

OPINION: “Sheriff Heroux changed Mission Statement in radical move to avoid community outrage”

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Often people do not want their last names used or they prefer anonymity. The reason for this is that in this day and age of social media, people will insult and ridicule people, their spouses and children and even try to get people fired or their businesses boycotted. In extreme cases, threats are made and based on a person's profile, enough information is gathered to figure out where people live, work, eat, or play.

Do you have a counter opinion to this opinion? Have an opinion about something else? Email us at info@newbedfordguide.com.

“This is a response to David Ehrens article, “Many valid reasons that Sheriff Heroux canceled autism, anti-bullying programs”

It is intriguing how people often target the author rather than focusing on the topic at hand. An attempt to distract from the points at hand. I want to clarify that I am not a “Hodgson supporter squeezing sour grapes,” as some may find it convenient to shift the discussion. Similarly, one could assume that the responding author is a Heroux supporter, endorsing a political figure whose program cancellations are

affecting real people within the community.

In today's polarized society, where people tend to see things in black and white and disregard the nuances (the gray areas) of a topic, we often oversimplify discussions. Delving deeper into a subject is strategically avoided by those who hold a specific viewpoint. I feel alot of these subjects deserve deeper dives as research proves community programs have a direct connection to preventing the need for care and custody. It's both amusing and saddening that it takes concerned citizens to write pieces like this to urge political figures to just do the right thing.

We must commend the author of the response piece for their remarkable job in identifying suitable alternatives for these services. Their efforts are truly praiseworthy. It should makes us wonder what could have been accomplished if Sheriff Heroux had invested the same 20 minutes of research into his own response. If anything, the previous author effectively proved our point that Sheriff Heroux did not exert ANY effort, because of the fact he did not consider it important enough.

Mission Statement

We are an organization of public safety professionals committed to serve and protect the people of Bristol County.



BCSO photo>

Regardless of whether you are Sheriff Hodgson, Sheriff Heroux, Deputy Dog, or Woody from Toy Story, the well-being of the community should be paramount. The main concern here is that no one was informed or provided with alternatives for these services. (except for the comments section on Heroux's Facebook page in response to community criticism)

Additionally, the Sheriff's Office was actively involved in schools across Bristol County, educating students about the importance of anti-bullying and the negative impact of social media—topics of great significance. However, there was no discussion or communication with the schools regarding finding alternative solutions. Shouldn't Sheriff Heroux have dedicated his own 20 minutes of research to this responsibility? Or is this the responsibility of some other unknown community entity as well?

Lastly, concerning TRIADS, which serves the elderly

population, there was no effort made to find alternative arrangements or collaborate with these communities. We believe that within the authors own words of your opinion peice, you've highlighted and proven Heroux's complete disregard for providing responsible and compassionate service to those in need within the community- as pointed out and outlined in the Sheriff's Office mission statement.

Ironically, you wouldn't be aware of this because, since the posting of our response highlighting the Mission Statement and the responsibility and DUTY to the community, Sheriff Heroux has DELETED and CHANGED the Bristol County Sheriff's Office mission statement to reflect otherwise. Yes, that's right! No talks, discussions, no press on the subject. For someone who loves press and social media, there was not a peep on this cover-up. I have attached a screenshot of the previous mission statement as evidence. I am curious about what prompted this sudden change and how the community feels about it.

I believe that as a community, in the future, it's going to be very difficult to expect anything other than what Heroux is putting forth as helping the community. Contrary to his OWN words, he is showing it is easier for him to whitewash his duties and replace web-pages in hopes nobody will notice, than help his community and do the right thing. If he is thinking we won't notice, or thinking we will forget... we won't."- Anonymous.

Sheriff Heroux is still making changes throughout the Bristol County Sheriff's Office body. This process takes time. He has corrected or trued the website's Mission Statement:

"The Bristol County Sheriff's Office is a public safety organization committed to care, custody, control, and rehabilitation of inmates. The Bristol County Sheriff's Office

strives to promote a work environment where employees feel valued and have a sense of purpose in their daily work, and will assist other public organizations when needed.”-Sheriff Heroux.

OPINION: “MAGA supporters would go beserk if President Biden pardoned his son!”

“What an explosive reaction would occur if Biden, borrowing the Trump playbook, pardoned Hunter Biden.

