



## **CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MEETING:** COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY &  
NEIGHBORHOODS  
**DATE:** APRIL 10, 2023  
**TIME:** 7:02 P.M.  
**PLACE:** CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214

**PRESENT:** COUNCILLORS BRIAN GOMES, CHAIR; IAN ABREU;  
DEREK BAPTISTE; SHANE BURGO (7:14); NAOMI R.A.  
CARNEY (7:05); MARIA GUESTA; BRAD MARKEY;  
LINDA MORAD; SHAWN OLIVER; RYAN PEREIRA

**ABSENT:** COUNCILLOR SCOTT LIMA

\* \* \*

Councillor Gomes called the Public Safety and Neighborhoods Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read Communications from Councillor Lima into the record explaining his absence and Councillor Burgo explaining his tardiness. The Clerk also read a letter from the Department of Public Infrastructure Commissioner Jamie Ponte, explaining his absence from the meeting. The Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Giesta and seconded by Councillor Oliver. This was passed on a voice vote.

The Clerk also informed the Committee that he received a phone call at 6:20 p.m. from Neil Mello, Mayor's Chief of Staff, explaining that he would not be able to attend the meeting but that Chief of Police, Paul Oliveira, would be representing the Administration.

\* \* \*

The Chair allowed Item number 3 on the agenda to be taken out of order.

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a REPORT, Committee on Appointments & Briefings, recommending that the City Council request that Attorney Gerwatowski review the current process for granting of Street Disturbance Permits to determine if the current procedure should be modified and provide the Council more direct responsibility in granting/revoking contractor permits. (Ref'd 04/12/2018) (3)

The Chair recognized Councillor Morad, who expressed her frustration at the lateness of Commissioner Ponte's letter to the Committee.

On a motion by Councillor Morad, and seconded by Councillor Giesta, the Committee VOTED: to Waive the Reading and Table the matter at this time. This passed on a voice vote.

\* \* \*

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Pereira, Council President Abreu and Councillors Giesta and Lima, requesting that the Director of Emergency Management and Anthony Veilleux or a representative with Eversource Electric appear before the Committee on Appointments & Briefings to discuss the power outage issues that continuously occur in the southern portion of the South End peninsula. (Ref'd 11/22/2022) was received and placed on file by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Abreu. This was passed on a voice vote. (1)

The Chair recognized Councillor Pereira, the maker of the motion. Councillor Pereira explained the reason for this motion is due to the substantial number of power outages in the south end, particularly on the southern tip of the peninsula, around Bellevue Street on the west side and Ricketson Street on the east side. Councillor Pereira questioned why this is occurring and this is the reason for inviting Eversource to the Committee meeting.

The Chair recognized Anthony Veilleux, Community Relations for Eversource. Mr. Veilleux gave an overview of the power outage history going back to 2019. Mr. Veilleux also explained how Eversource investigates power outages in the City and explained that older Eversource property in the City require onsite evaluation to determine where the outage occurred, and a decision is then made on how to address it. He opined that the age of the lines and equipment in the City contributes to the power outages. Mr. Veilleux explained the specific area that Councillor Pereira references suffers from outages due to a deficiency in automation. Once this area is upgraded it would then be a quicker process to determine the exact location of an outage in the area. The newer lines and equipment will allow Eversource to utilize their automated monitoring system. He explained that Eversource is very much aware of the issues and has initiated a 3-to-5-year upgrade plan in place for the City. This upgrade is currently ongoing.

Councillor Abreu was recognized and asked if there were certain pieces of infrastructure that would need to be replaced.

The Chair, recognized Mr. Scott Gervasio, Manager at Eversource. Mr. Gervasio stated that Eversource does have projects that are ongoing, and they would need to be amended to include additional areas as they move forward with them.

Councillor Gomes asked from the Chair if Eversource was making progress in removing the duplicate poles in the City. For example, an older pole was replaced by a new pole and the old pole has yet to be removed.

