

Massachusetts Troopers arrest two for Trafficking Cocaine, Fentanyl and Possession of Stolen Firearm

Shortly before 5 p.m. yesterday, a Trooper assigned to the Troop D Community Action Team was on patrol in Fall River. As he was traveling on South Main Street he observed a Chevrolet Traverse with heavily tinted windows. The Trooper followed the vehicle then activated his blue lights and subsequently stopped it as they approached Columbia Street.

After the vehicle stopped the Trooper approached it to speak with the operator, identified as SAVON GONSALVES, 21, of Fall River, who eventually informed the Trooper that his license was suspended. Several other Troop D CAT members arrived on scene to assist in removing GONSALVES from the vehicle, who was then placed under arrest. While removing him, Troopers observed numerous indications that he may have recently taken part in the sale of illegal narcotics. Troopers then removed the passenger, identified as SERENA SILVA, 20, of Brockton, from the vehicle as well.

After a short investigation on scene Troopers located 15 grams of a substance suspected to be Fentanyl and 50 grams of a substance suspected to be Cocaine. They also located a loaded .45 caliber Springfield Armory pistol which an electronic inquiry had shown to be stolen. Neither occupant of the vehicle possessed a license to carry firearms. SILVA was also placed under arrest.

Both GONSALVES and SILVA were transported to State Police-Dartmouth where they were booked. A bail commissioner was contacted and set bail at \$100,000 for both. They were later

transported to Bristol County House of Correction where they remained until their arraignment at Fall River District Court on the following charges.

SAVON GONSALVES:

01. Operating a Motor Vehicle with a Suspended License;
02. Improper Storage of a Firearm;
03. Possession of a Firearm;
04. Possession of a Firearm without FID Card;
05. Carrying a Loaded Firearm;
06. Possession of a Firearm During Commission of a Felony;
07. Possession of Ammunition without FID Card;
08. Trafficking in Cocaine;
09. Trafficking in Fentanyl;
10. Conspiracy to Violate Drug Law;
11. Conspiracy;
12. Firearm Violation with Prior Violent/Drug Crime; and
13. Receiving Stolen Property under \$1200.

SERENA SILVA:

01. Improper Storage of a Firearm;
 02. Possession of a Firearm;
 03. Possession of a Firearm without FID Card;
 04. Carrying a Loaded Firearm;
 05. Possession of a Firearm During Commission of a Felony;
 06. Possession of Ammunition without FID Card;
 07. Trafficking in Cocaine;
 08. Trafficking in Fentanyl;
 09. Conspiracy to Violate Drug Law;
 10. Conspiracy;
 11. Firearm Violation with Prior Violent/Drug Crime; and
 12. Receiving Stolen Property under \$1200.
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Dartmouth Police seek public's help in investigating murder of New Bedford man

"Calling all cAHs...Calling all cAHs

As you most likely have either heard or read about it by now, in conjunction with Massachusetts State Police detectives, Dartmouth detectives are currently investigating the homicide of 27-year-old New Bedford resident, Jose Cortez Cornejo.

If you have any information regarding the homicide and would like to remain anonymous, you are strongly encouraged to download the free Dartmouth PD tip411 app. If you do not want to download the app, you can either send us a private message on Facebook, or call the Dartmouth Police Department Investigative Services Division at 508-910-1775.

To anonymously text a tip to the D.A.'s Office, text the word "Bristol" to CRIMES (274637), then text them your tip. You can also submit a web-based anonymous tip by going to Submit a Web Tip. No personal information will be shared, even with investigators.

Please help us bring justice and closure to this case by sharing this post!"-Dartmouth Police Department.

New Bedford branch of NAACP urges House members to approve police accountability bill

“If we are not going to tolerate police abuses, if we’re not going to accept racism in the ranks of law enforcement; if we are to end the targeting of people-of-color by law enforcement; if we are truly committed to creating a culture and environment of racial equality in our Commonwealth, then the Massachusetts legislature must pass the Police Accountability Bill,” said LaSella Hall, President of the NAACP New Bedford Branch. The Senate version of the bill, S 2800, passed with an overwhelming majority. The legislation now moves to the House.

