40 to 50 to 70 years old. Eversource is currently in the community outreach phase, they hope to start construction in late 2024, early 2025. The project will take approximately two years to complete.

Councillor Morad made a motion to receive and place on file the handout from Tom Costa from Eversource Energy, which was seconded by Councillor Burgo. This motion passed on a voice vote.

On a Related Motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: to recommend to the City Council that when the Eversource Energy Acushnet to New Bedford Maintenance Project Line that replaces the existing transmission line from the Beech Street Substation in Acushnet to the Pine Street Station in New Bedford, that a Memorandum of Understanding and a full Safety Plan be negotiated between Eversource Energy and the City of New Bedford; and that the Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods review and have final approval of said Memorandum of Understanding and the Safety Plan. This motion passed on a voice vote.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Pereira, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter at this time. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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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) (03/24/2021 – tabled; RELATED MOTION requesting that the Police Department provide the Committee with historical data on the effectiveness of the Shot Spotter program) (2)

This item remained on the table.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Dunn, requesting, that the Department of Inspectional Services and the Fire Department meet with the City Council to discuss the structural safety of New Bedford's multifamily residences, in light of the tragedy in Surfside, Florida, the briefing should revolve around whether the City has the most modern building codes to protect against natural disasters

as well as non-disaster related structural degradation and decay; and further, the briefing should also cover whether the recertification process for multifamily residences is sufficient to keep New Bedford residents safe (To be Referred to the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods.) (Ref'd 07/15/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Dunn. (3)

Danny Romanowicz, DIS Commissioner, was present and explained to the Committee that while he understood the motion put forward by Councillor Dunn, you can not compare the Surfside, Florida building collapse to the buildings in the City of New Bedford. He compared the two different communities.

Scott Kruger, New Bedford Fire Chief was present and told the Committee that the city could always do more with its building inspections, but the Building Commissioner and his Inspectors provide a good level of protection for our residents.

On motion by Councillor Dunn and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action" on the WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Dunn, requesting, that the Department of Inspectional Services and the Fire Department meet with the City Council to discuss the structural safety of New Bedford's multifamily residences, in light of the tragedy in Surfside, Florida, the briefing should revolve around whether the City has the most modern building codes to protect against natural disasters as well as non-disaster related structural degradation and decay; and further, the briefing should also cover whether the recertification process for multifamily residences is sufficient to keep New Bedford residents safe. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Burgo made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Lima. This motion passed on a voice vote.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:42 p.m.

ATTEST:



Denis Lawrence, Jr.,  
Clerk of Committees