Mr. Gervasio explained that Eversource has done an inventory of all double poles and have identified where they are. They will be removed once the other utilities, e.g., Verizon and Comcast move their wiring from the old pole to the new pole. Once this is done, Eversource will remove the pole.

The Chair recognized Brian Nobrega, Emergency Management Director. Mr. Nobrega explained that Eversource is very receptive to pole removal requests. However, what is an issue are the slow responses from Verizon and Comcast owned poles.

On a motion by Councillor Pereira, and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: to Table the matter at this time. This passed on a voice vote.

\* \* \*

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Lima and Morad, requesting, that the New Bedford Public Schools Department investigate the feasibility of establishing an executive level position that is solely focused on public safety within the City's public schools, and that such a position be equal in rank to the current New Bedford Public Schools Department Executive Director positions of Executive Director Human Capital Services, Executive Director of Educational Access and Pathways, and Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services, and further, that Superintendent Thomas Anderson, Police Chief Paul Oliveira, Fire Chief Scott Kruger, Director of Emergency Medical Services Michael Thomas, Director of Emergency Management Brian Nobrega, the Mayor's Chief of Staff Neil Mello, and New Bedford Educators Association President Tom Nickerson appear before the Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods to discuss the feasibility of establishing said executive level position. (Ref'd 10/13/2022) was received and placed on file by Councillor Giesta and seconded by Councillor Burgo. This was passed on a voice vote. (2)

The Chair announced that he received a communication from the New Bedford Public Schools Superintendent Office at 2:18 pm., stating that no one from the School Department would be able to attend this evening's meeting because the School Committee meeting was being held at the same time.

The Chair recognized Councillor Morad. She expressed her frustration that the notification from the School Department was received so late in time when the agenda and invites had been published for some time now.

Councillor Morad stressed that the importance of having a School Department representative present to make the conversation work.

On a motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Burgo the Committee VOTED: to recommend that the City Council take "NO FURTHER ACTION". Passed on a voice vote.

\* \* \*

On motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Giesta, the Committee VOTED: To follow the Chair's recommendation and Waive the Reading, take No Further Action and Report Out to the Full City Council on items 4, 5, 6, and 7. This motion passed on a voice vote. The items are as follows:

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Gomes, Markey and Abreu, requesting that the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods, meet with concerned parents lead by Lisa Tavares, the Pulaski School Principal Melissa Rego, Members of the School Committee, Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro, DPI Commissioner Jamie Ponte and a Representative from the Mayor's Office to discuss a plan of action and a resolution in addressing the school's traffic problem on Braley Road; and further, discuss implementing a second entrance to the school grounds off of Acushnet Avenue and the possibility of doing this with the City's Department of Public Infrastructure, this request is for the residents of the area, to ease the traffic flow and more importantly, the safety of the children attending Pulaski School. (Ref'd 03/14/2019) (4)

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Dunn, requesting that MassDOT, the Traffic Commission, the Department of Public Infrastructure and the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) be invited to a meeting of the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods to discuss stoplight(s) and other measures to improve safety and reduce speeding on Hathaway Road. (Ref'd 10/10/2019) (5)

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Gomes, Dunn and Giesta, requesting, that the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods meet with officials from the Department of Inspectional Services, the Department of Public Infrastructure, the Fire Department, the Health Department and the owner of Bob's Tire Company located at 85 Brook Street, due to the local residents' complaints of the foul odor and runoff water from the site where the shredding of tires is occurring, this has become a quality-of-life issue for the residents of that area; and further, that an explanation be given to the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods as to when permission was given to shred tires at this location; and further, that if Bob's Tire Company has any Code violations, that the shredding of tires be halted immediately at this site. (Ref'd 02/13/2020) (10/26/2022 – tabled) (6)

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. (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) (11/21/2022 – Remain on the Table) (7)

\* \* \*

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

This meeting adjourned @ 7:27 p.m.

ATTEST:

---

Denis Lawrence, Jr.  
Clerk of Committees