“It’s rare for legislators to have the opportunity to pass civil rights legislation. History has shown that these opportunities don’t come often. We urge all House members to examine their consciences and think of the many lives lost, the many families devastated, by police violence, and take a stand against violence and racism today,” added President Hall.

A week ago the NAACP released a list of demands to of New Bedford City Mayor John Mitchell, Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro, and District Attorney Thomas Quinn III. Many of these demands, including creating Community Review Boards, outlawing choke holds and neck holds, in addition to many other protections, would be satisfied by the Police Accountability Bill. The organization worked closely with Senator Montigny to help craft and advance the bill, helping to include the voices of communities-of-color in the legislative effort.

Senator Montigny, in a statement, said, "We cannot deny that structural racism and inequality is deeply rooted within society, and we must take serious measures to begin to eradicate these pervasive problems."

As the earlier NAACP statement read: "The horrific death of George Floyd and, more recently, the deliberate shooting of Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta along with Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and other Black citizens too numerous to name, has increased the number of lives lost to state-sanctioned violence and white supremacy. These incidents are becoming all too common. Enough is enough!"

76-year old missing Dartmouth fisherman found deceased

Dartmouth Police and Fire, the Dartmouth Harbor Master, Massachusetts Coast Guard, Massachusetts Environmental Police and the Massachusetts State Police detectives assigned to the Bristol County District Attorney's Office began a search for missing fisherman Robert Griffith, 76 years of age of South Dartmouth, MA after his wife reported him missing at 11:30 am today.

Griffith left his home at approximately 5:00 am today to fish in his 14 foot Carolina skiff and was scheduled to return at 8:30 am. Griffith's boat was discovered at approximately 12:43 at Barney's Joy Beach in Dartmouth unoccupied. After a further search, Robert Griffith was discovered in the waters approximately half a mile out from Barney's Joy Beach and pronounced deceased a short time later. Foul play is not suspected.

New Bedford man identified as deceased person found this morning in Dartmouth

The Bristol County District Attorney's Office has identified the deceased male located in the area of 180 Horseneck Road earlier this morning as 27-year-old Jose Cortez Cornejo of New Bedford. As the investigation remains active and ongoing, no further information can be disseminated at this time.

Full details [here](#).

Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court to Hear Case Challenging Baker's COVID-19 Orders

Colin A. Young
State House News Service

The state's highest court will hear arguments in September in a lawsuit brought against Gov. Charlie Baker challenging his authority to declare a COVID-19 state of emergency and to issue the emergency orders that have shaped life in Massachusetts for the last four months.

Justice Barbara Lenk, sitting as part of a single-justice session, ordered a lawsuit brought by the New Civil Liberties Alliance to be transferred to the Supreme Judicial Court for arguments in September. The suit revolves around whether a governor can use the powers afforded under the Civil Defense Act to declare an emergency around public health.

“The Governor’s orders are invalid because the COVID-19 pandemic is not a ‘civil defense emergency.’ The Civil Defense Act is a 1950’s-era statute designed to protect the Commonwealth from foreign invasions, armed insurrections, and civil unrest associated with natural disasters. It has never before been invoked for a health emergency,” the plaintiffs said. “On the other hand, the legislature passed the Public Health Act explicitly to empower health authorities to control and prevent transmission of infectious diseases dangerous to public health. Under the Public Health Act, principal responsibility for disease control lies with local boards of health, not with the Governor.”

The plaintiffs include business owners in Hubbardston, Lexington, Burlington, and Marlborough, the pastors of churches in Westfield and Medford, and Ben Haskell, headmaster of Trinity Christian Academy in Hyannis.

Both the New Civil Liberties Alliance and the Baker administration asked for a single justice of the SJC to review the complaint.

