

# R/V Kommandor Susan strikes New Bedford-Fairhaven Hurricane Barrier

At around 7:00am Saturday morning the 272-foot research vessel Kommandor Susan had a minor collision with the New Bedford/Fairhaven Hurricane Barrier. Many residents from both Fairhaven and New Bedford reported hearing the horn blasts and the Fairhaven Police received numerous phone calls.

The captain of the research vessel reported the collision to the U.S. Coast Guard and turned the ship around to return to the harbor where the extent of the damage could be inspected. Initial visual inspections show the damage to be minor and superficial in nature and the damage to the vessel and damage to the hurricane barrier itself was limited to the Fairhaven side's bumper boards on the gates.

The barrier has had some minor scrapes throughout its history and this particular incident is actually not the first one since it was built in 1966. In 2013, a 154-foot barge carrying gravel struck the barrier causing significant damage to the timber fender protection system.

Before that, in 1977 another large ship collided with the barrier causing considerable damage to the concrete control abutment.

According to the [marinetraffic.com](http://marinetraffic.com) website the R/V Kommandor Susan "...is a Research/Survey Vessel that was built in 1999 and is sailing under the flag of United Kingdom."



R/V Kommandor Susan. Vesselfinder.com photo.

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# City of New Bedford roadwork sites for the upcoming week of May 25, 2020 –May 29, 2020

The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of May 25, 2020 –May 29, 2020 and they are as follows:

**NO WORK MEMORIAL DAY- MONDAY, MAY 25, 2020**

## **Eversource:**

Eversource will replace the gas mains at the following locations:

- Tarkiln Hill Rd. and Park Ave. from Tarkiln Hill Rd. to Church St.
- Brook St. from Collette St. to Earle St.
- Davis St. from Riverside Ave. to 389 Davis St.

- Johnathan St. from Arnold St. to 57-59 Johnathan 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 (Tuesday – 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.
- 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.**

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# Bridgewater State freezes tuition, issues \$9 million in credits and refunds

Chris Lisinski

State House News Service

Hoping to lessen the financial burden on students and their families during a time of crisis, Bridgewater State University officials agreed on a plan to keep tuition and fees at existing levels during the upcoming academic year. The Board of Trustees signed onto a plan from President Frederick Clark to maintain tuition and fees at \$10,732 per year for full-time, in-state undergraduate students, according to a Thursday press release.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has created a serious financial strain for our students, as demand on our BSU Student Emergency Fund attests,” Clark said in the release. “We are hopeful that this decision will help to relieve some of the economic pressure on our students and their families.”

The school also issued more than \$9 million in credits or refunds in April for unused services and directed almost \$740,000 from an emergency fund to help more than 1,000 students who have sustained income losses during the pandemic.

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# New Bedford officials report three more COVID-19 related deaths on Friday

New Bedford officials reported three additional COVID-19 related deaths on Friday bringing the total to 56.

Mayor Jon Mitchell's office reported 23 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Bedford on Friday, bringing the total positive cases in the city to 1,650, **up from 1,627 on Thursday.**

Mayor Jon Mitchell announced that the City of New Bedford will follow and implement the first phase of Governor Charlie Baker's reopening plan, with adjustments warranted by the current risk level of disease transmission in the city and region. Full details **here.**

25 additional cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Fall River on Thursday, according to the Mayor's Office. This brings the total in Fall River to 1,078. The death toll from the coronavirus in Fall River has grown to 25 after 3 more deaths. Full details **here.**

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## New Bedford man arrested for trafficking crack cocaine

# **while carrying \$2,255**

On May 21, New Bedford police officers conducted a traffic stop near the corner of Austin and Purchase streets. As a result, officers seized more than 18 grams of crack cocaine and \$2,255.

25-year old Trent Boston of 189 Rockland Street is charged with trafficking cocaine and driving with a suspended license. Boston currently has open cases in New Bedford District Court for distribution of class A, B, and D.

If you have any information on criminal activity in your community, the New Bedford Police Dept. wants to hear from you. You can leave an anonymous tip on our voicemail at (508) 991-6300 Ext. 1.

