

Northampton City Council vote results in police department cutting five police positions

After the Northampton City Council voted to cut their police budget by 10%, the Northampton police chief announced that the department is cutting five full-time police positions and eliminating the full-time School Resource Officer.

The following was posted yesterday by the Northampton police chief on their Facebook page:

“Good Afternoon Northampton,

Last week the City Council voted to cut the police budget by 10%. A significant portion of the cut (\$475,426) was directly from our personnel services (staffing) budget. As a result, we have cut five full-time sworn police positions from the department.

Who was cut? We had one vacant position that will remain unfilled. We have an individual who is currently working for us and who was scheduled to attend the next academy. Two additional employees are currently in the police academy and are scheduled to graduate in a few weeks. Those three individuals were notified that they were being laid off as of June 30, 2020. An additional officer resigned yesterday, and the position will remain vacant.

As a result of these cuts, we have had to remove Officer Josh Wallace from his position as the full-time School Resource Officer. Josh will now be serving as part of the patrol unit. In these increasingly difficult times, we remain committed to best serving the complex public safety needs of our community.”- Chief Kasper

New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of June 29, 2020 –July 03, 2020

The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of June 29, 2020 –July 03, 2020 and they are as follows:

Eversource:

Eversource will replace the gas mains at the following locations:

- Kings Hwy – Tarkiln Hill Rd. to Mt Pleasant St.
- Summer St. from Durfee Ct. to Locust St.
- Hill St. from Hillman St. – Mill St.
- Hillman St. from County St. – Pleasant St.
- Cottage St from Parker St – Campbell St

Eversource will be doing final street and sidewalk restoration at various locations city-wide

Other:

- Contractor (PA Landers) to continue drainage work at MassDOT Project #606709, New Bedford- Roadway Reconstruction and Related Work (including signals) along a section of Kings Highway and Tarkiln Hill Road, Construction to take place during regular working hours (Monday – Friday), police details and traffic controls will be in place.
- Department of Public Infrastructure will be filling potholes on a continuous basis throughout the city.
- Contractor (P Gioioso and Son) is scheduled to begin the

replacement of the Nelson St. water main between Crapo St. and County St. During working hours Nelson St. may be closed to thru traffic with access by local traffic only. Traffic will be directed to either Jouvette St. or Scott St. Detour signage, police details and traffic controls will be in place.

- Department of Public Infrastructure conducting its annual street sweeping program city-wide.
- The contractor (WES Construction) is scheduled to continue construction of the new pumping station and installation of the site utilities at the Front St./ Elm St. site. Elm St, between JFK Memorial Highway (RTE 18) and Macarthur Dr. will be closed to westbound traffic. Westbound traffic will be detoured via MacArthur Drive. There will be detour signage and traffic controls in place.
- Due to ongoing construction at the High Hill Reservoir residents may experience discolored water. The water is safe, and the discoloration will be temporary. We recommend allowing the water to settle for a few hours and then flushing your service line by letting the bathtub run for a few minutes until the water clears.

*** Please note: Contractors will continue to follow guidelines and protocol regarding COVID-19 social distancing while conducting work in construction zone.*

Due to the current COVID-19 situation the Department of Public Infrastructure will be closed to the public entry. Office staff is available to assist by email and telephone.

Baker: Unemployment insurance

fraud has been “enormously difficult” to fight

Katie Lannan

State House News Service

Combating the “thousands and thousands of attempts to steal money from the Unemployment Trust Fund” through fraudulent claims has been an “enormously difficult issue,” Gov. Charlie Baker said Thursday.

The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development in late May warned of a “national unemployment fraud scheme” involving the use of stolen personal information to file benefit claims, and said that payments may be delayed as unemployed workers are asked to provide additional identifying information.

“We’re not happy about the fact that we can’t just continue to make the funds available as quickly as we possibly can, but people are working really hard to make sure that people are in fact who they say they are,” Baker said Thursday. “And when you’re dealing with people who are as sophisticated as these people are that can often be complicated, and I wish that we didn’t have to deal with this, but we do.”

Baker said there have been specific cases where people “are calling a variety of places complaining about the fact that they didn’t get their check.” In some cases, he said, those complaints are legitimate, and in others “there’s somebody who’s working on behalf of the fraudsters to try to get funds released that we’ve already determined are, in fact, fraudulent to begin with.”

The state has been putting in mechanisms, recommended by federal officials to double-check, and in some cases triple-check, filers’ identities, Baker said. More than a million

initial claims for regular unemployment insurance were filed in Massachusetts from March 15 to June 20, and 624,091 people have filed initial claims for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance since April 20, state labor officials reported Thursday.

Massachusetts State Police respond to fatal pedestrian crash on Route 93

At approximately 8:30 p.m. yesterday Troopers assigned to State Police-South Boston responded to reports of a pedestrian that had been struck by a vehicle on Route 93 northbound in the area of Exit 9 in Milton.

