

New Bedford Fire Department responds to fire at Joseph Abboud Manufacturing

“At 2:40pm Friday afternoon, the New Bedford Fire Department responded to Joseph Abboud Manufacturing located at 645 Belleville Avenue for an automatic fire alarm activation.

When Command Unit 1 arrived, he was met by a plant engineer who said there was a fire in the boiler room that appeared to have been extinguished. A fire remained burning in the ceiling and roof above the fire sprinkler system. Hose lines were stretched into the boiler room and crews were able to open up the roof and prevent fire extension.

The fire cause was accidental due to a boiler malfunction and was investigated by the Nbfd Fire Investigation Unit. Currently, there are personnel working on repairs, with plant engineers and maintenance personnel assessing the damage.

The worker who attempted to extinguish the fire was transported by EMS to St. Luke’s Emergency Department for evaluation of smoke inhalation.”-New Bedford Fire Department.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.

26-year old Fall River man sentenced for gunning down 36-year old New Bedford man

“26-year-old Daquan Blanchard pled guilty to murder and armed assault to rob in Fall River Superior Court. He was sentenced to 20 years to life with the opportunity for parole after serving 20 years.

Just before 3:15 p.m. on June 2, 2021, New Bedford Police responded to 911 calls reporting a shooting outside of a warehouse at 67 David Street. When first responders arrived on scene, they located a male victim, 36-year-old Adilson Neves of New Bedford, suffering from an apparent gunshot wound. He was rushed to Saint Luke’s Hospital where he was later pronounced dead.

Blanchard was taken into custody in Greenville, North Carolina on June 15, 2021. The apprehension was made by US Marshalls, who were acting on intelligence developed by Bristol County District Attorney Thomas Quinn's State Police Detective Unit, New Bedford Police and the state police's Violent Fugitive Apprehension Section. Blanchard was found hiding in a closet inside a home."

68-year old Massachusetts woman charged after four-car accident

"On 11/07/2023 @ 7:21 p.m., a Wells Police Officer reported that as he was approaching the Exit 19 intersection while travelling east on Rt. 109.

A vehicle exiting the I-95 off-ramp ran a red light in front of him causing him to strike the passenger side of a 2006 Volvo which was pushed into a 2021 Chevrolet Silverado Pick-up Truck that was sitting at the red light waiting to exit the Wells Transportation Center as was a 2019 Toyota Rav 4 stopped behind the truck causing a yet undetermined amount of damage.

The operators of those vehicles were not injured. The operator of the Volvo, Victoria Mann 68, of Lawrence, MA complained of minor hip pain, but refused treatment. The officer, Dylan McNally complained of wrist pain and was later treated and released at York Hospital. The 2021 Ford Explorer cruiser sustained extensive front-end damage.

Maine State Police were summoned to conduct the accident investigation, which is standard procedure whenever a police

cruiser is involved in an accident. The accident was captured on the officer's Body Camera and Cruiser WatchGuard Dash Camera.

Victoria Mann was arrested at the scene and charged with Operating Under The Influence of Alcohol or Drugs. She was later released on \$360.00 cash bail and given a 12/27/2023 arraignment date at the York County Judicial Center."-Wells Police Department.

40-year old Fall River man sentenced to prison for assault on elderly couple

"A 40-year-old Fall River man who assaulted an elderly couple at a city gas station last September was recently sentenced to serve jail time, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Roderick Dixon pled guilty in Fall River District Court last week to charges of Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon on a Person over the Age of 60 and Assault and Battery on a Person Over the Age of 60.

The defendant was sentenced by Judge David Sorrenti to two years in the Bristol County House of Corrections with nine months to serve. The balance of the jail sentence was suspended for two years, meaning if the defendant faces a new charge during this time, he would be liable to serve the remainder of the jail term.

On September 2, 2022 Fall River Police were dispatched to the

New World Gas Station on Milliken Blvd. for a report of a fight. Two victims were on scene with injuries, but the defendant had left the scene. The female victim reported to police on scene that while her husband was arguing with a woman at the gas pumps, the defendant approached him and began hitting him in the head and continued to do so while he was on the ground.

The female victim attempted to get between the two to stop the altercation, but was pushed away by defendant, causing her to fall and injure her wrist. Both victims were transported to St. Anne's Hospital. The male victim suffered a dislocated shoulder and the female victim had bones separated in her wrist.

