

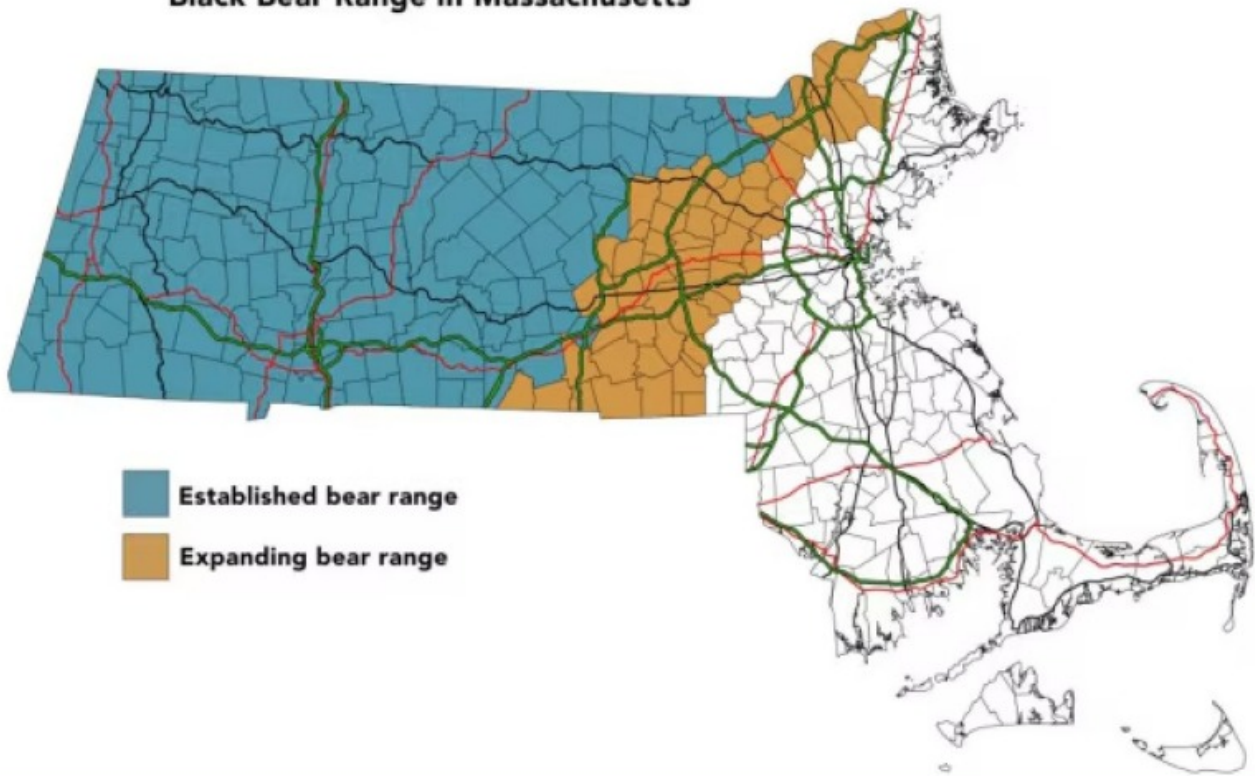
Massachusetts Officials advise residents: black bears emerging from dens are looking for food

“Black bears are emerging from their dens and are looking for food. Bears will always go for an easy meal so follow these simple steps to make your yard less attractive to bears.

- ✓☐ Take down your bird feeders. Birdfeeders are full of calorie-rich seeds that bears love to eat.
- ✓☐ Secure your trash in closed containers in a garage or outbuilding. Don't leave your trash out at the curb overnight where bears can find it.
- ✓☐ Protect your pets. The presence of a dog could trigger a bear to be aggressive. Keep dogs leashed when they're outdoors and never let dogs chase or interact with bears.

Share these tips with your neighbors! These efforts are even more powerful when neighbors work together.”-Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife.

