

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS & BRIEFINGS
DATE: JUNE 15, 2017
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS BRIAN GOMES, CHAIRMAN; JOSEPH LOPES, VICE CHAIRMAN; IAN ABREU; NAOMI CARNEY; DEBORA COELHO; HUGH DUNN; STEVEN MARTINS; LINDA MORAD; DANA REBEIRO

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS JAMES OLIVEIRA; KERRY WINTERSON

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Councillor Gomes called the Appointments & Briefings Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read Communications into the record from Councillors Oliveira and Winterson, explaining their absences. These Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of Citizen's Input Time – Not to exceed the first thirty (30) minutes of the meeting. Brenda Pires, 82 North Street, New Bedford, MA 02740, speaking on vacant properties in the City and greater utilization of our City Parks. (1)

The Clerk informed the Committee that Ms. Pires called to say she was unable to attend this meeting and would like to reschedule.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Carney, 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 PUBLIC HEARING, on APPLICATION, Martha Perez, D/B/A Ebenezer Auto Tires & Mechanic Shop, for a SPECIAL PERMIT for Motor Vehicle Sales & Rentals and General Repairs at 1519 Purchase Street, New Bedford, MA 02740 (Duly advertised in The Standard-Times on Thursday, June 1, 2017 and Thursday, June 8, 2017.) (Ref'd 5/9/17) was received and placed on file and the hearing was opened on motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Lopes. (2)

Ms. Martha Perez of 777 County Street, New Bedford was present with an interpreter, Ms. Betsy Jusino of 97 Matthew Street, New Bedford. Councillor Coelho offered her assistance as an interpreter for the ladies.

Councillor Morad asked what type of business would be run at the location of 1519 Purchase Street. She was told they would be fixing cars and doing general repairs. They would have one mechanic on staff for now, with a total of two (2) people working

there. They have been approved to sell anywhere between eight (8) or nine (9) cars at a time.

Councillor Abreu asked if there would be someone on staff to speak English and he was told yes.

Councillor Rebeiro asked if they had a plan for oil removal and she was told yes.

Councillor Lopes asked DIS Commissioner Danny Romanowicz what the prior use of the building was and he told him auto repairs. He has been to the location and it is a turnkey property with an MDC trap. All set and they are running a clean business.

Councillor Gomes asked if there were anyone present who wished to speak or be recorded in favor of the application, there were none. He then asked if there were anyone who wished to speak or be recorded in opposition to the application, there were none. The Hearing was closed on a motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Rebeiro, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL on the APPLICATION, Martha Perez, D/B/A Ebenezer Auto Tires & Mechanic Shop, for a SPECIAL PERMIT for Motor Vehicle Sales & Rentals and General Repairs at 1519 Purchase Street, New Bedford, MA 02740. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of MANUEL DEBRITO, JR., New Bedford, MA, 02740, to the ELECTION COMMISSION; Mr. DeBrito will be replacing Celeste Paleologos whose term has expired; term will expire April 2021 (Ref'd 5/23/17) was received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Rebeiro. (3)

Councillor Gomes informed the Committee that this Communication was an incorrect Communication and that the corrected one was sent to the City Council at their last meeting and was just recently referred to the Finance Committee where it currently sits.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Rebeiro, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Councillor to take "No Further Action" on the APPOINTMENT of MANUEL DEBRITO, JR., New Bedford, MA, 02740, to the ELECTION COMMISSION; Mr. DeBrito will be replacing Celeste Paleologos whose term has expired; term will expire April 2021. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a RELATED MOTION, Councillor Carney, requesting, that the Personnel Director, Sandy Vezina, meet with the Committee on Appointments and Briefings to inform the Committee Members of the City of New Bedford's hiring practices. (*Related to a Residency Waiver Request*) (Ref'd 10/27/16) (4)

A Communication was submitted to the Committee from Sandra Vezina, Personnel Director, explaining she was unable to attend this meeting due to a death in her family.

On motion by Councillor Carney and seconded by Councillor Lopes, 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 Abreu, Winterson, Gomes, Lopes and Martins, requesting that Representatives from both Eversource Energy and Spectra Energy come before the Committee on Appointments and Briefings to discuss both the potential economic and social impact the Acushnet LNG Proposal would have on not only New Bedford, but on the surrounding communities as well, since Representatives of the "SouthCoast Neighbors United" came before this body and the local media recently to voice their opposition of this project, it is only fair, in the spirit of full transparency, that the Committee invite the proponents of the project as well. (To be Referred to the Committee on Appointments & Briefings, Dennis D. Galvam, Manager of Community Relations & Economic Development for Eversource Energy and Representatives from Spectra Energy) (Ref'd 4/28/16) (5/22/17-tabled 30 days) (5)

Councillor Gomes explained that he received a call from Dennis Galvam from Eversource explaining that he was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney, 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 the CEO or Director of CleanSlate Addiction Treatment Center, 92 Grape Street, to discuss neighborhood concerns and security issues around the facility, due to the number of complaints about illegal activity and sales on the premises; and further, that if the Management and Security cannot control what is going on at this facility, that the City request a Police Detail during business hours (Ref'd 3/23/17) was received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Lopes. (6)

Director Brian Coonan and Regional Director of Operations Michelle L'Italien from CleanSlate at 92 Grape Street, New Bedford, MA were present to answer questions from the Committee.

Councillor Gomes explained that there have been ongoing complaints and concerns from the neighbors of criminal activity, including selling of drugs, hanging in the parking lot, etc., and that while there are a lot of healthcare providers in the area, this is a rural neighborhood.

Mr. Coonan explained he is aware of the issues and they are trying to circumvent them from happening. They have an onsite Security Guard that walks the perimeter every half hour and the building does have close circuit TV. They service anywhere between 700 to 900 people a month within the Bristol County area. He understands the issues and it is an uphill battle but he wants an open and honest dialogue between the business and the neighborhood.