Police observed surveillance video from the New World Gas station which showed the incident and showed that while the victim was on the ground and defenseless, the defendant walked over to him and punched him multiple times and stomped on him. At that point, the defendant walked away, but returned shortly thereafter to punch the male victim one final time.

During an interview with Fall River Police, the defendant corroborated being involved, stating he was coming to the defense of a young lady he alleged the male victim was yelling at, before the argument became physical. The defendant stated he "saw red" and kept punching the victim.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Zachary Ferris.

"This is another example of the senseless violence that occurs far too often in our society. I am pleased the defendant will be held accountable for his violent actions," District Attorney Quinn said."

Rochester Police dispatched to recycling center after employee finds deceased baby

“On Thursday morning at approximately 10:40 AM, Rochester dispatch received a 911 call from the Harvey Waste recycling facility on Cranberry Highway in Rochester.

The caller reported that employees had found what appeared to be the body of a human baby in the recycling products. All processing was stopped, and the Rochester Police began investigating.

Currently, no further information is available as the Rochester Police, State Police, and the Medical Examiner’s Office continue investigating.”-Rochester Police Department.

In May, a deceased baby was found in the same facility. You can read that story [here](#).

City of New Bedford moves forward with monument to vets of post 9/11 conflicts

“The City of New Bedford has taken an important step forward in its effort to establish a monument honoring veterans of post-9/11 conflicts, announcing this week its selection of

Martha Schwartz Partners (MSP) to provide design and construction management services for the project. The monument will recognize Greater New Bedford residents for their military service during the ongoing Global War on Terrorism, which includes Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

MSP was one of eight firms to respond to a Request for Qualifications issued in December 2022. It is an international design practice specializing in landscape architecture, urban design, and site-specific climate considerations. MSP has offices in London, New York, and Shanghai, and has received numerous awards including the ASLA Landmark Award, the British Association of Landscape Industries Award, and the Chicago Athenaeum Award for Best New Global Design. In the United States, the firm is known for its innovative landscape design approaches to public spaces, including the Navy Pier in Chicago and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Mayor Jon Mitchell assembled an advisory committee to oversee the monument at a 9/11 memorial service in 2021. The advisory committee, made up of members from the Veterans Advisory Board, local artists, and members of various city departments, has recommended the West Beach jetty as the location for the memorial as part of its initial planning work.

“I wish to thank the advisory committee for their effort in selecting a suitable site and first-rate design firm for this memorial,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell. “We are now well-positioned to develop a fitting and appropriate tribute to those who stepped forward when their Nation called.”

“We are very excited to be a part of this project. The City put forth a request that was both compelling and bold: How to commemorate a new generation of Veterans who served in an ongoing conflict and continue to serve their local community in so many ways,” said Timothy Nawrocki, associate director at

Martha Schwartz Partners. "With this dramatic and beautiful site, we hope to create a space for events, gathering, and reflection that takes inspiration from New Bedford's strong connection to the water and honors the citizens who protect it."

"It's great news that the City is moving forward to create a fitting memorial to honor the men and women who have served and are currently serving our nation during the ongoing Global War on Terrorism; a war which began on September 11, 2001, and continues to this day," said Bob Bromley, co-chair of the Advisory Board and Chair of the Veterans Advisory Board.

Bromley added, "The men and women of our armed forces have fought terrorism in nearly every quarter of the globe, for over two decades. It is an honor to be part of the planning for the City's new memorial honoring the military service of its residents during the Global War on Terror."

"I am honored to serve on the advisory committee and proud that the South End will be home to this monument that pays tribute to our veterans," Ward 6 City Councilor Ryan J. Pereira said. "I have grown up in a post 9/11 world, and to honor those who defended our nation these past decades is not only important for my generation, but for future generations to come."

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House Pours \$250 Million More Into Massachusetts Shelter

Crisis

The House made the first legislative foray into the state's slow-burning emergency shelter system crisis Wednesday, approving \$250 million and a list of specific requirements for the Healey administration as part of a larger budget bill that also addresses a slew of Beacon Hill loose ends and completes the accounting for the budget year that ended in June.

