



Committee on Public Safety - Agenda

May 14, 2013 – 7:00 PM

Chambers of the City Council, City Hall, Room 214

****View Minutes****

1. Written Motion, Councillors Lopes, Gonsalves, Bousquet, Alves, Oliveira, Lawrence, Gomes, Coelho, Duarte and Council President Martins, requesting, that the Mayor and Fire Chief Gomes present this City Council with both short term needs of the New Bedford Fire Department; and further, that Chief Gomes provide this Council with a detailed analysis of the pieces of apparatuses in use by the Fire Department, the useful life of each piece, current status of each piece, along with the cost associated with replacing said apparatus. (Ref'd 12/20/12)

INVITEES: Representative of the Mayor; Fire Chief Michael Gomes

2. Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods, meet with the Superintendent of Schools, a representative of the Administration, along with the Chief of Police to discuss what prevention policies are in place in City schools to guarantee the safety of all students, elementary to high school, in buildings across the City; and further, to discuss any safety precautions that can be implemented to guarantee the safety of all students while attending our public schools and anything that the City Council can do to make this an affirmative action on behalf of the students and the teachers in the New Bedford Public School system. (Ref'd 12/20/12)

INVITEES: Superintendent of Public Schools Michael Shea; Representative of the Mayor; Police Chief David Provencher

3. Written Motion, Councillor Martins, requesting, that Fire Chief Michael Gomes be invited to the next Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods meeting to update the Committee members on the status of the 889 red fire alarm boxes, 809 of which need an upgrade; and further, the City owns about 100 properties, many of which connect to fire alarm boxes and the public should be informed of any new update to said fire alarm system, this Councillor would like to see this issue addressed, to see if this is a long-term capital plan. (Ref'd 2/28/13)

INVITEES: Fire Chief Michael Gomes

4. Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods meet with the Mayor and the Police Chief to view the Winnebago City Unit was purchased some time ago, for the purpose of looking at the condition of said vehicle and to update the vehicle as far as its radio and camera status and anything else that is needed to make this vehicle up –to-date for the 21st Century, to be used not only by the City for surveillance and emergency situations but also by our Police Department. (Ref'd 4/11/13)

INVITEES: Representative of the Mayor; Police Chief David Provencher

5. Written Motion, Councillors Gomes and Oliveira, on behalf of the Police Department and its men and women of the SRT Swat Team, requesting, that the City take immediate action and look for funding for the purchase of a tactical development vehicle for the City of New Bedford's Swat Team, this vehicle is very important to the deployment and actions taken in situations that call for this type of unit, it is imperative that the City make this purchase as soon as possible due to the increasing amount of calls coming in that relay on this tactical unit and for the purpose of giving the needed equipment to the SRT Swat Team to deal with situations that arise throughout our City. (Ref'd 4/25/13)

INVITEES: Police Chief David Provencher

6. Written Motion, Councillors Gomes and Oliveira, requesting, that a public hearing be held with the Administration, Department of Public Infrastructure Commissioner Ronald Labelle, Department of Public Facilities Commissioner Kenneth Blanchard, and any other parties concerned to discuss snow removal during the Blizzard of 2013, that a plan of action be placed on the books for any type of storm related to the Blizzard of 2013 procedures and policies that will be followed in order to guarantee that we open up streets of the City of New Bedford as soon as possible and that the proper equipment is in place during a storm; and further, requesting that NSTAR officials be invited to said meeting to discuss their policies and procedures during the Blizzard of 2013 and what procedures were put in place to guarantee the constituents of the New Bedford area, rapid response from NSTAR and also requesting that during a hurricane or blizzard situation or any other emergency situation that arises, that NSTAR set up a command center similar to the one that is being done in the northern part of the state, such as National Grid which is a live operator speaking to residents giving them a breakdown of what has happened and how long it will take before their power is restored; and further, that this request be accepted by NSTAR due to the fact that the information that was coming out of NSTAR to the general public through an automated phone operator was not the way to handle a crisis such as this, and we demand that NSTAR explain why some areas took so long to get power back, also there were some small abutting areas where electricity was restored while others still had no power; and further, that NSTAR put in place policies and procedures that address areas where there are nursing homes or elderly housing due to the fact that these people should be prioritized due to the urgency of them possibly getting sick or freezing to death, so that the City can put in place along with information being fed from NSTAR a policy and procedure of emergency evacuation shelters to be set up to accommodate those affected; and further, requesting that if the City of New Bedford is going to award the contract to ABC Disposal, that we look into the possibility of amending the contract to include using their trucks and plows during major snow storms and that ABC Disposal be compensated for said service. (Ref'd 2/14/13)

INVITEES: Representative of the Mayor; DPI Commissioner Ron Labelle; DPF Commissioner Kenneth Blanchard; Representative of NSTAR

7. Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods meet with the Mayor and Police Chief for the purpose of discussing what policies, procedures and safety measures are being implemented throughout the City as we approach the summer season when many festivals and feasts will be held, in light of the recent events that took place at the Boston Marathon, that the City of New Bedford take every security measure in its power during all these outdoor activities, including the Whaling City Festival, Portuguese Feast and any function being held on the State Pier, just to name a few, that the City ensure resources are available in order to guarantee the safety of the people of New Bedford. (Ref'd 4/25/13)

