

Seven hope to replace Ward 1 City Councilor James Oliveira

Seven people are running for Ward 1 City Council in New Bedford. The preliminary election will be held on October 3rd and the top two vote getters move on to the November 7th final election.

Christopher Amaral, Melissa Costa, William Markey, Randy Santos, Mark Ventura, Daniel Costa and Steven Caton have all turned in enough signatures before the August 15th deadline. Only Steven Caton still needs to file officially before the August 29 deadline.

Current Ward 1 New Bedford City Councilor James Oliveira will not be seeking re-election this year. He replaced Linda Morad in 2012, who is now an at-Large Councilor.

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/newbedfordpolitics/>

New Bedford Ward 1 Map

Ward-1

Incumbents lead a weak New Bedford at-Large City Council

race

Seven people are running for the five at-Large City Council seats in New Bedford in what's considered one of the lowest field of candidates in the city's history. Per the New Bedford election office, many people pulled papers, but only seven dropped off the required signatures by the August 15 deadline.

There will be no preliminary election for at-Large City Council on October 3rd as 11 candidates would be needed to hold a contest. All seven move on to the November 7th final election. Incumbent Deborah Coelho still needs to file officially by August 29th or only six would be running for the five slots.

Incumbents Brian K. Gomes, Linda Morad, Deborah Coelho, Naomi R.A. Carney and Ian Abreu along with Christopher Boerl and Michael Jansen.

Several people pulled nomination papers, but didn't turn in their 50 signatures to the election office at the August 15 deadlines. They are John G. Andrade, John C. Arruda, Jeffrey L. Matthews, John Moniz and Evangelos "Gillie" Safioleas.

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Three running to be New Bedford mayor in 2018

Three people are running for Mayor of New Bedford this

election cycle. Per the New Bedford election office, many people pulled papers, but only three dropped off the required signatures by the August 15 deadline.

The preliminary election will be held on October 3rd and the top two vote getters move on to the November 7th final election.

Current New Bedford mayor **Jon Mitchell** is seeking re-election for his fourth term and New Bedford Police officer **Charlie Perry** filed officially. Mitchell Garner has turned in his signatures, but has until 5pm on 29 August to file officially. If Garner doesn't file officially by 5pm on August 29th, there will be no preliminary election on October 3rd and both Mitchell and Perry will move on to the final election on November 7th.

Several people pulled nomination papers, but didn't turn in their 50 signatures to the election office at the August 15 deadlines. They are Sean G. Fitzgerald, Ronald Perry, David Pimentel and Michael J. Proule.

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How did Miami succeed with panhandlers where New Bedford failed?

A friend of mine visited Miami and noticed this "no panhandling" sign:



I immediately thought, why can't New Bedford have an ordinance like this? A question New Bedford politicians should be asking is, how did Miami succeed against the ALCU in passing a law that punishes panhandlers from setting up on busy intersections? Is it possible to bring it to Massachusetts and New Bedford? Panhandlers in New Bedford have literally taken over every busy intersection in the city and not much seems to be done about it.

I recently published an article ***Stop blaming the panhandlers, blame the people who give to them***, but we all know there are too many suckers ... I mean compassionate people out there buying panhandlers heroin/alcohol ... I mean ending poverty, and we also know they aren't going to stop giving. Instead, we need to look to Miami.

Currently, **New Bedford City Councilors are proposing a motion to put up signs to curb panhandling**, but the signs are designed to deter people that give money to panhandlers, not punish those who panhandle. Should the motion pass, I have a feeling we will be seeing a lot photos and videos on social media with panhandlers standing under the signs with people giving to them.

A quick Google search reveals **Miami's code against panhandling**. This should be the starting point for anyone looking to start a no panhandling ordinance with some teeth in their city.

The ordinance's purpose basically says it's for economic reasons:

"Regulation is required because panhandling in certain areas threatens the economic vitality of those areas, impairing the city's long term goals of attracting citizens, businesses and tourist to these certain areas and, consequently, the city overall. The city has substantial interests in protecting the city's investment in certain areas, protecting tourism, encouraging expansion of the city's economic base, and protecting the city's economy."

Makes sense, right? The ordinance basically protects all the city streets, the downtown area and other no-panhandler zones. So what happens if you get caught panhandling?

"The first violation of this provision shall be punishable by a fine of not more than \$100.00 and 30 days imprisonment; second and subsequent violations shall be punishable by a fine

of not more than \$200.00 and 60 days imprisonment."

But there are alternative options for those that want it:

"Alternative programs. Nothing herein shall limit the discretion of the police, court personnel, and judges from referring individuals suspected, charged, or convicted of a violation of this provision to treatment programs or facilities as an alternative to prosecution or imprisonment, provided that the individual freely consents. For homeless individuals, such alternative programs shall include, but not be limited to, the Miami-Dade County Homeless Assistance Project."