The long-awaited supplemental budget bill was adopted after little debate on a roll call vote of 133-25 just before 6 p.m. Senate leaders said that branch will take up its own version of the bill in "short order," and then House and Senate Democrats will have to iron out any differences before sending a final version to Gov. Maura Healey's desk.

"This \$2.8 billion supplemental budget will close the books on the fiscal year 2023. With a net cost to the commonwealth of \$1.69 billion, this legislation will allow us to end FY23 in a balanced and fiscally responsible manner. A majority of the items contained in here are deficiencies that we need to pay or reauthorizations of past appropriations," House Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz said. "But the area that has received the most attention over the past few weeks is the request from the governor to make further appropriations to our emergency family shelter system."

The House bill (H 4167) would authorize the \$250 million infusion into the shelter system that Healey requested nearly two months ago, before the governor announced that she was capping the emergency shelter system at 7,500 families.

The House bill establishes requirements on how the additional appropriation can be used.

"We are proposing to provide the governor with her request of \$250 million, but it is no blank check," Michlewitz said.

Of greatest note is the House requirement that \$50 million of the \$250 million to go toward “the identification, acquisition and operationalization of a state funded overflow emergency shelter site or sites” for families placed on a shelter waitlist.

Out of the remaining \$200 million for emergency assistance shelters, the House bill would direct \$75 million toward reimbursing school districts for the costs of enrolling new students who recently arrived, \$18 million for temporary shelters, \$12 million for clinical and wraparound services, \$10 million for resettlement agencies, \$6 million for municipal support, \$6 million for shelter staffing needs, \$5 million for workforce authorization programming and \$3 million for family welcome centers, according to a bill summary.

“While we wait for Washington to get its act together, we must confront the issues that are on the ground. And that is a shelter system that is being asked to house significantly more families than it was designed for,” Michlewitz said.

He added, “Our municipalities and school districts are taking the brunt of the day-to-day life of housing these families and providing children with the education and the needs that come with that. And that has left us in the Legislature, as well as many in the public, struggling to get answers on what is going on each and every day in our own communities. Despite these questions and frustrations, we have always provided the resources needed to manage the crisis.”

The House budget chief said he expects the \$250 million outlay will get the state’s shelter system through the next winter months and into the spring. An initial \$325 million allocation for shelter costs is expected to run out in January.

“To be clear,” he said, “we face some hard decisions and choices ahead for 2024 and beyond.”

During his introductory speech on the House floor Wednesday,

Michlewitz asked fellow representatives to center their debate “around the facts that are before us today, and not misinformation that has casually been thrown around recently.”

“These families who have come to the commonwealth are [legally] here while their asylum process is underway,” he said.

Debate was fairly limited Wednesday afternoon. After Michlewitz’s intro, the House went into a lengthy recess as leadership chose which of the 61 amendments would be adopted as part of two consolidated mega-amendments. The first of those bundles, made available after 4 p.m., dispensed with 36 amendments but did not necessarily incorporate them into the supplemental budget. The second consolidated took care of what was left.

Rep. Paul Frost put one of his amendments up for consideration on its own after it was slated to be rejected in the first consolidated package. The Auburn Republican’s amendment would require that a family or pregnant person live in Massachusetts for at least one year before becoming eligible for emergency shelter. It included exceptions for domestic violence situations, natural disasters and more.

“I think that’s a fair amount of time to say that you’ve been here, that you’ve been participating in the community and that if you do need emergency shelter, then you could have it,” Frost said. “And if you want to discuss or further amend or debate lowering that figure to six months or whatever, I’m willing to talk. But the fact is it can’t be 45 minutes, it can’t be a day, because it won’t stop. They’ll continue to come and be sent here. And it’s not their fault, I understand that. They’re going where they’re told, they’re going where other groups are sending them because they’re told they will be taken care of.”

Rep. Alice Peisch of Wellesley argued against Frost’s

amendment, telling representatives that she does not think it would survive a court challenge or that it would actually staunch the flow of migrants to Massachusetts.

“I certainly appreciate the concern that gives rise to this amendment. However, the better approach, I believe, is that that has been proposed by the Ways and Means Committee with respect to requiring that the administration set up an overflow site or sites within 30 days and, if they do not, then the cap will not go into effect,” Peisch, the House’s assistant majority leader, said. “It seems to me that that is the better approach. And I think that that is one that we have put forward due to, unfortunately, the lack of clarity that we have been given to date by the administration with respect to what happens when families start to arrive once that 7,500-family cap has been reached.”