Black Bear Range in Massachusetts



Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife photo.

New Bedford Police “Safe Zone” allows residents to safely meet, complete online transactions

“The NBPD wants to urge those who are meeting individuals for transactions of items purchased or sold that were negotiated either through phone, text, email, or social media sites like Facebook or Craigslist to use extreme caution and care when doing so.

The New Bedford Police Department does have a “Safe Zone” at Police Headquarters (located at 871 Rockdale Avenue) where

transactions by private parties can be made in a safe and secure environment. Those engaging in transactions can simply pull up to the entrance area of Headquarters and make the transactions.

If you choose not to make the transactions here, please consider using a public place where there are several people around to avoid dangerous encounters.”-City of New Bedford Police Department.

Massachusetts establishes the nation's first Office of the Energy Transformation

Melissa Lavinson appointed as Executive Director to execute community-by-community decarbonization strategy.

“BOSTON – The Healey-Driscoll Administration today announced the establishment of the Office of the Energy Transformation (OET) and the appointment of Melissa Lavinson as its Executive Director.

The Office will be housed within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and is charged with the hands-on execution of the clean energy transition, including ensuring the availability and readiness of electrical infrastructure, electric and gas transition coordination, and a just transition for impacted workers and businesses. Lavinson will also convene an Energy Transformation Task Force with industry, labor and supply chain representatives, among others, to accelerate cooperation and understanding of the current state of the energy transition in Massachusetts. This

is the first position of its kind in the nation.

"We are committed to equitably and fairly transitioning to clean energy. This means working closely with workers and businesses to set them up for success in an economy powered by clean energy," said Governor Maura Healey. "Melissa Lavinson joins our team with close working relationships with the utilities and unions and will be able to build quick consensus as we make the transition away from fossil fuels. She'll be able to translate our policy goals into real-world actions."

"We are at an inflection point where our policy vision needs to be translated into practical solutions," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "Our new Office of Energy Transformation and the Energy Transformation Task Force will be able to execute on the important granular work of readying our electrical grid and supporting our fossil fuel workers over the next few years."

"The DPU's order on the Future of Gas gave us the regulatory framework to end Massachusetts' reliance on natural gas, and now it's time to act," said Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Rebecca Tepper. "This is a transition for the consumer switching to electric appliances, for the worker being trained in the latest decarbonization technologies, and for our utility companies, which will need to adopt a new business model. We are establishing the Office of Energy Transformation with a dedicated team focused on transitioning our utilities and their employees to our clean energy future. Melissa Lavinson shares our urgency and commitment to an equitable transition. I know she will be able to hit the ground running and lead this new office with enthusiasm."

"I'm thrilled to join the Healey-Driscoll Administration and get to work bringing the benefits of the clean energy transition to every community in Massachusetts," said Melissa Lavinson. "I'm looking forward to bringing together energy

workers, businesses, and other stakeholders to develop practical and immediate steps we can take to equitably, affordably, and responsibly shift to a cleaner, more electrified, and fossil fuel-free future. Our office will tackle some of the most complex and important barriers to this transition and build meaningful consensus to meet this moment. It will take all of us, working together, to make this vision a reality.”

The Department of Public Utilities’ groundbreaking order in Docket 20-80 confirmed that Massachusetts will move away from fossil fuels and its supporting infrastructure as quickly as possible toward electrification, including advancing targeted electrification pilots and expanding geothermal. The electric network is projected to be the primary energy delivery mechanism for the entire state by 2050. To achieve this vision, the Healey-Driscoll Administration recognizes the need for a dedicated team to focus on to real-world, daily impacts of executing the energy transition.

The Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office of Energy Transformation will provide leadership in strategic planning, roadmap development, and stakeholder engagement to advance the transformation of the state’s energy delivery ecosystem.