INVITEES: Representative of the Mayor; Police Chief David Provencher

Chairman suggests to "Follow the Recommended Action", on the following items:

8. Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that our State Delegation look into the possibility of filing an amendment to gun control in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that would make the laws stricter and penalize individuals that are involved in selling illegal firearms which then is used in a criminal act, if proven that the gun was sold illegal and if the seller is identified, that the individual be held accountable for selling said firearm and that a mandated prison sentence be placed, making the laws stronger against illegal guns on our streets. (Ref'd 2/14/13, 4/29/13 – Response from Gov. Patrick) ***Refer to the State Delegation***

9. Written Motion, Councillors Coelho, Lopes, Lawrence, and Saunders requesting, that representatives of the United Interfaith Action Committee (UIA), who have an interest in helping inner-city neighborhoods stay clean, to be invited to a Committee on Ordinance meeting and a Committee on Public Safety and neighborhoods meeting to discuss methods on how to keep New Bedford litter free; and further that the current street sweeping schedule be reviewed so that ALL inner-city neighborhoods receive equal attention; and further, that "No Parking" Signs be installed the night before and along streets due to be cleaned the following day, as is done in the City of Boston. (Ref'd 2/23/12) ***Refer to the United Interfaith Action Committee***

10. Written Motion, Councillors Lopes, Gonsalves, Bousquet, Alves, Oliveira, Lawrence and Gomes, requesting, that the Department of Public Facilities evaluate the living conditions at each of the Fire Stations, and prepare a maintenance plan for each station, and that said maintenance plan be part of the next Short Term Municipal Maintenance Bond. (Ref'd 12/20/12) *Refer to DPF*

Chairman suggests taking "No Further Action", on the following items:

11. Written Motion, Councillor Lopes, requesting that Police Chief Ronald Teachman and New Bedford School Superintendent Mary Louise Francis, ED.D, meet with the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods to discuss policies and procedures for school bus safety, as it relates to dropping off, picking up and the dismissal of students at area schools. (Ref'd 11/23/10, 3/12/12 - tabled)
12. Written Motion, Councillor Coelho, requesting, **ONCE AGAIN**, that the Committee on Ordinances and the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods, look into methods of ensuring that all dogs are properly licensed in the City of New Bedford, especially in the more densely populated, residential inner-city areas, where "Pit Bulls" have been roaming at will on the City streets menacing pedestrians; and further, considering that these dogs have a long history of dangerous/menacing behavior, as recently evidenced by the killing of a defenseless smaller breed dog and the attack on that smaller dog's owner when he tried to intervene and save the little dog, that the Committee on Ordinances take this matter seriously and research any restrictions that may be placed on the owners of these dogs and the landlords of the buildings where these dogs reside, including requiring landlords to carry some form of insurance, as some other Communities in Massachusetts already require property owners to do, further requesting, that the Committee on Ordinances look into creating an Ordinance similar to the one in Boston, "Responsible Pit Bull Ownership", and further, requesting that this matter be heard at the next Committees on Ordinances and Public Safety and Neighborhoods, since this very matter was first brought before the City Council for action on June 10, 2010, and nothing has been done. (Ref'd 4/14/11)
13. Written Motion, Councillors Gonsalves, Dehner, Martins, Morad, Lopes, Lawrence, Saunders, Coelho, Alves, and Duarte requesting, that the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhoods meet with the Commissioner of the Department of Public Infrastructure and the Department of Public Facilities, as well as the Police Chief and the Executive Secretary of the Traffic Commission, prior to the beginning of winter to discuss the snow parking ban and parking procedures, in particular what improvements can be made to those procedures in order to ensure improved plowing operation for the City of New Bedford. (Ref'd 9/22/11, 11/29/11 – tabled)
14. Written Motion, Councillors Gomes and Oliveira, requesting that Mayor Mitchell immediately notify the City Council as to what his Administration is doing to replace the front line cruisers of the New Bedford Police Department, along with the vehicles of the Commanding Officers and the Canine Unit, this request has been made several times before but to no avail, the City Council has never received any information or plans from the Administration to address this issue which has become urgent to the New Bedford Police Department and the men and women that serve the City on the front line in those vehicles in every sector of this City 24/7. (Ref'd 12/20/12)
15. Written Motion, Councillors Gomes and Oliveira, requesting, that the Mayor take immediate action and explore the possibility of a bond with the purposes of obtaining new Police cruisers that have been requested by the Police Department, due to the fact that the fleet of cruisers that is presently running is nearly five to six years old and beginning to show wear and tear from their years of service by breaking down or needing frequent repair, we have reached a point where it is crucial that a new line of front line cruisers be purchased for the purposes of not only moral but assistance to the general public and City; and further, that the Police Department along with the City look into whether any State or Federal vehicles are available that may be bought at a cheaper cost for the second line of the fleet cruisers that may also assist us in replacing some of those special assignment cruisers that have become old in service to the City. (Ref'd 6/28/12)