The MAGA supporters would go beserk with indignation. Pardoning a son with a significant drug addiction and obvious psychological issues would be more unforgivable to them than the pardons parceled out by Trump during his presidency and those promised if he is re-elected President.

The treasonous actions perpetrated by Trump cronies and the January 6th insurrectionists are ignored or excused by the constantly grieving MAGA diehards. But the illegal and greedy actions of Hunter Biden have remained a rallying call and issue for publicity seeking legislators and supporters who believe every lie and distortion fed to them.

It can be reasonably argued that Hunter Biden received a minimized indictment and conviction but when compared to the innumerable alleged criminal and ethics violations of Donald Trump that haven't horrified his base it is truly one of the greatest hypocrisies in American history.

-Betty Ussach, Dartmouth.”

Massachusetts Police Dept. lambastes proposed unconstituional anti-gun bill

"The Ware Police Department would like to bring an important matter to your attention: the proposed anti-gun Bill currently under consideration (HD 4420, An Act Modernizing Firearms Laws). We understand that this state-level legislation has raised concerns among law-abiding citizens who value their Second Amendment rights.

We recognize that the right to bear arms is a fundamental aspect of our nation's history and an essential component of personal and collective security. As members of the police force, we are committed to upholding the law and defending the rights of our community members.

A plethora of blatantly unconstitutional proposals litter this travesty of a Bill, too many to mention here; however, of particular egregiousness is the criminalization of carrying firearms in certain so-called "prohibited locations", including businesses and private properties, EVEN WHILE HOLDING A VALID LICENSE TO CARRY. Not even off-duty police officers will be exempted from this appalling mandate.

Gun Free zones have been proven to have no effect on stopping crime, in fact they embolden criminals to seek out these areas as soft targets of opportunity, where their chances of meeting resistance will be minimal.

This Bill does not address criminals. Rather it focuses on making criminals out of law-abiding citizens and further hampers police agencies from combating true crime.

We believe that public input and engagement are crucial in shaping legislation that reflects the diverse perspectives and concerns of our citizens. Therefore, we encourage you, the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, who have a long and storied history of throwing off the chains of our oppressors (let not this tradition die in the hands of our generation), to actively participate in the democratic process by voicing your opinions and taking appropriate actions to safeguard your rights.

Here are a few ways you can make a difference:

1. Educate yourself: Familiarize yourself with the details of the proposed anti-gun Bill. Read the legislation, study its potential impact, and understand its implications for your rights as a responsible gun owner.
2. Communicate with your elected representatives: Reach out to your local, state, and federal representatives to express your concerns about the Bill. Write letters, and make phone calls to ensure your voice is heard.
3. Encourage open dialogue: Foster constructive conversations about gun ownership, emphasizing responsible practices and the importance of preserving individual liberties. Engage in respectful discussions with friends, family, and neighbors to promote understanding and awareness.
4. Stay informed and mobilize: Keep yourself updated on the progress of the bill and its potential impact on your rights. Stay connected with local gun rights organizations and be prepared to mobilize if necessary.

Remember, your involvement in shaping legislation that impacts your rights is vital. By actively participating and voicing your concerns, you contribute to the democratic process and help ensure that legislation is fair, balanced, and respects the rights of responsible citizens.

The Ware Police Department encourages respectful and law-abiding civic engagement on this matter. We are committed to

maintaining the safety and security of our community while upholding the rights enshrined in our Constitution..

Thank you for your attention and active participation.-Ware PD"

OPINION: "Many valid reasons that Sheriff Heroux canceled autism, anti-bullying programs!"

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The following is a response to an opinion called "Sheriff Heroux is shirking community responsibilities towards autism, anti-bullying," which itself was a response to an opinion by Betty Ussach called "Bristol County has a new sheriff because Hodgson ignored his major responsibilities."

"To the editor:

This is a reply to an "anonymous community member" complaining that the Bristol County Sheriff was no longer paying for their child's autism tracker.

My first thought was that this was a Hodgson supporter squeezing sour grapes. Regardless, let's address some of the points raised.

The author says sheriffs should be involved in public safety. They are, but everyone has a reasonable role to play. Sheriffs do their part, as mandated by law, to support the police, who are legally tasked with public safety in each community.

The author rages that Sheriff Heroux has "left children and adults with autism, and the families who live with elderly with dementia, all left in the dark. Who is picking up this needed service? He has also left schools across Bristol County with one less educational resource for teaching anti-bullying and social media awareness." The author also asks: "who will deal with autism and pick up serving families with autistic loved ones?"