Frost’s amendment was rejected on a 28-126 vote that broke mostly along party lines. Democrat Reps. David Robertson of Tewksbury, Jonathan Zlotnik of Gardner and Colleen Garry of Dracut voted with the Republican caucus.

Though the shelter funding got the bulk of the attention, most of the money in the budget bill – about \$2.1 billion – would go toward MassHealth for “caseload adjustments.” It also includes nearly \$300 million for a reserve to fund collective bargaining agreements with state employees and \$10 million in additional flood relief for municipalities hit by severe rain events this summer.

House budget writers also picked up the loose ends of a July supplemental budget – including \$100 million for pension obligations related to an early retirement program, \$75 million for special education reimbursements and \$60 million for a DTA caseworker reserve – that didn’t already make it across the finish line.

A House Ways and Means Committee spokesperson said the bill

would authorize spending from both the state's general fund and a "transitional escrow fund" full of one-time relief dollars. The legislation empowers the administration to decide how much money to draw from each source, the spokesperson said.

House Speaker Ron Mariano previously said Michlewitz and Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairman Michael Rodrigues were negotiating the terms of the final supplemental budget before it emerged in either branch, but Michlewitz downplayed that notion this week.

"We had some discussions, but this is – I don't want to speak for the Senate. This is the House's version of what we think is the right step to be taken," he said of his private talks with Rodrigues.

Senate President Karen Spilka pledged Monday that her branch will take up the supplemental budget in "short order" following discussions with lawmakers. There's no Senate formal session scheduled this week, though Senate Democrats plan to meet in a closed-door caucus on Thursday morning.

Both branches must conclude formal lawmaking sessions for the year by Nov. 15 under legislative rules, though the possibility exists that the supplemental budget could move during informal sessions that any single member could derail.

Massachusetts Police announce sudden passing of K-9 "Rokko"

"We regret to announce the sudden passing of Ptl. Jeff Jackson's K9 partner Rokko.

Rokko was rushed into emergency surgery this morning and unfortunately did not survive. Rokko served the Town of Barnstable honorably for the past six years.

We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Kevin Smith and all the staff at VCA Hyannis Animal Hospital. K9 leads the way.”-Barnstable Police K9 Foundation.

All photos by Barnstable Police K9 Foundation:



Three arrested in connection

with operating sophisticated high-end brothels in Massachusetts, Virginia

Interested sex buyers were allegedly required to provide employer information and references before booking appointments.

BOSTON – “Three individuals have been arrested in connection with operating sophisticated high-end brothels in greater Boston and eastern Virginia. Commercial sex buyers allegedly included elected officials, high tech and pharmaceutical executives, doctors, military officers, government contractors that possess security clearances, professors, attorneys, scientists and accountants, among others.

The following defendants have been charged with conspiracy to coerce and entice to travel to engage in illegal sexual activity:

- Han Lee, a/k/a “Hana,” 41, of Cambridge, Mass.;
- James Lee, 68, of Torrance, Calif.; and
- Junmyung Lee, 30, of Dedham, Mass.

Han Lee and Junmyung Lee were arrested this morning and will appear in federal court in Boston later today. James Lee was arrested in the Central District of California and will appear in federal court in Boston at a later date.

According to the charging documents, from at least July 2020, the defendants operated an interstate prostitution network with multiple brothels in Cambridge and Watertown, Mass., as well as in Fairfax and Tysons, Va.

It is alleged that the defendants collectively established the infrastructure for brothels in multiple states which they used

to persuade, induce and entice women – primarily Asian women – to travel to Massachusetts and Virginia to engage in prostitution.

Specifically, the defendants allegedly rented high-end apartment complexes as brothel locations, which they furnished and regularly maintained. The monthly rent for the brothel locations were as high as \$3,664. It is further alleged that the defendants coordinated the women's airline travel and transportation and permitted women to stay overnight in the brothel locations so they did not have to find lodging elsewhere, therefore enticing women to participate in their prostitution network.