In this role, Lavinson will focus on three key areas:

- **Electric Infrastructure:** As residents make the switch to electric heating and vehicles, the OET will work to ensure there is adequate infrastructure, regulations, and supply chain in place to accommodate increasing electric load on the timeline outlined in the state’s Clean Energy and Climate Plans.
- **Electric and Gas Coordination:** The OET will work with the electric and gas utilities to ensure a coordinated approach to the energy transition that maintains reliability, safety, and affordability.

- **Just Transition for Workers & Businesses:** Many companies and thousands of workers are dependent on fossil fuels such as natural gas, oil, and propane for their livelihoods. The OET will work with stakeholders to develop a roadmap to empower and prepare workers and businesses for the future, while ensuring the safe and reliable operation of energy infrastructure during the transition.

To address these issues, Lavinson will convene an Energy Transformation Task Force comprised of representatives from utilities, business, labor, supply chain industry, municipalities, and other implementation partners to accelerate cooperation and understanding of the current state of the energy transition in Massachusetts and areas in which immediate progress can and must be made. In collaboration with the Task Force, Lavinson will develop a slate of near-term priority actions to address current barriers to the transition and a longer-term execution roadmap to help companies and individuals implement the transition.

Such a roadmap would evaluate where and when new electric infrastructure is needed, gas infrastructure can be retired, and near-term transition projects, including geothermal and targeted electrification projects, can advance. Planning ahead and taking a coordinated approach will help contain costs and minimize impacts on ratepayers. Additionally, the OET and Task Force will develop and execute a transition plan for gas workers and gas-dependent businesses to set them up for future success and competitiveness.

About Melissa Lavinson

Melissa Lavinson joins the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs from National Grid, New England, where she previously served as Head of Corporate Affairs, leading

National Grid's state and municipal government relations, community and stakeholder engagement, media relations, municipal customer management, strategic communications, and the company's Equity in Energy initiative and Grid for Good philanthropic program in New England.

Previously, Lavinson was Senior Vice President of Federal Government and Regulatory Affairs and Public Policy at Exelon Corporation and Senior Vice President of Governmental and External Affairs for Pepco Holdings, Inc. (PHI), the parent company of Pepco, Delmarva Power, and Atlantic City Electric, which provide gas and electric service to Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and the District of Columbia. Lavinson also spent more than 20 years at California-based PG&E Corporation, including as Vice President of Federal Affairs and Policy and Chief Sustainability Officer. Earlier in her career, she worked at MRW and Associates and in ICF Consulting's Climate Change Practice. Melissa holds a bachelor's degree in Economics from Hamilton College. She starts as Executive Director on May 1."

Boston Police seek public help locating 33-year-old missing for 5 days

"BPD Missing Person Alert: 33-Year-Old Ashley Drehle Of Dracut

BPD Missing Person Alert: The Boston Police Department is seeking the public's assistance in efforts to locate 33-year-old Ashley Drehle of Dracut.

She was last seen at about 6:00 AM, on Friday, March 8, 2024,

in the area of 725 Albany Street. She is described as a white female, about 5'05", thin build, and brown hair. She suffers from mental health issues.

Anyone with information regarding her whereabouts is advised to contact 911 or District D-4 Detectives (617)-343-5619.

If you would prefer to share information anonymously you can do so by calling the CrimeStoppers Tip Line AT 1-800 (494) - TIPS or by texting the word 'TIP' to CRIME (27463)."-Boston Police Department.