How about medical and social service agencies, not corrections officials?

Schools, community leaders, the DA's office, social service agencies and (if communities so choose) School Resource Officers already deal with bullying. Massachusetts has a resource center for families with autism. The Autism Alliance in Framingham provides support to families. There is an umbrella organization called Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts, which assists families. One of its sister groups in Bristol County is The Arc in Attleboro. There are many more.

The cancelled program the author is so upset about is called Project Lifesaver. It is an expensive program that uses RF technology from the 1980's, and triggers a search by law enforcement which then uses a tracker to locate the lost person's RF transmitter. It is a for-profit company that, according to one article, in 2015 was billing families \$210 for a proprietary bracelet and \$25 a month for the location

service. In the years since this technology was developed, smart watches, GPS devices, WiFi, and other consumer location and tracking technology have come to the market. Garmin, for example, makes a device that lets family members track loved ones even when they are deep in the wilderness, far out of cell range.

It also turns out that, out of over half a million Bristol County residents, Project Lifesaver was being used by only about 50 families – at a cost of one correction officer. This was one of Tom Hodgson's many programs that had nothing to do with running a jail, did not concern inmates, but which let him toot his own horn, even if cost Massachusetts taxpayers.

I feel for the parent who wrote the letter, I really do. But let's let autism experts run autism programs, and let's let appropriate agencies and insurance companies pay for the technology to track autistic children and seniors.

And let's let the sheriff run his jail, neither treading on the toes of social service agencies nor families."

David Ehrens

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In addition, Sheriff Paul Heroux added:

*"There was one other detail that I don't know if I mentioned, but the bullying program we were offering was actually making kids **worse** off.*

It was increasing the chances that they were going to get involved with juvenile delinquency. The research is very clear that all types of scared straight programs whether they are aversive or non-aversive actually increase kids going to jail or prison later on.

As soon as I found out our SLAM program was a non-aversive,

scared straight, I cut that immediately.”

Project Lifesaver contacted New Bedford Guide to offer a correction about their company:

“Project Lifesaver is a **for** profit company. We are not a [non-profit company] and never have been. We are a 501 c3 and have been since our beginning in 1999.

PLI does not charge for any service whatsoever. The agency member buys equipment from us and THEY have the option to charge a client or not. We do not tell them how to run their program.

RF technology works much better than Garmin, GPS devices or anything that depends on a satellite for assistance. If this writer had Sirius XM radio in his car, he should go under an overpass or into a garage and see what happens to the signal. Or try to locate someone in Lucas Oil Stadium on a football Sunday. Our 30 minute average time in locating lost people speaks for itself!”

OPINION: “Sheriff Heroux is shirking community responsibilities towards autism, anti-bullying”

This is a response to opinion piece by Betty Ussach which you can read [here](#).

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A true sheriff's role: beyond inmates, towards a stronger community

"As citizens of Bristol County, it is important for us to have an open and honest conversation about the role of our sheriff and their responsibilities.

While the care and custody of inmates is undoubtedly a crucial aspect of their job, we must also recognize the significance of community engagement and the implementation of effective programs. After all, a true public servant understands that their DUTY extends far beyond the walls of a correctional facility. Let us explore why the Sheriff Heroux should be equally dedicated to the welfare of both inmates and the wider community.

A Commitment to Serve and Protect:

In the Bristol County Sheriff's Office mission statement, it explicitly states "We are an organization of public safety professionals committed to serving and protecting the people of Bristol County." This statement suggests that the scope of his responsibility reaches beyond managing inmates. It implies a duty to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents within our community.

A Holistic Approach to Public Safety:

A sheriff who focuses solely on the care and custody of

inmates neglects the broader aspects of public safety. Instead, by investing in community programs and initiatives, they can address the root causes of crime, work towards reducing recidivism rates, and foster an environment of trust and cooperation. By adopting a holistic approach to public safety, a true and good sheriff would acknowledge that a strong community is the foundation for a safer society as a whole.

Prevention Through Education and Rehabilitation:

Community programs play a vital role in breaking the cycle of crime. By prioritizing education and rehabilitation, the sheriff can actively work towards reducing crime rates and empowering individuals to reintegrate successfully into society. Programs such as job training, substance abuse counseling, and mental health support can provide inmates with the tools they need to become productive and law-abiding citizens upon release.