Imagine that. Get caught panhandling? Face jail time and/or pay a fine ... or get treatment for substance abuse or help for homelessness. It's refreshing to see a tough, smart, yet compassionate ordinance alive and well. New Bedford legislators should immediately head down to Miami to do some research and find out how it made it past the ACLU.

New Bedford residents can thank me for eliminating panhandlers and legislators can thank me later for the tan.

10 people who should run for mayor of New Bedford in 2017

The mayor, or chief executive of the City, wields a lot of power. He or she appoints the chief of police, has major influence on the discretionary part of the \$300 million city budget and has full veto power of the city council. The mayor also appoints most of the city leadership and is the head of the school committee.

While a few people have pulled nomination papers with the intent to run for mayor, only Charlie Perry and Kerry Winterson seem to be serious about a run. At the time of this writing, I'd say Kerry Winterson is not likely to run for office. Candidates have until August 15, 2017 to run in the October and November elections this year.

Here are 10 people that I feel should run for mayor of New Bedford this year ...



Current Mayor Jon Mitchell— Mayor Mitchell definitely deserves a shot at re-election. New Bedford has low unemployment, statistically crime is down and public schools have turned around and continue to move in the right direction. Downtown New Bedford is booming with new businesses and we have a new business park replacing half of the Whaling City Golf Course. The Airport and waterfront are expanding commercially. The south end now has two amazing walking paths along the hurricane barrier (Harborwalk and Covewalk) that will eventually connect to a Riverwalk to form The **Blue Lane** to provide locals with 11 miles of fantastic walking, running and biking.

The current mayor has a strong record, but that doesn't mean

he deserves to run unopposed like he did in 2013. Here are 9 other people that should run against him.



Linda Morad – Linda is a top-notch leader trapped in a City Council. There are few people in the area that I would recommend for Mayor, State Senate/Representative or even congress. She received the most votes in 2013 and the second most votes in 2015 in the at-Large City Council elections.

While being Republican in New Bedford can immediately hurt your chances of winning any election, it would actually help her. As mentioned, she finishes first or second in total votes for the at-Large races with most people knowing her political

party.

Governor Baker is the most popular governor in the United States and has shown that he is willing to endorse candidates in local elections. He endorsed Jill Marie Ussach in the special Ward 3 election just a few months ago. Additionally, Keiko Orrall is now the Republican National Committee Woman. She is just down the road in Lakeville with strong ties to New Bedford and could be a strong advocate. Money is what would be needed to defeat Jon Mitchell and having a party behind you would help with that.

Additionally, I'm certain she's learned a lot from her failed run for mayor in 2011 and could use the experience to perform better in 2017.

Linda has pulled nomination papers with the intent to run for re-election for at-Large City Council, but that doesn't mean she can't change her mind.



Kerry Winterson – During a City Council session this summer,

Kerry announced that he would run for mayor. Kerry has already announced that he will not seek re-election for his Ward 5 City Council seat due to personal reasons, but seemed to be re-energized recently to run against mayor Mitchell. His platform announcement was crime and focusing on the north and south end of New Bedford.

Kerry is a blue-collar man that New Bedford residents would respond to very well. It would make for a great mayor's race as he disagrees with Mayor Mitchell on the core issue of crime, the mayor says crime is down and Kerry feels it isn't. Kerry would also do well with the crowd of people that feel the mayor spends too much of his focus on downtown New Bedford.



Brian Gomes – Brian Gomes once ran for mayor, but then 9/11

happened. There are few people with as much passion as Brian in the City Council and you will find him in the community at all the important events – even the ones with no media coverage.

Brian offers legislation that is not always popular – but no question out-of-the-box thinking. For example, check out his record and you'll see he's pushed for curfews, more cameras and drone use in high crime areas. You'll also see him working minor motions like traffic issues and community events. Brian is consistent, passionate and bleeds New Bedford. It would be great seeing him in debates and in an executive position in the city.

Brian has pulled nomination papers with the intent to run for re-election for at-Large City Council, but that doesn't mean he can't change his mind.



Henry Bousquet – You have to respect a man that does good

things for the City without getting a paycheck. Due to a bogus state law, Henry was not allowed to collect a check while teaching at GNB Voc-Tech as a culinary instructor and working as a City Council member. That's roughly \$18,000 a year he gave up for nearly three years (33 months to be exact).

He gave up his ward City Council seat earlier this year and hasn't pulled nomination papers, but he's someone that should run this year or in 2019. He was always a moderate, calm voice in the city council.