Upon their arrival they located a pedestrian, identified as Tat Segundo, 49, of Mattapan, in the roadway suffering from serious injuries. Emergency aid was rendered prior to him being transported to Boston Medical Center where he succumbed to his injuries.

Preliminary information reveals two vehicles were involved in the crash. The first vehicle, a 2014 Honda CRV operated by a 25-year-old female, struck the pedestrian with the passenger side mirror. The second vehicle, a 2007 Dodge Caliber operated by a 30-year-old male, struck the pedestrian with the front bumper of his vehicle.

The exact cause and circumstances of the crash remain under investigation by Troop H of the Massachusetts State Police, Collision Analysis Reconstruction Section, Crime Scene Services, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Troopers were assisted on scene by MassDOT, Milton Fire and

EMS.

New Bedford officer struck by car while directing traffic

Last night around 9:00 pm, a New Bedford police officer was struck on E. Rodney French Blvd. while directing traffic during a traffic stop of another car.

The unnamed male officer was struck by a dark sedan and knocked unconscious. The driver, also a male, stayed on scene until police and emergency personnel arrived.

The officer was transported to Rhode Island hospital. His condition at this time is currently unknown.

Eyewitnesses report that the impact was powerful enough to shatter the windshield.

At this time, the driver is not suspected to have been under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Councilor Gomes: Establish \$300 fine for those illegally

using fireworks in New Bedford

New Bedford City Councilor Brian Gomes is calling for an ordinance that would establish a \$300 fine for anyone illegally using fireworks in New Bedford. **Fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts** for anyone without a professional license.

The following motion is scheduled for the New Bedford City Council session this evening:

27. WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting that the Committee on Ordinances look into establishing an Ordinance that would ban fireworks being shot-off throughout the City after the hours of 10:00 pm with the exception even though illegal after the 10:00 pm curfew on July 4th; and further that the Ordinance establish a \$300 fine for those caught illegally firing off fireworks between July 5th through July 3th of the following year within City neighborhoods, beaches, waterfront and open spaces; furthermore that this law would be strictly enforced in the City giving some relief to the neighborhoods.

Poll: Most do not support defunding the police in Massachusetts

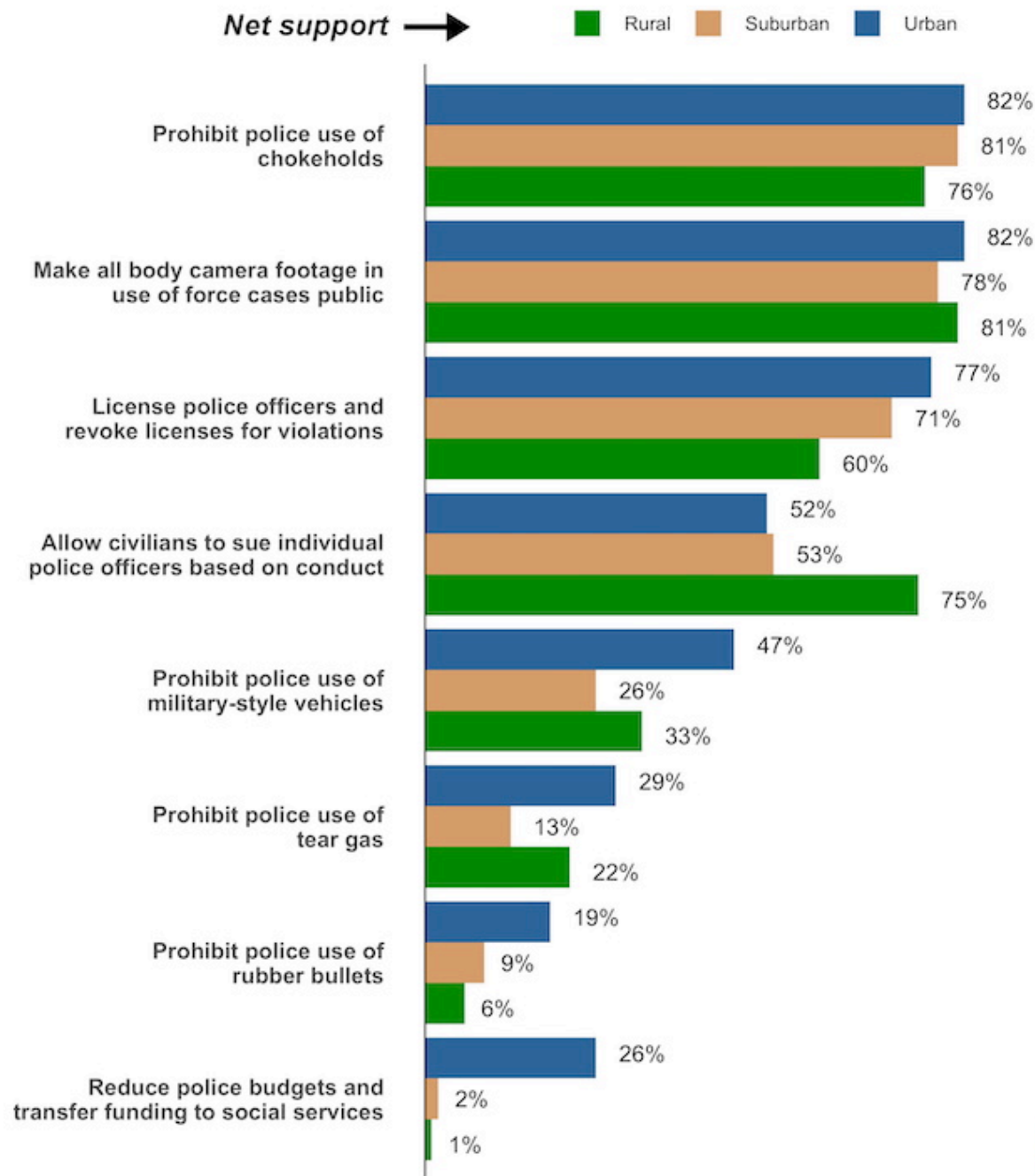
According to a recent poll, very few people support defunding the police and transferring the money to social services in