Engagement and Collaboration:

A sheriff who actively engages with the community fosters a sense of trust and cooperation. By partnering with local organizations, schools, and the community in general, they can develop collaborative initiatives that address community concerns and build bridges between law enforcement and citizens. This engagement is essential in establishing positive relationships, enhancing public perception, and ensuring that the sheriff's office is responsive to the needs of the community it serves.

Allocating Resources Wisely:

Critics may argue that focusing on community programs takes resources away from inmate care. However, investing in preventive measures and rehabilitation programs can ultimately save taxpayer dollars by reducing crime rates, preventing recidivism, and lessening the burden on the criminal justice system. A balanced approach, where inmate care and community programs coexist, is not only feasible but also beneficial for

the overall well-being of Bristol County.

In conclusion, Sheriff Heroux should embrace a multifaceted approach that goes beyond the care and custody of inmates. By prioritizing community programs, the sheriff can fulfill his DUTY to serve and protect the people of Bristol County. Engaging with the community, focusing on prevention, and fostering rehabilitation are not mutually exclusive to inmate care but rather complementary to the ultimate goal of public safety.

Let us not just encourage, but MANDATE, that Sheriff Heroux commit to embracing this broader vision as stated in the sheriff's office's OWN mission statement, ensuring that Bristol County thrives as a safe and supportive community for ALL its residents. Less he ignore his DUTY, and this mandate, you can rest assured that the community WILL REMEMBER this "public servant's" intentional disregard to the community in the future... by means of the voting booth.

***IMPORTANT NOTE TO PUBLIC:** Sheriff Heroux has dissolved the entire community program's department with exception of one program. The Sheriff has publically PROMISED that he would find homes for all these programs. This has proven me false.

The result has left children and adults with autism, and the families who live with elderly with dementia, all left in the dark. Who is picking up this needed service? He has also left schools across Bristol County with one less educational resource for teaching anti-bullying and social media awareness.

After doing some research It's also worth mentioning some of these programs were programs also operated by many Sheriff's Office's within the State, as well as nationally." -Anonymous community member.

OPINION: “Justice delayed in the Trump trail, may be justice served”

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“If Trump were to be tried and exonerated prior to the next presidential election, a real possibility considering that it might be heard by a Trump appointed judge and a sympathetic Florida jury, he will increase his chances of regaining the White House. Even a hung jury would serve his purpose of distorting its meaning to signify his innocence.

On the other hand, an indicted pre-trial Trump could not prance around and pronounce his innocence with the same degree of certainty and arrogance as the overwhelming evidence, including graphic photos, will be utilized by his competitors and the Democratic nominee.

Those photos, condemning documents and testimony, will be useless if he is found not guilty as he will characterize all evidence as fake, manipulated and manufactured by the deep state.

It is a fact of life in the United States that an indicted person is frequently not viewed as innocent until proven

guilty. As a result all competitors, and anti-Trumpists, can refer to him as the indicted nominee. And all that disclosed evidence contained in the lengthy indictment will be fodder for investigative journalism and campaign material for the primaries and the general election.

If the judge is inclined to tip the scales of Justice in his favor, believing that a delayed trial will work to his advantage, and agrees to set the date until after the election, she may in reality insure his second loss at the polls.

And that will be a win for the country.”-Betty Ussach, Dartmouth.

Massachusetts Senator blasts “far-right justices” on Affirmative Action ruling for college admissions

“Senator Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), author of legislation to expand the U.S. Supreme Court from nine to 13 justices, released the following statement after the Court ruled to strike down Harvard University and the University of North Carolina’s affirmative action policies:

“It’s been nearly 50 years since Brown v. Board of Education made clear that education ‘is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.’ Yet, today, the Supreme Court made it more difficult for students of color to achieve their educational dreams. The Supreme Court majority may think

they are blind to race, but what they are truly blind to is inequality, blind to injustice, blind to progress.

“The realities of racial injustice are woven into every part of our society, yet the far-right, extremist majority on the Court is forcing colleges and universities to minimize the importance of diversity and equity among their student bodies. Considering race in college admissions is a key tool for diversifying campuses, increasing equity and fairness, and strengthening our education system with different perspectives and lived experiences. Operationally, ignoring inequality is ignoring race, whether that be in admissions, in our larger educational system, or in society.