“Due to the nature of the questions raised, and the multiple pending cases in State and Federal courts related to these issues of State-wide significance, the parties’ motion to transfer is the most expeditious way to resolve the questions presented in the petitioner’s complaint,” Lenk wrote in her order.

The governor has said that he was mindful to not trample upon anyone’s constitutional rights when imposing virus mitigation

measures. For example, Baker has said repeatedly that he did not think he had the authority to order residents to stay in their homes, and he opted instead to advise people that they would be safer at home.

The Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance, which is not a plaintiff in the suit but supports the action, celebrated Lenk's order on Tuesday.

"It looks like the plaintiffs and all those who care about keeping state government accountable will have their day in court – the state's highest court. This case is not an attack on the Governor and makes no judgement as to whether his policies are good or bad," Paul Craney, spokesman for the Fiscal Alliance, said. "What this case hopes to clarify is whether the Governor has the legal authority to impose so many far reaching executive orders or should he abide by the provisions set forth by the legislature in state's Public Health Act."

UPDATED: Dartmouth Police and Massachusetts State Police seek public's help regarding body found on side of road

UPDATE: (5:30 PM)

The Bristol County District Attorney's Office has identified the deceased male located in the area of 180 Horseneck Road earlier this morning as 27-year old Jose Cortez Cornejo of New Bedford. As the investigation remains active and ongoing, no

further information can be disseminated at this time.

Original press release:

Dartmouth Police, Massachusetts State Police detectives assigned to the district attorney's office and Homicide Unit prosecutors are actively investigating an apparent homicide which occurred in Dartmouth sometime late last night or early this morning.□

At 5:10 a.m. today, Dartmouth Police received a 911 call from a motorist, who reported seeing a male collapsed on the side of the road in the area of 180 Horseneck Road. When police and paramedics arrived on scene, they located the male and determined him to be deceased.

The victim is an unidentified male and based upon evidence gathered during the preliminary investigation, it is believed he is the victim of a homicide.

The state Medical Examiner's Office will take custody of the body to perform an autopsy in the coming days.

As the investigation remains active and ongoing, no further information can be disseminated at this time. Once the victim's next of kin is located and notified of his death, this office will be able to publicly identify him through a follow up media release.

If anyone has any information regarding this case or may have been in the area of 180 Horseneck Road between 11 pm and 5 am, they are urged to contact Dartmouth Police or take advantage of the district attorney's anonymous text a tip program.

The first way to submit an anonymous tip is via our text-a-tip program. To anonymously text a tip to us, text the word "Bristol" to the phone number CRIMES (274637). Then just text us your tip. You can also submit a web-based anonymous tip by going to Submit a Web Tip. These tip programs are completely

anonymous and your personal information will never be seen by our investigators or anyone else.

Fall River Police Union: Do not remove \$480,000 from the police department, it is needed

The following letter was sent to us from the Fall River Police Union:

City Council President Cliff Ponte,

I write to you today in regards to Mayor Paul Coogan's appropriation order request to transfer funds from the Fall River Police Department's FY 2020 budget to the Community Maintenance, Expenses and Insurance, which is scheduled to be voted upon today. Specifically, the Mayor is requesting unexpended funds be removed from the police department budget, which consists of \$24,777 from Administrative Salaries, \$175,000 Administrative Expenses, and \$280,223 from Police Salaries, totaling \$480,000.

As you know, those funds had been allocated by the Fall River City Council enabling the Fall River Police Department to provide specific services to the citizens of Fall River during FY 2020 to include reactive patrols, proactive patrols, and fund the expense of overtime costs associated with those services as well as funding the expense of Police Officer attendance at the various court proceedings required to prosecute the bad actors within our community.