The defendants allegedly advertised their prostitution network primarily on two websites – bostontopten10.com and browneyesgirlsva.blog – which offered appointments with women in either greater Boston or eastern Virginia, respectively. Both websites purported to advertise nude Asian models for professional photography at upscale studios as a front for prostitution offered through appointments with women listed on their websites. The websites listed the height, weight and bust size of women available for appointments and depicted nude and/or semi-nude photographs of each. The women listed as available on the websites updated frequently, with updates to include “coming soon” or “open” to reflect an impending arrival of new women arriving in the area.

Each website allegedly described a verification process that interested sex buyers undertook to be eligible for appointment bookings– including requiring clients complete a form providing their full names, email address, phone number, employer and reference if they had one.

It is further alleged that the defendants maintained local brothel phone numbers which they used to communicate with verified customers and schedule appointments via text message. In these text message exchanges, the defendants allegedly sent

customers a “menu” of available options at the brothel, including the women and sexual services available and the hourly rate. Additionally, the defendants allegedly texted customers directions to the brothel’s location – a high-end apartments – where they engaged in commercial sex with the women.

According to the charging documents, the defendants charged sex buyers a premium price for appointments with the women advertised on their websites, which ranged from approximately \$350 to upwards of \$600 per hour depending on the services and were paid in cash. The defendants allegedly concealed the proceeds of the prostitution network through depositing hundreds of thousands of dollars of cash proceeds into their personal bank accounts and peer-to-peer transfers. Additionally, it is alleged that the defendants regularly used hundreds of thousands of dollars of the cash proceeds from the prostitution business to purchase money orders (in values under an amount that would trigger reporting and identification requirements) to conceal the source of the funds. These money orders were then used to pay for rent and utilities at brothel locations in Massachusetts and Virginia.

Over the course of the investigation, a wide array of buyers were identified, including, but not limited to, politicians, high tech and pharmaceutical executives, doctors, military officers, government contractors that possess security clearances, professors, lawyers, scientists and accountants.

The investigation into the involvement of sex buyers is active and ongoing.

Members of the public who have questions, concerns or information regarding this case should contact USAMA.VictimAssistance@usdoj.gov.

The charge of conspiracy to coerce and entice to travel to engage in illegal sexual activity provides for a sentence of

up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy; Michael J. Krol, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England; and Cambridge Police Commissioner Christine Elow made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Central District of California; the Eastern District of Virginia; the U.S. Postal Service; and the Watertown Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Lindsey E. Weinstein of the Criminal Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Raquelle Kaye, of the Asset Recovery Unit are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.”-Massachusetts Department of Justice.

Wareham Police Department arrest New Bedford man, Westport woman after car, foot pursuit

“On November 07, 2023, at approximately 11:15 pm, a Wareham officer conducted a motor vehicle stop with a blue sedan on Onset Avenue. The female operator, Inasia Louis-Charles, was nervous during her interactions with officers.

The passenger of the vehicle was identified as, Lashii Ortiz, who had an outstanding arrest warrant out of Wareham District Court for; Armed Home Invasion, Felony use of a Firearm, and Armed Assault in a Dwelling with a Firearm. The warrant was from an incident that occurred in Wareham, MA on October 31, 2023.

The sedan took off at a high rate of speed, and led officers onto Cranberry Highway, Route 25, and Interstate 195 westbound and hitting estimated speeds of over 100 MPH. Marion officers were able to successfully deploy "Stop Sticks" (tire deflation devices) as the blue sedan entered Marion on Interstate 195 westbound. Ortiz fled from the vehicle and ran into woods along the highway. Wareham officers with the assistance of the Marion Police, Mattapoisett Police, Plymouth County Sheriff Department, and the Massachusetts State Police, located Ortiz and placed in him custody. Louis-Charles was placed in custody on scene.

Ortiz, thirty-five (35) years old, of New Bedford, MA was placed in custody on the outstanding warrant. Louis-Charles, twenty-four (24) years old, of Westport, MA was charged with; Failure to stop for police, Negligent Operation, and numerous other motor vehicle offenses. Ortiz, was arraigned at Wareham District 4th Court on November 8, 2023.

Chief Walter Correia credited the teamwork and inter-agency coordination in order to remove two (2) reckless and dangerous offenders from the streets of Wareham, MA."-Wareham Police Department.

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