“Equal opportunity for all is a bedrock, universal value in our country. We cannot allow this captured Supreme Court majority to turn back the clock on progress. Congress must act. We must make sure we continue to hold the doors of opportunity open to all. We must give people the just and equal opportunity to achieve their educational dreams. We must expand the Supreme Court and return legitimacy and balance back to the same institution that rightly ruled that education – and justice – should be made available to all on equal terms.”

**Massachusetts bill response
to transgender, nonbinaries
barriers put up by the**

“right-wingers”

Gender Affirming CARE Act would provide \$25 million to the National Institutes of Health for federal public health researchers to understand health care obstacles.

“Senator Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security, today announced the introduction of the Gender Affirming Care Access Research for Equity (CARE) Act, legislation that would authorize \$25 million annually over five years for the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to research barriers to gender-affirming care and the impact of those barriers on health.

The transgender community is experiencing escalating attacks by lawmakers around the country that aim to prohibit access to medically-necessary care and allow for discrimination against transgender and nonbinary people. Since January alone, there have been more than 500 anti-LGBTQ+ state bills introduced, many of which include bans on gender-affirming care, and 20 state have laws or policies have passed banning gender-affirming care for youth.

“Trans health is health, and health care is a human right,” said Senator Markey. “We have a moral obligation to protect, defend, and expand the fundamental right for transgender and nonbinary people to get the care they need despite the tremendous legal, financial, and social barriers they too often face when accessing their health care. There is no question that transgender and non-binary people across America are under attack just for being who they are. We will not have true health equity for all until we have eliminated the health disparities trans and nonbinary people face.

The Gender Affirming CARE Act will help us better understand

all of the factors keeping people from essential medical care so we can dismantle these obstacles and light the path forward.”

Cosponsors include Senators Alex Padilla (D-Calif.), Mazie Hirono (D- Hawaii), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), and Peter Welch (D-Vt.). A copy of the legislation can be found [HERE](#).

The legislation would build upon the promises in Senator Markey and Representative Pramila Jayapal’s (WA-07) Trans Bill of Rights, a landmark resolution calling on the federal government to protect and codify the rights of transgender and nonbinary people, as well as ensure that trans people have access to gender-affirming care.

The Gender Affirming CARE Act is endorsed by National Center for Transgender Equality, Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, Human Rights Campaign, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, National Health Law Program, National Center for Lesbian Rights, GLMA, Trevor Project, PFLAG National, GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), Whitman-Walker Institute, Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, Fenway Health, and Transhealth.

“Transgender healthcare is vital to the health and well-being of transgender people, and we applaud the efforts of Senator Markey and the bill’s co-sponsors to ensure advances in science and medicine in this field,” said David Brown, Legal Director of the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund.

“Across the country, there’s a full blown attack on every kind of sexual and reproductive health care service, including gender-affirming care. It’s outrageous that politicians are gutting transgender rights, interfering with our ability to feel comfortable and seen in our own bodies, and creating insurmountable barriers to life-saving health care. Planned Parenthood is thankful to have champions in the Senate, like Senator Markey, who are meeting the moment and investing in

the research needed to fight back. Patients across the country need more access to health care, not additional restrictions – and this bill demonstrates that everyone deserves the right to critical gender-affirming care,” said Alexis McGill Johnson, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

“Transgender and nonbinary young people deserve to live happy, healthy lives. When trans young people receive support from the people in their lives and have access to the care they need, research shows they report lower suicide risk, better mental health outcomes and ultimately, thrive,” said Kasey Suffredini (he/him), Vice President of Advocacy and Government Affairs for The Trevor Project. “We are incredibly grateful to see this legislation introduced, which sends a powerful message of affirmation and acceptance to trans young people across the nation, while also helping ensure equitable access to important care for all.”

“We need federal action to support and protect transgender people in this country, especially trans youth and their parents,” said Brian K. Bond, Executive Director of PFLAG National. “These kids are being unduly harmed in dozens of states, where access to medically necessary care is being systematically blocked. Senator Markey’s bill is timely and critical; PFLAG families everywhere welcome this important step to support and protect trans kids.”