The security detail begins at 7 a.m. before employees and patients arrive. Meticulous logs are kept and the detail confiscates items that are not permitted on site for example, knives. He will look to increase the perimeter walks.

They are a member of the Opioid Task Force established by the New Bedford Police Department's Chief Cordeiro. Although it might seem like a lot of people for one Security Guard, they see approximately 30 people a day, which is workable. The patients are instructed that they are not allowed to wait outside and are not allowed to hang in the parking lot. The hours of operation on Mondays and Tuesdays are from 9 to 5, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 8, and Fridays from 9 to 10. They are not open on the weekends. They do not provide onsite medications. They currently have 6 Nurse Practitioners and 3 Medical Doctors on site. They do conduct neighborhood outreach and the Security Guard knows the surrounding neighbors by name. He understands the social stigma about the service they provide and the NIMBY attitude; but they are willing to cooperate and make it work.

Councillor Gomes asked if he would commit to increasing perimeter checks to every 15 minutes. He was told they would.

On motion by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Rebeiro, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter for sixty (60) days and if there were not anymore issues the Committee should move to take No Further Action on the matter. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Coelho, requesting, that a representative from the Department of Facilities and Fleet Management appear before the Committee on Appointments and Briefings to update Committee members on the City's residential and commercial waste collection schedule (To be Referred to the Committee on Appointments and Briefings.) (Ref'd 2/23/17) was received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Lopes. (7)

Ken Blanchard, DFFM Commissioner was present to answer questions from the Committee.

Councillor Coelho explained the reason for this motion was that the Landlord Association wanted permission to put their trash containers out earlier than 5 p.m. in the winter months because it is dark out.

Mr. Blanchard explained that the way it works now is the reason they city streets are looking so much better. He understood the motion, but explained that most of the multiple property Landlords have people that put the trash out for them and they are not personally doing it. He explained the city is trying to limit the exposure of trash.

Councillor Coelho stated she was comfortable with his response.

On motion by Councillor Coelho and seconded by Councillor Dunn, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action" on a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Coelho, requesting, that a representative from the Department of Facilities and Fleet Management appear before the Committee on

Appointments and Briefings to update Committee members on the City's residential and commercial waste collection schedule. 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 City of New Bedford and the Office of Labor Relations begin a discussion with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), so that the City of New Bedford can begin the Municipal Equality Index (MEI) process of self-submission, by which any City can submit themselves to be rated by The Human Rights Campaign, the Municipal Equality Index examines the laws, policies, and services of Municipalities across the Country and rates them on the basis of their inclusivity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender LGBT community. (Ref'd 05/28/15) (4/12/16-tabled 6 months) (8)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action" on a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Lopes, requesting that the City of New Bedford and the Office of Labor Relations begin a discussion with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), so that the City of New Bedford can begin the Municipal Equality Index (MEI) process of self-submission, by which any City can submit themselves to be rated by The Human Rights Campaign, the Municipal Equality Index examines the laws, policies, and services of Municipalities across the Country and rates them on the basis of their inclusivity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender LGBT community. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Bousquet, requesting that the Health Director Dr. Brenda Weis, appear before the Committee on Appointments and Briefings to provide the Committee with an update on the Hoarding Task Force activities. (Ref'd 8/18/16) (9)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action" on a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Bousquet, requesting that the Health Director Dr. Brenda Weis, appear before the Committee on Appointments and Briefings to provide the Committee with an update on the Hoarding Task Force activities. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the City revitalize the park located on the Southwest corner of Hillman Street and Ash Street, refurbishing the basketball court, installing new hoops and backboards, new swings, a fun slide, park benches, fencing, lighting, trees, and of course, the installation of an American flag pole. (To be Referred to the Department of Public Infrastructure, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Beaches and the Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development.) (Ref'd 8/18/16) (9/8/16-returned unsigned by the Mayor) (10)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to take "No Further Action" on a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the City revitalize the park located on the Southwest corner of Hillman Street and Ash Street, refurbishing the basketball court, installing new hoops and backboards, new swings, a fun slide, park

benches, fencing, lighting, trees, and of course, the installation of an American flag pole. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Council President Gomes, requesting, that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings, meet with all Veteran agencies that are presently utilizing the Waldron Barracks to provide services to the Veterans of the Greater New Bedford area; and further that all Veteran agencies provide the City Council's Committee on Appointments and Briefings with paperwork for the assistance they provided to Veterans along with the name of the Commanding Officer for each agency of service, that provide Veterans services out of this location. (Ref'd 11/12/15) (11)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To follow the recommended action and send a letter to Chris Gomes, Veterans Agent asking him to reply to the motion in writing and forward his reply to the Committee. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Rebeiro, requesting that a representative from DPI come before the Committee on Appointments and Briefings, to explain the dissemination of salt throughout the City for the upcoming winter. (Ref'd 11/22/16) (12)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To follow the recommended action and send a letter to Zeb Arruda, DPI Commissioner asking him to reply to the motions request in writing and forward his reply to the Committee. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Council President Lopes, submitting a letter from Joe Vinagre, owner of Hawthorn Florist and Gift Shop, 87 Dartmouth Street, regarding parking issues in front of said business. (To be Referred to the Committee on Appointments and Briefings.) (Ref'd 5/23/17) (13)

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Carney, the Committee VOTED: To receive and place on file the COMMUNICATION, Council President Lopes, submitting a letter from Joe Vinagre, owner of Hawthorn Florist and Gift Shop, 87 Dartmouth Street, regarding parking issues in front of said business. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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

This meeting adjourned @ 7:45 p.m.

ATTEST:

Denis Lawrence, Jr.,
Clerk of Committees