



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS & BRIEFINGS
DATE: AUGUST 21, 2025
TIME: 6:33 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS NAOMI CARNEY, CHAIR; IAN ABREU (6:44); SHANE BURGO; LEO CHOQUETTE; MARIA GUESTA; BRIAN GOMES; JOSEPH LOPES; LINDA MORAD; SHAWN OLIVER; RYAN PEREIRA

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR DEREK BAPTISTE

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Councillor Carney called the Appointments & Briefings Committee meeting to order, took attendance, and explained that the meeting was being recorded and live-streamed. The Clerk read a Communication into the record from Councillor Baptiste explaining his absence. The Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Oliver.

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PUBLIC HEARING on an APPLICATION, Jose Barbosa and Derek Mendes, d/b/a Casa Do Benfica, No. 27, Inc., for a SPECIAL PERMIT for a CLUB or LODGE, to be located at 34 Beetle Street, New Bedford, MA 02746. (Application Received – July 22, 2025.) (Duly advertised in The Standard-Times on Thursday, August 07, 2025 and Thursday, August 14, 2025.)

On motion by Councillor Giesta and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: To receive and place on file the APPLICATION, Jose Barbosa and Derek Mendes, d/b/a Casa Do Benfica, No. 27, Inc., for a SPECIAL PERMIT for a CLUB or LODGE, to be located at 34 Beetle Street, New Bedford, MA 02746 and open the public hearing.

The Chair invited Derek Mendes, one of two applicants representing the Benfica Club, to provide an overview of the Club's request.

Mr. Mendes, a Club Member residing at 1086 Mt. Pleasant Street in New Bedford, emphasized the Club's family-oriented focus. He described it as a "club for the members and our families." Due to their growing membership, they are seeking a larger facility to meet their needs, which is the reason for their relocation. He reiterated that as a family-oriented organization, the Club hosts regular dinner events on Friday nights for members and their families.

Atty. John E. Williams, based at 651 Orchard Street, was recognized and presented a history of the Club's licensing with the City and stated that the Club's existing liquor license will be transferred to the new location.

Councillor Burgo inquired with Matthew Silva, Assistant Director for the Department of Inspectional Services, about any potential concerns regarding the new building. Mr. Silva confirmed that there are no concerns regarding the building.

The Chair asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak and/or be recorded in favor of the petition. There were none. The Chair asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak and/or be recorded in opposition of the petition. There were none.

Councillor Morad inquired with Atty. David Gerwatowski, Legal Counsel, whether this item had been appropriately presented to the Council and whether he was aware of any potential waiting or appeal period. Atty. Gerwatowski confirmed that it was presented correctly and that he was uncertain, but did not believe any waiting or appeal period exists.

On motion by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Oliver, the Committee VOTED: To close the public hearing.

On motion by Councillor Giesta and seconded by Councillor Oliver, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the APPLICATION, Jose Barbosa and Derek Mendes, d/b/a Casa Do Benfica, No. 27, Inc., for a SPECIAL PERMIT for a CLUB or LODGE, to be located at 34 Beetle Street, New Bedford, MA 02746. This motion passed on a roll call vote of Yeas 10, Nays 0.

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Councillor Burgo made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councillor Giesta.

This meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

ATTEST:

Dennis W. Farias
City Clerk/Clerk of the City Council