



Appointments and Briefings

July 15, 2014 – 7:05 PM – **Minutes**
Chambers of the City Council, Room 214

****View Agenda****

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS & BRIEFINGS
DATE: JULY 15, 2014
TIME: 7:05 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS DAVID ALVES, CHAIRMAN; JAMES OLIVEIRA, VICE-CHAIRMAN; HENRY BOUSQUET; NAOMI CARNEY; DEBORA COELHO; JOSEPH LOPES; STEVEN MARTINS; LINDA MORAD; DANA REBEIRO; KERRY WINTERSON

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR BRIAN GOMES

* * *

Councillor Alves called the meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read a memo from Councillor Gomes explaining he would not be in attendance due to a personal family commitment which was received and placed on file on motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Carney.

* * *

Councillor Alves announced the start of Citizens Input Time, which is not to exceed the first half hour of the Appointments & Briefings Meeting.

Ms. Jacqueline Pina, 325 Pleasant Street was scheduled to speak on water meters, but she was not present. (1a)

Jerry Pinto of 184 Davis Street spoke on behalf of Neighborhoods United and provided an update on the upcoming “National Night Out”, which is scheduled for August 5, 2014, with a rain date of August 9, 2014. (1b)

* * *

Councillor Morad asked the Chair, that due to the fact that Councillor Gomes is not in attendance, would the Chair take up item number four (4). Councillor Alves informed the Committee that Councillor Gomes would not be in attendance, so therefore item number four (4) was tabled as follows:

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting that a Representative from the Mayor's Office, Temporary City Planner Jill Maclean and Preservation Planner Anne Louro, meet with the Committee on City Property to discuss exactly what the future plans are at this present time to address the Congdon House at Hazelwood Park that has for some time gone with no plans of action, which is only deteriorating more and more as years pass, there is a historical significance to this building that should be preserved for the City of New Bedford. (Ref'd 4/11/13) (4)

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

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Continued Public Hearing, on a COMMUNICATION/DEMOLITION, New Bedford Historical Commission, to City Council, re: BUILDING DEMOLITION REVIEW, 4026 ACUSHNET AVENUE, Map 136, Parcel 252, advising that "the structure was built circa 1800 and retains some of its original exterior architectural features including setting and massing; the structure is associated with members of the Tobey family who were early settlers of Old Dartmouth; the subject structure is reminiscent of a "Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn" farm complex found in many colonial American communities; the structure is found to be historically significant due to its historical representative of New Bedford's early rural character and therefore, "the NBHC has determined that 4026 Acushnet Avenue is a historically significant structure and preferably preserved". (Ref'd 5/22/14, advertised in the Standard-Times on Tuesday, June 3, 2014, 6/17/14 – hearing continued) *Petitioner is out of the Country* (2)

On motion, by Councillor Carney and seconded by Councillor Morad, the Committee VOTED: To continue the Public Hearing until August 12, 2014. This motion was passed on a voice vote.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Related Motion, Councillor Lopes, requesting that Paul Sellers, Senior Arborist Vegetation Management for NSTAR be invited to the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting to discuss NSTAR tree and power line maintenance policies and provide a list of all the Contractors that NSTAR uses (Ref'd 3/8/12, 7/16/13 - tabled) was removed from the table on motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Carney. (3)

Mr. Sellers was not present to answer questions from the Committee. Councillor Lopes informed the Committee that they did receive a packet of information and he is pleased with all the information.

On motion by Councillor Bousquet and seconded by Councillor Coelho, the Committee VOTED: To receive and place on file the packets of information sent from NSTAR. This motion passed on a voice vote.

On motion, by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Bousquet, the Committee VOTED: To take "No Further Action" on this matter at this time. This motion passed on a voice vote.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motions, Councillors Lopes, Martins, Alves, Gonsalves, Oliveira, Lawrence, Bousquet and Council President Duarte, requesting that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings, meet with a Representative of the Mayor's Office and the Director of Parks and Recreations, Mary Rapoza, to discuss the feasibility of establishing a "Crowd funding" campaign as a means of soliciting private funds to maintain the level of year round programs across our City (Ref'd 6/13/13) was received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Winterson. (5)

Director of Parks and Recreation Mary Rapoza explained that she did some research into communities receiving funds for things like maintenance and upkeep of parks and facilities, but not programming like this.

Councillor Lopes stated that he read that Chicago, IL actually raised \$70,000.00, in three weeks.

Ms. Rapoza stated that she is pleased to learn of the precedent for it and will gladly take it on as a new project, and speak with the Park Board members about it.

Representative of the Mayor, Christina Connelly agreed that it is something worth looking into. Councillor Lopes asked Ms. Connelly when the City Council could expect to hear back from her, and she said in a few weeks.