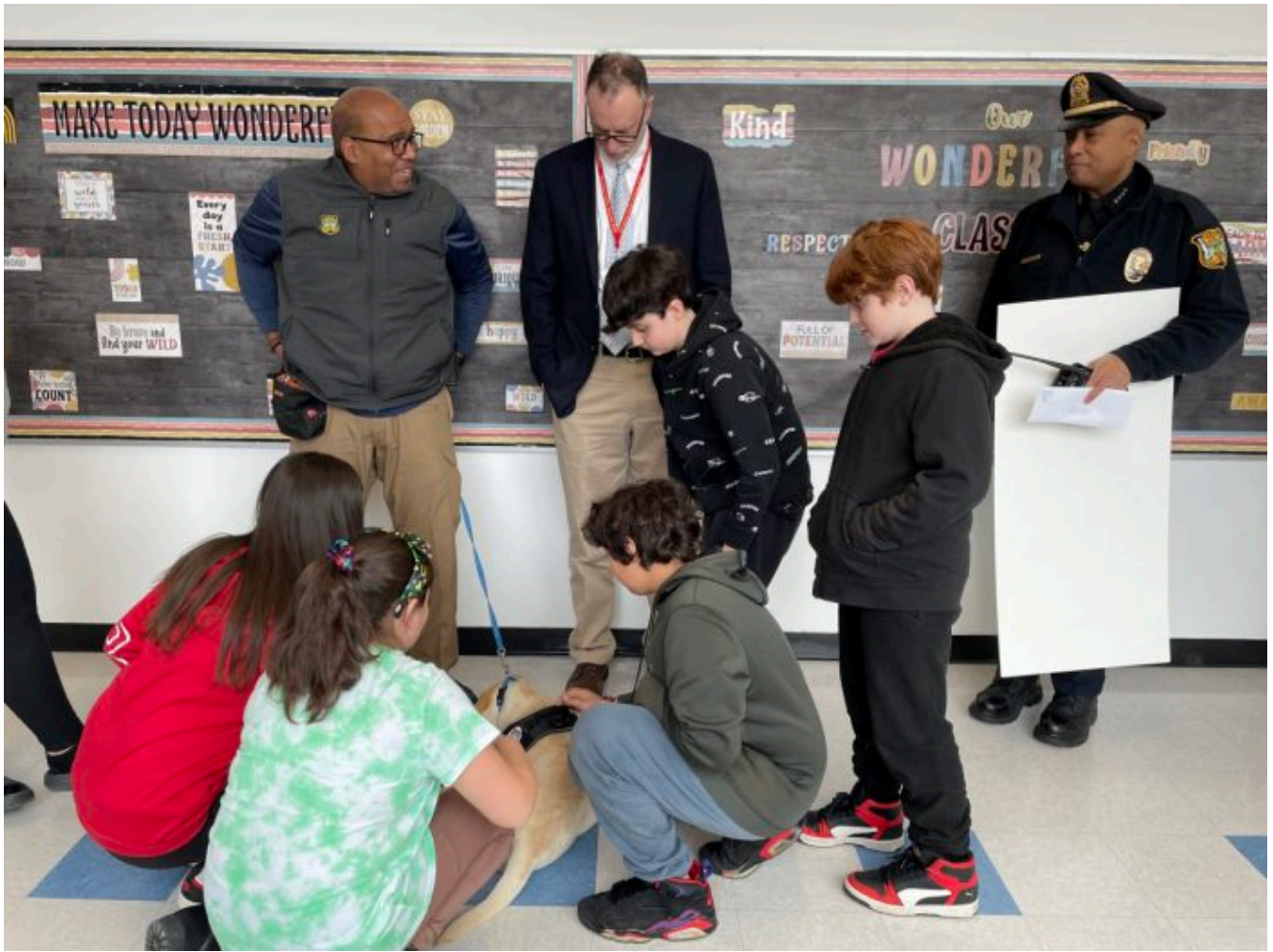
Boston Police Department photo.

“Lexi,” the specially trained

police comfort dog to support Wareham students and residents

“Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and Wareham Police Chief Walter Correia, Jr. are proud to introduce Lexi, a specially trained comfort dog to support students and residents.

Lexi is the most recent addition to the Plymouth County Comfort Dog Program. The Town of Wareham recently acquired Lexi, a Labrador Retriever, from Professional Canine Services in Middleboro, where she will also perform her comfort dog training. Lexi, 3-months old, was acquired by Wareham Police with assistance from a \$5,000 grant from the Plymouth County District Attorney’s Office.