Massachusetts. While 87.6 percent of respondents said chokeholds should be banned, 62.8 percent also said police should not have military-style vehicles, 55.8 percent said tear gas should be prohibited and 52.4 percent said rubber bullets should be banned.

The poll was conducted by Suffolk University, State House News Service, Boston Globe, and Mass Live from Jun 18-21.

Massachusetts views on police reform vary by region

Urban areas more likely than suburban and rural to support budget reallocations.



Undecided responses not included.

Data: Suffolk University/SHNS/Boston Globe/WGBH/MassLive poll of 500 Mass. residents, June 18 to June 21.



[Graphic: Chris Lisinski/SHNS]

Based on the enormous amount of “defund the police” posts on social media, you’d think there would be stronger support for defunding the police in official polls, but clearly the vast majority of people do not support it and stay silent on social media.

You can read the full poll results [here](#).

Coronavirus outbreak costing City of New Bedford \$150,000 a week

According to New Bedford's Chief Financial Officer Ari Sky, the City of New Bedford has incurred \$1.5 million in COVID-19 expenses through June 5, 2020. In his note to City Councilor Linda Morad, he stated the cost has risen to \$150,000 a week and expects the costs to be around \$2 million in total. Sky also expects most of the expenses to be reimbursed by FEMA and the CARES Act.

The largest expenses were \$225,000 for 95,000 fabric masks purchased from Joseph Abboud as part of the **MaskNB program** and the purchase of 56 Dell Computers at 56,962.80.

Here is the letter to Councilor Morad and a detailed breakdown of expenses:

06.25.2020_COMMUNICATION-EMAIL_-_CURRENT_COVID19_EXPENSES

06.25.2020_COVID-19_EXPENSES_SPREADSHEET

New Bedford City Council to take up petition to move grilling area at Hazelwood Park

The New Bedford City Council today will officially be presented with a petition to move the grills and tables at Hazelwood Park due to the air pollution. The petition has been signed by the majority of the residents of Valentine Street who want the grills moved due to the air pollution caused by the winds.

COMMUNICATION, Council President Lopes submitting a copy of an email and petition signed by residents of Valentine Street regarding grilling at Hazelwood Park. (To be Received and Placed on File.)

06.25.2020_COMMUNICATION_-_GRILLING_AT_HAZELWOOD_PARK

African American blood donors needed in Massachusetts

Michael P. Norton
State House News Service

The number of African Americans donating blood with the Red Cross has dropped by more than half since the COVID-19 outbreak began in mid-March, and African American donors are critically needed to help patients battling sickle cell disease, according to the Massachusetts Health Council.

The cancellation of blood drives at businesses, churches, and schools, along with the disproportionately high COVID-19 infection rate among African Americans, is contributing to the lower donor turnout, which is concerning since African American donors are vital for patients with rare blood types, like sickle cell disease, who depend on blood that must be matched very closely to reduce the risk of complications.

The American Red Cross, with New England Patriots players Devin and Jason McCourty, the Rev. Liz Walker of Roxbury Presbyterian Church, Clappazzola Partners, and other community groups, plans a five-hour blood drive starting at 10 a.m. on June 30 at Northeastern University's Matthews Arena, according to the council. "Sickle cell has affected our family and watching our family fight inspired us to get involved," Devin McCourty said.

According to the council, healthy individuals who are feeling well may also make an appointment to donate by downloading the free Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org), calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

"Blood transfusion helps patients with sickle cell disease – the most common genetic blood disease in the U.S. – and African American donors play an important role in their treatment," said Dr. Yvette Miller, executive medical officer, Red Cross Blood Services. "We want to assure donors that their health and safety is a top priority for the Red Cross. By adding safeguards to our drives in response to this coronavirus, we hope individuals will roll up a sleeve to help those counting on their donation."