



Appointments and Briefings

February 19, 2014 – 7:30 PM - **Agenda**
Chambers of the City Council, Room 214

****View Minutes****

1. Public Hearing, on an APPLICATION, GC, CF NEW ENGLAND, LLC, for SPECIAL PERMIT for MOTOR VEHICLE LIGHT SERVICE at 943 Shawmut Avenue, New Bedford, MA 02740. (Duly advertised in the Standard-Times on Wednesday, November 27, 2013 and Wednesday, December 4, 2013, 12/10/13 – Hearing continued, 1/22/14 – meeting cancelled due to inclement weather)

INVITEES: Cumberland Farms New England, LLC Representative; City Solicitor Mikaela McDermott; City Planner Jill Maclean; DIS Commissioner Dan Romanowicz; Licensing Clerk Nick Nanopoulos; DPI Commissioner Ron Labelle; City Clerk Rita Arruda; Abutters

2. Written Motion, Councillors Coelho, Bousquet and Gonsalves, once again, requesting, that the Mayor's Office look into hiring a "Baby Advocate" for the City of New Bedford to address the needs of the growing baby population in the City, the advocate would assess the needs of both mothers and babies and bring in, if necessary, State agencies to provide proper services for the wellbeing and safety of the City's babies and possibly obtain grants or needed funding for the vital assistance needed for the welfare of these children; and further, requesting that Diane Bolton be invited to a Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting, along with Cynthia Wallquist, Department of Community Services Director, to discuss if the City can add a person or have someone pick up this work as a Baby Advocate for the City. (Ref'd 3/14/13)

INVITEES: Diane Bolton; Community Services Director Cynthia Wallquist

3. Written Motion, Councillor Martins, requesting, that the Committee on Finance meet with a representative of the MIS Department, City Auditor, CFO and City Treasurer for the purpose of having the City of New Bedford's checkbook placed online for all taxpayers and Citizens to view; and further, that the City has a large budget, monies being transferred, items being bought and salaries being paid for that although the City Budget is posted on the web, it's not easy to follow and doesn't give them the information needed to follow the monies being spent, nor the access to see what they pay for and what we do with City funds; and further; that this process would increase transparency of local government and we should have our books open to the public to show the people of New Bedford what is being done with their tax dollars; and further, this process should include the School Department's budget, especially during times like these when so many Citizens and taxpayers want answers to their questions and rightfully so. (Ref'd 5/9/13)

INVITEE: MIS Director Maria Pina-Rocha; Acting City Auditor Sharon Thomas; CFO Ari J. Sky; City Treasure Renee Fernandes-Abbott

4. Written Motion, Councillor Lopes, requesting that the Morgan Celebration Committee meet with the Committee on Appointments and Briefings to provide the Committee with an overview of the celebratory plans for her return visit to New Bedford. (Ref'd 10/10/13)

INVITEES: Rep. of the Mayor Christina Connelly; National Historical Park Director Jennifer T. Nersesian; Whaling Museum President & CEO James Russell; Tourism Director Dagny Ashley

5. Communication, Kenneth Blanchard, Director, Department of Facilities and Fleet Management, to City Council, relative to the City's new trash and recycling collection program. (Ref'd 1/9/14)

INVITEES: DPF Facilities Management Director Kenneth Blanchard; Recycling Director Marissa Perez-Dormitzer

6. Written Motion, Councillors Gomes and Lopes, requesting, that the Committee on Appointments & Briefings meet with a representative from the Administration, along with Ward Six Councillor Joseph P. Lopes and the artist responsible for painting the City's electrical boxes to discuss why the Administration painted the boxes black after they were painted with artwork that so well identified the City of New Bedford, and which was deterrent to graffiti; and further, that we ask Patrick Sullivan, Director of Planning and Community Development if there are any monies available to hire this artist on a part-time basis to paint all of the electrical boxes across the City, identifying the neighborhood, the culture and the flavor of each neighborhood and the City of New Bedford which we take pride in; and further that the City Council go on record and ask Artworks and the 3rd Eye to work with the City Council to develop a program to provide space for public art to be done by the youth of our City and the Lt. Scott Carola be invited to cooperate with the Council in mentoring youth in New Bedford, sharing his artistic talent. (Ref'd 9/12/13)