Wareham Police Department photo.

Lexi and her handler, Wareham Police Juvenile Detective Karl Baptiste, will be used to reduce stress and promote wellness for students in Wareham Public Schools, and residents at town events. Lexi will also be on hand to offer comfort to our police officers.

“The Plymouth County Comfort Dog program created a network of comfort dogs and handlers who assist the community through daily interactions with students and coordinated response to crisis situations,” DA Cruz said. “In ways big and small, the dogs are an important part of trauma-informed response within the county, helping create positive relationships between children and law enforcement, while spreading joy wherever they go.



Wareham Police Department photo.

Lexi is bound to be a great addition to the town of Wareham.

Wareham Police Chief Correia said, Lexi will play a pivotal role in creating a calming presence for students and staff. She will be a valuable resource in supporting the mental and emotional well-being of students, our officers and the Wareham Community.

The DA's Office is partnered with Bridgewater State University to conduct an academic study of the Plymouth County Comfort Dog program, which has grown to include 15 dogs county-wide. The office applied for and received a modification to its COSSUP

federal grant for the Drug Endangered Children Initiative to fund a study of the comfort dog program's effectiveness, determine best practices, and support care and training of the dogs."-Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz's

Office.



Wareham Police Department photo.

City of New Bedford spreads word about Vineyard Wind's Fisheries Compensation Program

We wanted to spread the word about Vineyard Wind's Fisheries Compensation Program:

“The third party administered program seeks to provide fair, equitable compensation to commercial fishermen for economic impacts attributable to the project’s construction, operations, and decommissioning activities. The launch of the program opens a 90-day window for fishermen to qualify for compensation at www.vwlfisheriescomp.com.”

“BOSTON, MA – Avangrid, Inc. (NYSE: AGR), a leading sustainable energy company and member of the Iberdrola Group, and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP), a global leader in green energy investment and in offshore wind development through its affiliate Vineyard Offshore, today announced that the Vineyard Wind 1 project has launched its Fisheries Compensatory Mitigation Program. The third party administered program seeks to provide fair, equitable compensation to commercial fishermen for economic impacts attributable to the project’s construction, operations, and decommissioning activities. The launch of the program opens a 90-day window for fishermen to qualify for compensation at www.vwlfisheriescomp.com.

“Throughout the development of Vineyard Wind 1, we have focused on building relationships with local fishing communities while ensuring that each of these vital industries can co-exist to the benefit of the entire Northeast region,” said Avangrid CEO Pedro Azagra. “By launching this program we are making good on our promise to work with the fishing industry to address financial impacts related to the development of this project, and we encourage any commercial fishermen affected to apply for eligibility.”

“The launch of these funds are the latest example of our commitment to working with the fishing industry to create successful programs together,” said Crista Bank, Fisheries Manager for Vineyard Offshore. “In addition to these funds, we’ve also employed dozens of fishing vessels to work on different scopes of the project, a model we hope to expand as we develop projects around North America. By working together,

we can power healthy communities and environments with 100 percent clean energy and the fishing industry can continue to provide healthy locally caught seafood.”

“As Massachusetts leads the nation in offshore wind development, sustaining our nation-leading seafood industry is an equally important priority,” said Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Rebecca Tepper. “For centuries, commercial fisheries have played an essential role in our state’s history, culture, and economy. The Vineyard Wind Fisheries Compensation Fund will bolster our commercial fisheries during this time of transition to clean energy—we hope this fund can be a model for ensuring offshore wind and commercial fisheries thrive together.”

To support the program, Vineyard Wind 1 has established three escrow funds to compensate affected fishermen in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York. Compensation may also be available to shoreside businesses in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The launch of the program opens a 90-day window, until June 3, 2024, for commercial fishermen to apply for eligibility and qualify for compensation payments based on defined eligibility criteria. Critically, this 90-day timeframe is the only opportunity that fishermen will have to qualify for compensation over the life of the program. Fishermen will not need to demonstrate economic impacts from Vineyard Wind 1 to qualify for the program or receive compensation payments.

