



# *Appointments and Briefings*

June 09, 2015 – 7:01 PM – **Minutes**  
Chambers of the City Council, Room 214

## **NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MEETING: COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND BRIEFINGS**

**DATE: JUNE 09, 2015**

**TIME: 7:01 P.M.**

**PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214, MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLORS DAVID ALVES, CHAIRMAN; DEBORA COELHO, VICE-CHAIRPERSON; HENRY BOUSQUET; NAOMI CARNEY (7:08); DEBORA COELHO; BRIAN GOMES (7:03); JOSEPH LOPES; STEVEN MARTINS; JAMES OLIVEIRA; DANA REBEIRO (7:17); KERRY WINTERSON**

**ABSENT: COUNCILLOR LINDA MORAD**

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Councillor Alves called the Appointments & Briefings Committee to order and took attendance. The Clerk announced that he received calls from Councillors Carney, Gomes and Rebeiro stating that they would be a little late in attending tonight's meeting. The Clerk read a Communication from Councillor Morad stating she would not be in attendance due to a prior work commitment. This Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Martins and seconded by Councillor Lopes.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillors Gomes and Duarte, requesting that the City reach out to the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School for the purpose of refurbishing our trolleys that are now close to two decades old and in need of serious repair work especially on the wood portions of the trolleys and these Councillors feel that Voc-Tech can be of significant help in refurbishing said trolleys which are a beacon within the City and the expertise of the Vocational students to perform this work would be greatly appreciated (Ref'd 8/16/12, 12/10/13 – Remain in Committee, 03/18/14 – tabled, 09/16/14 – Letters, 03/31/15 – remain in Committee) was removed from the table by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Bousquet. (1)

Councillor Gomes explained that he had received a Communication from the Department of Public Infrastructure stating that they were able to repair one trolley using the parts from the second

trolley which was beyond repair. They have one good trolley which now belongs to the City of New Bedford.

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

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting, ONCE AGAIN, that the School Department consider implementation of school uniforms throughout the New Bedford School System; and further, requesting that members of the School Committee appear before the Committee on Appointments and Briefings for the purpose of discussing the implementation of the school uniforms and to also discuss security measures proposed by the City Council, such as an emergency silent alarm system and what, if any security measures have been put in place throughout the New Bedford Schools (Ref'd 10/24/13, 09/16/14 – tabled, 3/10/15 - tabled) was removed from the table by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Winterson. (2)

Bruce Oliveira, Vice-Chairman of the New Bedford School Committee was present to answer questions from the Committee.

Councillor Gomes thank him for attending the meeting and informed him that he believes that the issue of school uniforms should be discussed with the Superintendent of Schools. He did ask Mr. Oliveira about the security systems and silent alarms needed for New Bedford Public Schools.

Mr. Oliveira explained that the city is working on tighter security, especially as they relate to the High School. However, it is not in the best interest to discuss this in a public forum but that he would be more than happy to have a private discussion with Councillor Gomes, but he assured the body that steps were being taken to improve security measures in the public schools. He went on to say that all properties have been surveyed for safety and they are in the process of working out the issues and securing bids for security systems; and that he would discuss this with any Councillor in a private manner if they would like further information.

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

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Gomes, requesting that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meet with Dr. Michael J. Langworthy and a representative from the Mayor’s office, representatives from the School Committee, a representative from the University of Massachusetts/Dartmouth and a representative from SeaLab, for the purposes of discussing a possible venture project of education and research with Dr. Langworthy and the Mars Project upon his research vessel (03/27/14, 09/16/14 – table for 90 days and bring both parties back to check progress on project, 3/10/15 – tabled for 60 days) was removed from the table by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Winterson. (3)

Simone Bourgis, SeaLab Representative, was present to answer questions from the Committee.

Councillor Gomes asked if she had any additional insight on the collaboration with Dr. Langworthy and his vessel.

Ms. Bourgis explained that there had not been any further communication; however, SeaLab is more than willing to collaborate with Dr. Langworthy once the vessel is seaworthy and she would also be more than happy to work with the School Department and the Administration in moving the collaboration forward.

The Chair made mention that the Committee had received a letter from Ms. Christina Connolly of the Mayor's Office apologizing for her not being able to attend this evening's meeting on this matter, but that the Administration is actively working on this collaboration as well. This communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Lopes.

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

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillors Coelho, Winterson, Council President Lopes, Councillors Morad and Carney, requesting, a clarification from the New Bedford School Department regarding the scheduling of school bus service for the City of New Bedford, what has transpired this school semester which has resulted in hundreds of children from all areas of the City left without any means of transportation to and from school; and further, why parents are not given any advance notification of these changes which have left many with no alternative but to hire a taxi, which they cannot afford, to bring their children to school, this places additional stress on students even before classes begin; and further, parents would like this matter resolved without delay, considering Daylight Savings Times will soon come to an end, there is also a safety factor and weather factor to consider (Ref'd 09/11/14, 3/10/15 - tabled) and a Written Motion, Council President Lopes, Councillors Winterson, Morad, Bousquet, Alves, Gomes, Carney and Coelho, requesting, that a representative from each of the bus companies (Whaling City Transit, Reliable Bus Lines, Inc., and Tremblay Bus Company) who were awarded a bussing contract by the Members of the New Bedford School Committee for the 2014/2015 School Year, be invited to attend and speak at a Committee on Appointments and Briefings meeting to discuss the concerns that the members of the New Bedford City Council have, as it relates to the bussing routes that they were provided for the 2014/2015 School Year (Ref'd 10/14/14, 3/10/15 - tabled) were removed from the table by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Coelho. (4, 4a)

Councillor Coelho told the Committee that she received calls from parents at the beginning of the school year with issues of school buses picking the children up in areas that were not proper or safe.