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# **Ashley BLVD fire caused by careless smoking, North Front fire still under investigation**

Statement from the New Bedford Fire Department regarding the fire cause determination of the 235 Ashley Boulevard and 317 North Front Street structure Fires:

At 0038 hrs on Wednesday, May 20, the New Bedford Fire Department responded to a structure fire at 235 Ashley Boulevard. The fire was observed in a first-floor apartment along with reports of a female occupant trapped inside. Crews

from Engine 7 and Engine 9 made entry and were able to rescue her within five minutes of arriving on the scene. She was resuscitated by NBEMS Paramedics prior to arrival at St. Luke's Emergency Department and then transferred to Rhode Island Hospital.

The cause of this fire is the careless use of smoking materials. The investigation was conducted by the New Bedford Fire Department Investigation Unit, NBPD Detectives, State Fire Marshal's Office, and MA State Police.

At 0754 hrs, the New Bedford Fire Department responded to the intersection of North Front and Tallman Streets for a reported structure fire. The fire had well involved 317 North Front Street and had also extended into the neighboring structures at 311 North Street as well as 50 Tallman Street. The fire reached three alarms and was fought by approximately sixty firefighters. Mutual aid from surrounding towns and additional off duty members provided station coverage for the City while the on-duty shift was committed to this fire. Crews did an excellent job of protecting the exposure buildings as well as extinguishing the well-involved fire at 317 North Front Street.

The cause of this fire remains under investigation however human involvement cannot be ruled out. This fire is also being investigated by the New Bedford Fire Department Investigation Unit, NBPD Detectives, State Fire Marshal's Office, and MA State Police. If anyone has information related to the cause of this fire, they're asked to call 1(800)682-9229.

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# New Bedford's parking meter app abruptly ceases operations

New Bedford's parking meter app abruptly ceased operations on May 18 forcing New Bedford to go without a parking application for smartphone users. Currently, the City of New Bedford is not enforcing metered parking spots.

From **MobileNOW!'s website:**

"Dear Customer,

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on its activities suffered during the last two months, MobileNOW! with regret has had to cease its operations on May 18th, 2020 and has dissolved the same day. We apologize for any inconvenience caused.

As you may already have noticed, our mobile application is not accessible anymore. Our website [www.mobile-now.us](http://www.mobile-now.us) only provides restricted features for a limited period of time moving forward, notably to allow access to your online account historical data.

We are running a process over the coming weeks to validate the funds due to our creditors, including customers, as well as the funds necessary for MobileNOW!'s winding-up and liquidation process. Once completed, we will pay such creditors in accordance with applicable law with any funds remaining and available for distribution, most notably our customers that have a credit balance associated to their wallet.

We will then also place a general notification on our website which will confirm the proportion of credit balances that we



will be able to repay out of available funds and the associated timescale in which this will happen as well as the payment method. We expect that those of our customers that have a valid credit card associated with their online account will be reccredited automatically such proportion of their credit balance as may be payable to them, without any need for a request. The others will be proposed to be credited of such proportion of their credit balance through another mean of payment in the course of being defined.

We again apologize for any inconvenience caused and will as mentioned keep you informed of our winding-up process through our website.”

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## **Massachusetts Implements Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)**

The Baker-Polito Administration announced today that Massachusetts residents who are eligible for the federal CARES Act and qualify for having exhausted their regular unemployment compensation may now receive the new Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC). The launch of this program marks the third and final benefit available for the Commonwealth through the CARES Act.

PEUC provides up to 13 additional weeks of benefits to an individual who has exhausted all rights to any regular unemployment compensation and who meets other eligibility requirements of the CARES Act. PEUC will automatically begin

for individuals who have been receiving regular standard unemployment benefits on an active claim and those benefits are exhausted, and those individuals do not have to take any further action.

If an individual's standard unemployment claim has expired, they must file a new standard claim. If the individual is monetarily eligible on the new standard claim, regardless of the benefit rate amount, they will receive benefits from that new claim. Otherwise, the individual will be eligible for PEUC on the prior claim and it will be automatically implemented.