2020 was not a typical year and no one predicted that a virus such as Covid-19 would have made an appearance and wreaked havoc in every community around the globe. Fall River was not spared in that widespread impact and many entities and employers shut down for an extended period of time but the Fall River Police Department never shut down. We continued to provide our citizens with the fullest and best services we could provide. In fact, our attendance records were the best they had been in several years, which just showed the dedication our police officers displayed during the pandemic. As a result of the shutdown, court proceedings were halted, therefore, officers were not needed to attend the proceedings as they were all postponed. There was a savings as a result of the court closures, which accounts for much of the funds remaining from the FY2020 police department budget. It is now July 2021 and we are in the new fiscal budget and entities are returning to full operation as is the Fall River District and Superior Court. Police Officer attendance at those proceedings will begin and I'm sure at a greater pace than normal just so the court system can catch up with the backlog created from the Covid-19 shutdown.

As the Covid-19 restrictions are eased, our citizens are returning to their jobs, traveling, shopping and simply trying to get their lives back to as normal as possible. With that, the criminal element within our community has not gone away and in fact, as you know, there has been a spike in violent crime in the city of Fall River with the most notable are the recent incidents involving shooting victims and gunfire being exchanged. These incidents are not occurring in rural areas of Fall River, they're occurring in thickly settled residential neighborhoods and parks. On July 10th Mayor Coogan stood with Chief of Police Jeffrey Cardoza pledging to stop the violence in the city and said; "Those who want to make the city more dangerous will not be allowed to run around our city unchecked", "It's time to draw the line in the sand."

If you vote to remove and reallocate funding from the Police Department to any other department other than back to the Police Department, you've allowed the Mayor to back up that "line in the sand" from those violent actors within our city and give them more room to continue their violent acts.

The Police Officers of this city work very effectively with the low resources and staffing levels but don't let that be deceiving, they are spread very thin performing their duties. In order to combat the violence, police need to be proactive and conduct targeted investigations that require manpower, which can be achieved in various ways but no matter how you want to address the violence, it takes funding to do so.

I ask that you please provide the Fall River Police Department with the ability to provide the much-needed services of crime prevention and control by not defunding the police department but rather vote to reallocate the remaining FY2020 police department funds back into the FY2021 police department budget.

Respectfully,

Michael McConnell, President
Fall River Police Association
Massachusetts Coalition of Police, Local 1854

fall river police union letter

BREAKING: Massachusetts State Police and Dartmouth Police

investigating body found off of road

Police blocked off Russells Mill Road this morning after a body was found on the side of the road off of Horseneck Road in Dartmouth this morning.

Massachusetts State Police are also involved in the investigation but neither police force commented on the reasons or to what capacity the state police are involved.

This is an ongoing and developing story. More details will be released as they are made available.

New Bedford Commission on Police Use of Force Policies kicks off review and recommendation process

Public Safety Committee Chairman and Councillor Brian K. Gomes convened the Commission on Police Use of Force Policies last week with a clear mandate to review three existing policies at the NBPD that embody “use of force” and produce recommendations for improvement within a 60-day timeframe.

Mayor Jon Mitchell created the commission in June as a part of his commitment to The Mayor’s Pledge aimed at addressing use of force policies in police departments across the country. The Obama Foundation’s Mayor’s Pledge calls on mayors across the United States to commit to the following four actions:

- REVIEW your use of force policies.
- ENGAGE your communities by including a diverse range of input, experiences, and stories in your review.
- REPORT the findings of your review to your community and seek feedback.
- REFORM your communities police use of force policies.

The Commission now meets weekly on Wednesdays and has plans to host a public meeting to hear input from city residents later this summer before formulating its recommendations to the Mayor and Chief Joseph Cordeiro by the end of August.

Gomes instructed members of the commission who represent a broad spectrum of community leaders and subject matter experts to keep open minds and be willing to learn. “We are fortunate to have some incredible individuals among us who have dedicated their lives to serving the community and are committed to advancing the City of New Bedford,” said Gomes.

“The Mayor has requested that we not lose this very moment in history to secure a more equitable future. We must do the hard work of reform,” he added.

If you have any questions or to request copies of the policies, please contact Melissa Batchilder at 508-991-6300 Ext. 79428.