Mr. Oliveira, Vice-Chairman of the New Bedford School Committee was present to answer questions from the Committee. He explained that there were issues with the new computer program which failed. All of the problems that were related to the computer program came to surface at the beginning of the academic year. There was also a new individual that was hired to set up the new system and she was not familiar with the City at that time. This contributed to what you would call a perfect storm. He did go on to say that most of the hiccups have been worked out and that this year the transportation route is being designed and established by the Department. This should satisfy any issues that happened at the beginning of the year.

Councillor Winterson thanked Mr. Oliveira for being present and he too was concerned about the hiccups that took place at the beginning of the academic year and is very happy to hear that the items and issues will be taken care of.

Councillor Carney asked why the bus routes were put onto a computer and she was told by Mr. Oliveira that this is a state of the art program; it is a better process in planning transportation routes. Now that the quirks have been worked out, it is much more efficient. He also told the body that they spend approximately \$9,000,000 as a part of the transportation budget.

Councillor Oliveira echoed the concerns of the other Councillors and was pleased to hear that the transportation issues were being worked out.

Councillor Rebeiro explained that she wished that the Transportation Director would have come to speak on this issue. She finds her to be unresponsive to Councillor's issues. She said that the problems went beyond snow and the first of the year quirks. She asked if the School Committee was putting benchmarks in place as it relates to the job description and requirements of the Transportation Coordinator.

Mr. Oliveira explained that the process of hiring a Transportation Coordinator was done by a subcommittee of which he did not sit on. He suggested that any questions as it relates to how the individual was hired should be sent to the Transportation Committee. He believes that Marlene Pollock is the Chairperson of that Committee, but he would pass on Councillor Rebeiro's concerns to her.

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

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Winterson, Council President Lopes and Councillor Alves requesting, that the School Department inform the City Council as to what is the "student to teacher ratio" throughout the New Bedford School system on all levels Citywide, but specifically, the Betsy B. Winslow School, the Ellen R. Hathaway School and the Elizabeth Carter Brooks School, to include the number of out of district students, and also what is the student population in all public schools across New Bedford; and further, that the School Administration provide the Council with what they anticipate what is the School Department's five-year projection plan; and further, requesting "a response in writing" no later than thirty (30) days; and further, that said response

include the number of student per school that English is their second language (Ref'd 09/11/14, 3/10/15 - tabled) was removed from the table by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Winterson. (5)

Councillor Winterson explained that he would reach out to the Administration to discuss this motion further.

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

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillor Lopes, requesting, that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meet with members from Turowski 2 Architecture and Daedalus Projects, Inc., to discuss the progress being made on the MSBA Preliminary Design Program Submission for the "New" Hannigan School project. (Ref'd 01/22/15, 3/10/15 - tabled) (6)

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

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a Written Motion, Councillors Oliveira, Lopes, Council President Gomes, Councillors Martins, Winterson, Alves, Bousquet, Carney and Rebeiro, requesting that the School Administration conducts a feasibility study to develop a second entrance and exit to Pulaski School, and to consider any and all other alternatives to ameliorate the safety issue, this is the only elementary school in New Bedford hosting over 700 students from across the City and the immediate area lacks a second means of access/egress and in the case of emergency, having only one means of entrance and exiting the property could prove disastrous as these issues apply to all schools in New Bedford and should all be considered (Ref'd 02/12/15, 3/10/15 - amended) and a Related Motion, Councillor Morad, that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings refer to the School Committee that the School Department conduct and pay for a study to develop a second entrance and exit to the Pulaski School and further that all Elementary, Middle and High Schools throughout the City be studied to determine traffic flows and safety of all our schools; and further to have a study funded through the 2016 School Department Budget or MSBA (Ref'd 03/10/15) were received and placed on file by Councillor Coelho and seconded by Councillor Rebeiro. (7, 7a)

A Communication received from the Mayor's Office was read into the record explaining the Administration's position on item number seven (7). A motion was made to receive and place on file the Communication from the Mayor by Councillor Carney and seconded by Councillor Rebeiro.

Councillor Oliveira explained that the letter from the Mayor is specific to Pulaski School, but that seven (a) be kept on the table because it is asking the Mayor and the School Department to address the parking issues and egress and ingress issues for all public schools. He explained that he is satisfied with the Mayor's letter on how the issue as it relates to Pulaski School is being approached. He knows that the walking school bus has been tested over the last few months and that the jury is still out on that for the numbers of those participating in the program is shrinking dramatically. He understands that the

remote drop-off site that is being proposed can accommodate 5 to 6 cars. He is intrigued about the trail development to the Pulaski Park and believes that this has the best potential. However there are some safety issues that will need to be addressed.

On motion by Councillor Oliveira and seconded by Councilor Coelho, the Committee VOTED: To take “No Further Action” on item seven (7) and to table item seven (7a). This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Martins made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Coelho.

This meeting adjourned @ 7:43 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Clerk of Committees