Individuals who exhausted their standard benefits but were receiving benefits through Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) must apply to claim weekly benefits. Residents should apply through the standard unemployment benefits portal available [here](#).

Those receiving PEUC will also receive \$600 weekly through the week ending July 25, 2020, provided by the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program established by the CARES Act.

The CARES Act signed into law on March 27, 2020, established the PEUC, PUA and FPUC public benefit programs that expanded unemployment eligibility, temporarily increases weekly benefits for all claimants and allows additional categories of people to claim unemployment benefits. This is the largest expansion of assistance for the Commonwealth's workforce since the Great Depression.

More information about Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation can be found at [mass.gov/peuc](https://mass.gov/peuc).

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# **10 Bristol County Sheriff staff members, 15 inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 Since May 12**

Ten Bristol County Sheriff's Office staff members and 15 county inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 since May 12.

Additionally since May 12, the BCSO has completed COVID testing for ICE detainees as recently ordered by a federal judge in Boston. Eight detainees refused the test; they are being housed in single cells and being monitored by health care professionals. All are asymptomatic. The 65 other ICE detainees in Bristol County have tested negative.

Including the 15 positive tests since May 12, the total number of county inmates who have tested positive is 24. Twenty of them remain in single cells where they are being monitored by medical professionals. Four individuals have been released as their sentences were completed. Prior to their release, the BCSO provided notification of the positive test to the person picking them up and the state Department of Public Health, which in turns notifies the communities they are returning to.

Of the 10 staff members to test positive since May 12, seven are security officers, including four corrections officers, one lieutenant, one sergeant and one captain. The other staff members are a teacher, a communications dispatcher and a classification counselor. All are expected to return to duty in the coming weeks.

In total, 28 BCSO staff members have tested positive for COVID-19, of which 10 have recovered and returned to the facility.

“The COVID pandemic has hit Bristol County, Massachusetts, and our nation pretty hard,” Bristol County Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson said. “In the middle of this epidemic, our essential staff of more than 600 people is doing an amazing job in these challenging times.”

Over the past few months, the Bristol County Sheriff’s Office has instituted many protocols to protect inmates, detainees and staff from the Coronavirus outbreak. Some of those measures include:

- All employees were given masks that must be worn inside the secure perimeter of our facilities. All inmates and detainees have also been given masks to wear for protection.
- All areas of the facility are being cleaned\disinfected every day on every shift.
- All staff members are being screened before entering the buildings; new arriving inmates are being screened before being accepted into custody.
- In-person visitation has been suspended to limit the number of people coming in and out.

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## **Kennedy Summer Day Program cancelled for summer 2020; beach passes available for New Bedford residents**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and based on federal, state and city guidelines, the New Bedford Department of

Parks, Recreation & Beaches Kennedy Summer Day Program will be cancelled for the summer of 2020.

Staff from the Department of Parks, Recreation & Beaches will be in contact with those who have already submitted a payment for the 2020 session of the Kennedy Summer Day Program in order to issue full refunds.

The Summer Food Service Program and other family programming will continue to be offered throughout the city in accordance with social distancing and hygiene guidelines.

### **Beach passes available for New Bedford residents**

Mayor Jon Mitchell announced this week that New Bedford's beaches will follow the state's guidelines, reopening May 25 with additional guidelines.

At New Bedford's beaches, only New Bedford residents will be able to purchase a beach pass until further notice. Social distancing measures will be enforced, with no beach volleyball or other organized sports permitted.

**Public restrooms at the beach will be closed until further notice.**

Beach parking passes will be sold on-site at Fort Taber Park (cash only) and with credit/debit card only at [www.nbprb.com](http://www.nbprb.com), under Register Now, Beach Parking Information.

A pop-up beach parking pass sale will be held on Friday, May 22, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. outside the Andrea McCoy Recreation Center, 181 Hillman Street. Cash, credit/debit cards will be accepted. Masks must be worn and social distancing and hygiene protocols will be observed.