INVITEES: DPF Facilities Management Director Kenneth Blanchard; Planning & Community Development Director Patrick Sullivan; Artworks Director Noelle Foye; 3rd Eye Unlimited Representative Ben Gilbage; Police Lieutenant Scott Carola

7. Written Motion, Councillor Martins, requesting that the Director of Public Health, Dr. Brenda Weis, be invited to the next Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting to discuss the new posted position in the Health Department, Code Enforcement Inspector; said posting states that the Inspector will also be doing some "outreach" and Landlords have spoken to this Councillor about outreaching which is important in the City; and further, requesting that the Health Department should create an awareness campaign to all living in the City about "Trash Violations" and develop a plan to also outreach to tenants who are not following the City's Ordinance. (Ref'd 12/19/13)

INVITEES: Public Health Director Dr. Brenda Weis

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

8. Written Motion, Councillor Lopes and Council President Gomes, requesting that David English and Mary O'Keeffe the Regional Representative of Comcast Cable attend the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on Appointments and Briefings, and to provide this Councillor with an update as it pertains to their agreed upon meetings with the Residents of Tripp Towers. (Ref'd 11/22/11, 6/21/12 – tabled, 12/10/13 – Remain in Committee)

9. Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the Board of Health's new Director Brenda Weis and a Representative from the Massachusetts Board of Health be invited to a Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting to give a detailed explanation as to what is being done on a City and State level to combat the growing bedbug problem that has hit New Bedford and other communities in the Commonwealth and what plans the City and State are implementing to alleviate this problem. (Ref'd 8/16/12, 10/18/12 – tabled, 12/10/13 – Remain in Committee)

10. Written Motion, Councillors Gonsalves and Bousquet, requesting, that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meet with Mme. Paul Bushins, owner of Wamsutta Mill Number One, Matthew Morrissey, Economic Development Council, Department of Inspectional Services, Commissioner Danny Romanowicz and the Owners of the Skate Factory, Phil DaSilva and Russell Anderson, regarding the ongoing and unresolved compliance issues that have prevented the Skate Factory from opening in Wamsutta Mill Number One. (Ref'd 10/11/12, 2/19/13 – tabled)

11. Communication, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of MANDY ABOUCHANAB, Acushnet, MA 02743, to the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, replacing Reverend Richard Wilson, whose term has expired; this term will expire in December 2014. (Ref'd 12/20/12, 2/19/13 – tabled, applicant not present, 3/21/13 – tabled, 7/16/13 – tabled, stipulation that if she is a no show for next meeting put on for NFA)

12. Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meet with Lee Heald, from AHA! and representatives from the Downtown art community and those responsible for working with the City to put on a City Celebrates! New Year's Eve, for the purpose of discussing what the City can possibly do to improve what is already in place and what is a good program for New Year's Eve, but what can be done to make it more festive for the City, including possibly a big name group for the Downtown celebration, this is the only City on the SouthCoast that holds such a celebration and should be attracting those from a 25 to 30 mile radius to the City for the festivities that have been put on for years. (Ref'd 1/10/13)

13. Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the City look into purchasing more Christmas decorations for the Downtown area; and further, look into replacing some of the older decorations in the north end and the south end for the purposes of putting a beautiful display of Christmas decorations not only on Union Street and Pleasant Street, but in areas that have long been without any decorations, such as South Sixth Street, the upper part of Pleasant Street, which should include the entire Downtown area in an effort to bring a more festive look for the Christmas season. (Ref'd 1/10/13)