On motion, by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Bousquet, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter until August 12, 2014. This motion passed on a voice vote.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillors Lopes and Martins, requesting that the Director of Parks and Recreation, notify the Council in writing, of the policy changes regarding the granting of Special Permits (Ref'd 12/19/13) and a Communication/E-mail, Parks and Recreations Director Mary Rapoza, RE: Special Permit Event Process (Rec'd 6/4/14, copy all Councillors, attachments) were received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Morad. (6)

Director of Parks and Public Places, Mary Rapoza stated that, upon her arrival to Parks and Recreation she realized that at least one staff member was spending a significant amount of time on nothing but processing permits for special events, and she brought that concern to the Mayor's office. A committee was convened and a consultant was brought in to determine whether or not this process could be done more efficiently. After some work, public meetings and public input, the process is now much more efficient and cost effective. It has been very successful and people, including professional event planners, have expressed how much they enjoy the process and planning events in the City now.

Several Councillors asked if the Council could be provided with a calendar of events that she has, and that the calendar be put up on the City's web-site. Ms. Rapoza said she could do that.

On motion, by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Coelho, the Committee VOTED: To take "No Further Action" on this matter. This motion passed on a voice vote.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillors Coelho, Alves, Morad, Carney, Martins, Gomes and Bousquet, given that the New Bedford Harbor Trustee Council decided in 2010, to **NOT** fund recreational project in the final round of its grants, projects like the 2.1 million for Riverside Park in the City's North End, which included the restoration of the 1.5 miles of North End shoreline, the installation of a pedestrian walkway, a boat house and boat ramp among other projects, requesting, that members of the New Bedford Harbor Trustee Council be invited to a Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting to discuss what, if any future plans or recommendations they have for that site and to update the City Council on said matter (Ref'd 1/23/14) and an e-mail from the Harbor Trustee Council was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Winterson. (7)

The Clerk read a Communication from Steve Block, Coordinator for the New Bedford Harbor Trustee Council, thanking the Committee for the invitation and apologizing for not being able to attend. He did want to point out that in 2010 funding round to which the invitation refers, the Trustee Council did provide the City of New Bedford with \$2,908,000 for the Riverwalk Project and with \$100,000 for the Palmer's Island Project. He would be happy to provide the Committee with additional information on those projects, or you can contact Michele Paul, New Bedford's Director of Environmental Stewardship, about the Riverwalk Project and Sarah Porter, New Bedford's Conservation Agent, about the Palmer's Island Project. This Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Carney.

On motion, by Councillor Coelho and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To send a letter to the Harbor Trustee Council asking for more detailed information regarding how the funds for the Riverwalk Project (\$2,908,000) and the Palmer's Island Project (\$100,000) referred to in the email were distributed and that they respond within thirty (30) days. This motion passed on a voice vote.

On a related motion, by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Coelho, the Committee VOTED: That CFO Ari Sky and a Representative from the Mayor's office also attend the next Appointments and Briefings meeting that this matter is discussed regarding the Riverwalk Project (\$2,908,000) and the Palmer's Island Project (\$100,000), for the same purpose of discovering how these funds were utilized. This motion passed on a voice vote.

* * *

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Lopes, requesting, that DPI Commissioner Labelle, on behalf of the property owners on Jenkins Street and Bolton Street, review the City's Engineering changes made to the sewer interceptor, eighteen months ago, which is now causing multiple homes on Jenkins Street and Bolton Street to be flooded with raw sewage; and further, requesting, that DPI Commissioner Labelle provide this Councillor with copies of the existing plan on file for the said intersection, along with the City Engineering plans and a timeline for the corrections of the problem. (Ref'd 8/16/12, 12/10/13 – Remain in Committee) (8)

Councillor Lopes informed the Committee that he spoke with Commissioner Ron Labelle and he would like to keep this matter on the table until the next meeting in August, where he will provide the work that was done at this intersection.

On motion, by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Bousquet, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter until August 12, 2014. This motion passed on a voice vote.

* * *

Councillor Bousquet made a motion to “Follow the Recommended Action on items nine (9) and eleven (11), which was seconded by Councillor Coelho. Those items are as follows:

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Alves and Lopes, requesting, on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne S. Martin, that the City Council change the Zoning of the Vacant Lot Property they own (City Plot 16-Lot 140 and Plot 14-Lot 223) being approximately 16,000 square feet, from Residential to Mixed-Use Business. (Ref’d 6/26/14) ***Refer to the Ordinance Committee and the Planning Board (9)***

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Coelho, requesting, that in light of the recent incidents where the theft of copper resulted in dangerous house fires, that the Committee on Ordinance revisit the existing Ordinances, Chapter 15, License and Permits; Business Regulations, Section 33-51, in order to strengthen the guidelines and the enforcement of same; and further, requesting that a representative from the Police Department attend the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting to inform the Council as to what is being done in other communities regarding this problem. (Ref’d 5/23/13) ***Refer to the Committee on Ordinances (11)***

* * *

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Martins, the Committee VOTED: To take “No Further Action” on item number ten (10). It is as follows:

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a 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, 2/19/14 – tabled) (10)

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a 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, 2/19/14 – tabled, letters)
Response on file from the Mayor (12)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Bousquet, the Committee VOTED: To take “No Further Action” at this time. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Lopes made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Morad.

This meeting adjourned @ 7:46 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Committees