The program is open to commercial fishing vessel owners/lessees in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island who can demonstrate historical fishing activities in the lease area, OCS-A 0501; and shoreside businesses in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Information about the shoreside business portion of the program will be available at a later date.

“CZM was pleased to work with the Division of Marine Fisheries to secure these mitigation funds from Vineyard Wind for the commercial fishing industry,” said Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management Acting Director Tyler Soleau. “These funds were actively negotiated with stakeholders through the Fisheries Working Group and will help ensure that Massachusetts’ historic fisheries remain safe and profitable as the important offshore wind industry emerges and grows.”

“Division of Marine Fisheries is glad to see Vineyard Wind Fisheries Compensation Fund, negotiated alongside our commercial fishing partners and the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM), provide real benefits for our impacted fishermen and local businesses,” said Division of Marine Fisheries Director Dan McKiernan. “DMF is committed to working closely with impacted individuals to connect them with this critical support.”

Vineyard Wind is hosting open house and tabling events in the month of March to assist fishermen with their applications and answer any questions they may have. Information about these events is available at www.vw1fisheriescomp.com.

To qualify for the program, fishermen must be able to demonstrate that they:

- are a commercial fishing vessel owner/operator homeported in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, or Rhode Island.
- have a 2023 commercial fishing permit from NOAA Fisheries.
- have a valid government-issued vessel registration that shows vessel ownership, or a vessel lease agreement.
- fished in the Vineyard Wind 1 lease area, OCS-A 0501, for at least three years between 2016 and 2022.
- have annual revenue from fishing activities for at least the corresponding three years between 2016 and 2022 (e.g., IRS Form 1099 and/or other tax documents, sales receipts, dealer slips, and/or dealer compilation reports).

Fishermen must include evidence of fishing activities in the lease area, OCS-A 0501, in their application.

This evidence may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Vessel Trip Reports
- Vessel Monitoring System information
- Automatic identification system information
- Fishery Observer or At-Sea Monitoring Information
- NOAA Cooperative Research Study Fleet information
- Chart plotter data/images time-stamped
- Logbooks (supported by additional data)
- Other trip-level reporting information that establishes fishing activity in the lease area

After qualifying, eligible commercial fishing vessel owners/operators will receive annual compensation payments for the first five years of the program. Every five years, participants will need to submit evidence of ongoing and active fishing activities to continue receiving payments. Notably, fishermen do not have to demonstrate an impact to qualify for the program or receive payments.

The program is administered by de maximis, inc., an independent third-party administrator, with support from local fixed gear and mobile gear fisheries advisors. The third-party administrator's point of contact is Major Sharpe, who can be contacted at vineyardwind@demaximis.com.

Vineyard Wind is not involved in the administration of the program, application review process, payment determinations, dispute resolution, or other program functions. The program will continue until Vineyard Wind 1 is decommissioned.

An 806-megawatt project located 15 miles off the coast of Martha's Vineyard, Vineyard Wind will generate electricity for more than 400,000 homes and businesses in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, create 3,600 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) job

years, save customers \$1.4 billion over the first 20 years of operation, and is expected to reduce carbon emissions by more than 1.6 million metric tons per year, the equivalent of taking 325,000 cars off the road annually.”-Vineyard Wind.

New Bedford Police spotlight clinician during National Social Work Month, International Women’s Day

“Isabel has been a calm, steady presence and resource for not only our officers, but also for our community.

She has been able to connect with so many people to help get them the care they need,” said Assistant Deputy Chief Belong.

“Isabel continues to be a key member of our team here at the NBPD and has never asked for or sought out public recognition for her work. We are very proud of her and fortunate to have her working as a co-response clinician with our officers.”

We appreciate you, Isabel, as well as all of our other co-response clinicians! We will be highlighting all of the great work they do during #NationalSocialWorkMonth.”-City of New Bedford Police Department.