14. Written Motion, Councillors Gomes and Bousquet, requesting that a Representative from the Mayor's Office, Department of Public Infrastructure Commissioner Ronald Labelle, and a Representative from the Treasurer's Office meet with businesses in the Coggeshall Street area, including the Golden Greek Restaurant, the Dog House Restaurant, Hair Stylists and many other businesses in that area for the purpose of updating them as to where the International Marketplace project is at this time and to clarify what the plans are on said project, given that the businesses in this area have suffered so greatly during the past eight months, not only loosing thousands of dollars but whether they should make future investments at this time; and further, that at said meeting the City address plans for the parking lot to consider including a public parking lot not to include meters and also to see if there is some type of tax relief that can be given to the businesses due to the fact that they have lost a lot of money. (Ref'd 1/10/13)

15. Related Motion, Councillor Martins, requesting that the Personnel Director Angela Natho, be invited to the next Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting held in Executive Session with a list of names and addresses of applicants that applied for the positions of CFO, Director of Tourism, City Planner and the Director of the Harbor Development Commission so the City Council can discuss and review resumes to find out how many New Bedford applicants applied for above-referenced positions. (Ref'd 1/10/13, 3/21/13 – no action taken)

16. Written Motion, Councillor Gonsalves, requesting, that Wire Inspector Michael Baker and Department of Inspectional Services Commissioner Danny Romanowicz meet with the Committee on Appointments and Briefings, regarding the requirement for licensed electricians to produce a signed contract in order to obtain a wiring permit if the project is valued at \$3,000.00 or higher. (Ref'd 1/24/13, 3/21/13 - tabled)

16a. Communication, Councillor Gonsalves, submitting a copy of a letter dated April 27, 2012, to DIS Commissioner Danny Romanowicz from Officers of the New Bedford Electricians Association, Inc., relative to licensed electricians and wiring permits. (Ref'd 1/24/13, 3/21/13 – tabled)

17. 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 Acting 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 the 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 the information being fed from NSTAR a policy and procedure of emergency evacuation and 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 as plows during major snow storms and that ABC Disposal be compensated for said service. (Ref'd 2/14/13)

18. Written Motion, Councillor Martins, requesting, that members of C.A.L.M., Inc., be invited to a Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting to discuss their organization's involvement in the education and use of medical marijuana. (Ref'd 3/14/13)

19. Communication, Councillor Lawrence, submitting letter dated March 13, 2013, to the Office of the City Solicitor from Epic Realty Associates, Inc., relative to building demolitions. (Ref'd 3/27/13)

20. Written Motion, Councillors Lawrence and Gonsalves, requesting that in light of the SouthCoast Rail project debacle currently taking place in our State legislature, that the City Council's Legislative Counsel David Gerwatowski, review and provide this body with his opinion as to whether or not the City Council through his representation as our Attorney, can take any legal action to ensure that funding be provided to support rail service to New Bedford. (Ref'd 4/11/13)

21. AN ORDER, that EASTON STREET (Board of Survey) 50 feet wide, from Upton Street northerly +/- feet be DISCONTINUED as a Board of Survey Street. (Ref'd 4/25/12)

22. COMMUNICATION, Councillor Lopes submitting a Memorandum from James M. Cole, Deputy Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, to United States Attorneys regarding Marijuana Enforcement. (Ref'd 9/12/13)

23. Written Motion, Councillors Gonsalves, Lopes, Gomes and Bousquet, requesting that Uplifting Health 7 Wellness (UHW) and Coastal Compassion, Inc. meet with the Committee on Appointments and Briefings to discuss their plans for a medical marijuana dispensary in New Bedford. (Ref'd 9/12/13)

24. Written Motion, Councillor Lawrence, requesting that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meet with the Cultural Art District Steering Committee to review and approve a Resolution in support of said district in the City of New Bedford; and further, that a Public Hearing be advertised and called for on Tuesday, September 24, 2013 in relation to this item. (Ref'd 9/12/13)

25. Related Motion, Councillor Lopes, requesting that the Cultural Art District Steering Committee look at establishing cultural districts in the North End and South End of New Bedford, since both areas have cultural strengths that should be highlighted and celebrated along with the Downtown area. (Ref'd 9/12/13)