“Transgender health research is critically needed to ensure the health and well-being of transgender and nonbinary people. This includes on-label trials of hormone therapy and longitudinal studies of transgender health and well-being across the lifecourse,” said Sean Cahill, Director of Health Policy Research at The Fenway Institute of Fenway Health. “We commend Senator Markey and his staff for introducing this visionary legislation at a time of unprecedented political attacks on transgender people in our country.”

“The Gender Affirming CARE Act introduced today by Senator Ed

Markey is not just a bill; it is a lifeline,” said Dallas Ducar, President and CEO of Transhealth. “By funding crucial research on the barriers faced by transgender and gender-diverse people in accessing the healthcare they need and deserve, this bill makes powerful strides towards achieving equitable, accessible, and affirming care for all.”

“GLMA strongly supports the Gender Affirming Care Access Research for Equity Act or the Gender Affirming CARE Act and its provisions for funding research on barriers to gender-affirming care. By allocating \$25,000,000 annually to the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this bill recognizes the urgent need to understand and address the impact of these barriers on health outcomes. We commend the commitment to advancing health equity and improving access to gender-affirming care, and believe that this research will contribute to creating a more inclusive and compassionate healthcare system for all individuals,” said Alex Sheldon, Executive Director of GLMA.”-Massachusetts Department of Justice.

New Bedford election season starts off with a fizzle

Thanks to **New Bedford residents voting away their right to vote in 2017**, New Bedford mayoral elections are now every four years making the local elections in between mostly irrelevant as few show up to vote. In the early stages of the 2023 New Bedford election cycle, only 31 people have pulled nomination papers.

Here's the status of the New Bedford election cycle so far:

Timeline

August 1 is just over a month away and the deadline for candidates to submit signatures to be certified by the elections office, so we don't have any official candidates yet. The preliminary election will be held on October 3rd with the general election on November 7th.

New Bedford Mayor's Race

Incumbent mayor Jon Mitchell has not officially pulled nomination papers as of Monday, June 26. He hasn't officially announced his re-election effort, but could likely gather enough signatures in a single day. Six people have pulled nomination papers to run for mayor, but none with major name recognition.

New Bedford City Council

At-large incumbents Shane Burgo, Ian Abreu, Naomi R.A. Carney, and Linda Morad have pulled nomination papers. Brian Gomes is the only incumbent at-large candidate not to have pulled papers yet. Current Ward 5 Councilor Scott Lima has pulled papers for at-Large. Ward incumbents Brad Markey (Ward 1), Maria Giesta (Ward 2), Shawn Oliver (Ward 3), Derek Baptiste (Ward 4) and Ryan Pereira (Ward 6) have all pulled nomination papers. Former Ward 6 Councilor Joeseeph Lopes, Zach Boyer, Carlos Maiato and David Sullivan have pulled papers for Ward 5 which is being vacated by Scott Lima. Former Ward 4 city councilor Bruce Duarte Jr. has pulled at-Large papers.

New Bedford School Committee

Four people have pulled papers for school committee. Incumbents Bruce Oliveira, Christopher Cotter, and Joaquim "Jack" Livramento along with Daniel Archer have pulled papers

Assessor

Incumbent Martin Treadup is the only one who has pulled papers

so far.

OPINION: New Bedford mom has creepy run-in with woman wanting pictures of her baby

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"Please be aware and keep your children in arms reach at all times. I was at the beach with my son when I was approached by a Chinese woman probably in her early 40s.

She began asking me weird questions like 'Where do you live?' She also told me she wasn't from around here, that she is from L.A. She was already giving me bad vibes so I paid close attention to her every move while keeping my son on my lap.

She walked away for just a few minutes then approached me and my son again and then asked if she could take a picture of my baby. I said 'No.' She asked AGAIN. I said 'No!' She laughed and said, 'She's cute. God bless her.' As soon as she said that a blue van pulled up and her phone rang.

She walked away and started quietly talking in Chinese but also keeping her eyes on me. The van sat there. I got up from

my chair and told my son, 'Let's go. We're leaving.' The van was still there doing nothing. No one was getting out just sitting there.

Thank god they were parked in a 'No parking zone' and the City of New Bedford pulled up behind them causing them to drive off. Meanwhile, the lady is still no more than 100 ft from me and my son.

As soon as the van left I ran with my son. I'm 99.9% sure that this lady was trying to kidnap my son. This lady was probably in her early to mid 40s with short black pin-straight hair (Pixie cut). Please everyone stay safe."-Dechelle Campos.