“In honor of National Social Work Month, we would like to recognize our lead co-response clinician Isabel. Isabel has been doing police co-response with NBPD since September of 2021.

Isabel does not often get the recognition she deserves as a

social work. She goes above and beyond the call of duty not only as a co-response clinician but trains all new co-response clinicians and also has completed the Co-Response Certificate program through William James College.

Isabel thank you for all you do for our program and especially for the patients we service!"-CFS Community Behavioral Health Center.

New Bedford Police respond to volatile situation involving a man with a knife on Monday

"Police were called to a north-end residence to serve a commitment order on an emotionally disturbed person. Officers were advised that the male had expressed both suicidal and homicidal ideation. The male was also known to the officers to have been violent in the past.

Upon arrival, the male was located seated in a parked vehicle. He was holding a kitchen knife which he gestured towards the police.

At this time, rather than proceeding forward and engaging a male who was only an immediate threat to himself, the officers stepped back and encouraged communication. Family members spoke to the male in an effort to calm him down, as did police officers. Eventually, the male surrendered his weapon, exited the vehicle, and accompanied the police peacefully to the hospital.

The officers on the scene were David Figueiredo, William

Suave, Marc Felix, and Lt. Arthur Hegarty.

"I'm proud of the officers' approach to this call and their commitment to de-escalation during an extremely volatile situation. In the past, police were conditioned to simply charge recklessly forward to resolve a perceived threat. Today, officers are taking the time to consider all their options. That's exactly what happened here, and the result couldn't have been better." -Chief Paul Oliveira.

If you or anyone you know is experiencing a mental health emergency, you can call or text the Behavioral Health Line at 988, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Also, the Crisis Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by calling 508-996-3154. The New Bedford Police Department has a clinician response during certain hours by calling 911.

New Bedford Police Department kick off Women's History Month with photo of female pioneers

"In honor of #WomensHistoryMonth, we thought we'd show off an early 2000s #throwback photo acknowledging some of the courageous women of the NBPD.

Happy #WHM, we celebrate the contributions and the sacrifices women have made not only in U.S. history, but every single day. Thank you to our officers, dispatchers, and civilian staff who have made the NBPD what it is today.

In no particular order: Former Officers Kelly Almeida, AnneMarie Lefever, Barbara Lipsett, Carol O'Shea, and Marge Clayton – May 29, 2000.”-City of New Bedford Police Department.



City of New Bedford Police Department photo.

**Milton facing lawsuit by
Massachusetts for refusing to
add multi-family homes amid**

migrant crisis

Massachusetts Attorney General Joy Campbell has filed a lawsuit against the town of Milton, alleging non-compliance with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Communities Law. The lawsuit, announced on Tuesday, February 27th, has sparked controversy and highlighted the ongoing debate over housing regulations and enforcement in the state, against the backdrop of a migrant crisis and a housing shortage.

Massachusetts is facing a dual crisis, with a surge in illegal immigration and a persistent shortage of affordable housing. The MBTA Communities Law, enacted to address the region-wide need for housing, requires that MBTA communities have at least one zoning district where multi-family housing is permitted as of right.

The law sets specific criteria for these zones, including a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre and proximity to public transportation hubs such as commuter rail stations, subway stations, ferry terminals, or bus stations. Additionally, the housing must be suitable for families with children and cannot have age restrictions.

In a statement posted on Twitter, Attorney General Campbell emphasized the importance of enforcing the law, stating, "The housing crisis is going to take all of us to solve, which is why we filed a suit today against Milton. Compliance with [the MBTA Communities Law] is mandatory. My Office will not hesitate to enforce the law."

The lawsuit comes at a critical time for Massachusetts, as the state grapples with the challenges of providing adequate housing for both its residents and the influx of migrants. The outcome of this lawsuit could have significant implications for housing policy and enforcement across the state, making it

a topic of considerable interest and debate among policymakers, residents, and housing advocates.