Ian Abreu – Ian is the Manager of Workforce and Business Development at the South Coast Chamber of Commerce and a freshman at-Large City Councilor. Love his ideas or not, he has put up motions with teeth in his first years in office. He's pushed for medical marijuana and a ban on synthetic marijuana in his first year – real impact proposals. There is no questioning his passion or love for New Bedford and if you follow him on Facebook you know he dedicates a lot of time to

constituent services.

Ian has pulled nomination papers with the intent to run for re-election for at-Large City Council, but that doesn't mean he can't change his mind.



Former New Bedford Mayor Scott Lang – The biggest story each New Bedford election cycle revolves around is whether or not Scott Lang is going to run again. Most people in the political know will tell you Scott Lang is really the only person that could unseat current Mayor Mitchell, even though I'm not so sure about that. Would he be a strong candidate? Sure, but he did leave City Hall with the public schools having major issues, with the high school having a graduation rate approaching 60% and an employment rate much higher than it is today – 16% in 2010 compared to 6% today.

Having said all that, Scott Lang is still a very popular figure in New Bedford politics and would make the mayor's race a real battle that we haven't seen since 2011 when **Jon Mitchell defeated State Representative Antonio Cabral by 837 votes (9,876 to 9,039)**. Lang has the name recognition that is worth more than a huge war chest of cash.



Reverend David Lima – Rev. Lima is the Executive Minister of the Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford and in the leader of the Greater New Bedford Suicide Prevention Coalition. He's a man of the people and dedicates his time to the most disadvantaged of the community.

Rev. Lima was also one of the few voices in opposition to the casino coming to New Bedford. While he wasn't the lone voice at the open community discussions, he was the most consistent and passionate. It was an unpopular stance and one reason I consider him a strong candidate for mayor – when in leadership you have to make the best choice, not the most popular one.



Erik Andrade – If there is one man that would shake things up in a debate, it's Erik. I first saw Erik speak in front of a packed City Council on YouTube and thought his passion is something needed in New Bedford politics. Here's the video:

Erik has spent much of his career working with the youth of New Bedford and he is someone that they will listen to should he take an official leadership role in New Bedford. **He ran for school committee in 2011 and received over 5,000 votes,** something difficult to do for a newcomer to New Bedford politics. While someone who travels a lot for political movements, he's someone who should deeply root himself in New Bedford and throw his hat back in to New Bedford politics.



Photo by Colton Simmons.

Charlie Perry – New Bedford Police Officer Charlie Perry has already made it known that he is running for mayor of New Bedford. A Veteran on the police force, Charlie is a very likable person that would immediately connect with people. Crime will also be a top issue in New Bedford and serving decades on the police force is a strong resume.

Who would you like to see run for office in New Bedford? Post a comment!

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell running for re-election in 2017

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell discussed the reasons for running for re-election in 2017 at the New Bedford City Hall.

Running for New Bedford Public Office in 2017

The 2017 New Bedford election cycle is upon us and the final day for potential candidates to turn in nomination papers is August 15, 2017. The process to become a candidate for a New Bedford office is simple, but there are strict requirements and timelines that must be fulfilled.

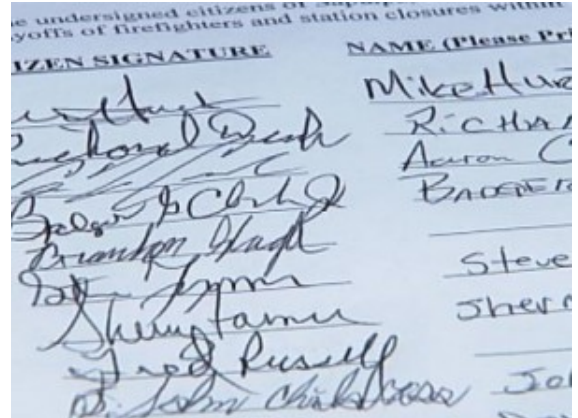
It is important that potential candidates understand the election cycle timeline, the requirements to get on the ballot, the rules established by the election commission, and the office positions available. Your number one resource is the New Bedford elections office at (508) 979-1420.

New Bedford Elections 101

Unlike state and national elections, local elections are non-partisan. This means there are no parties involved or attached to a candidate (i.e. Democrats versus Republicans).

By law, preliminary elections are held on the fourth Tuesday preceding the final city elections that will be on **November 7th, 2017**. This means that all qualified candidates are voted on by registered voters in a preliminary election on

October 3rd. The top two finishers move on to the final municipal election on 3 **November, 2017.** The winner of the Municipal Election is sworn in and serves office on **1 Jan, 2018.**



You must get at least 70 signatures to run for a New Bedford Office.

Candidate Requirements

All persons wanting to run for public office in New Bedford must fill out and submit official nomination papers to the Board of Election Commissioners. These nomination papers were made available on **May 22nd, 2017** and must be filled out completely, correctly and have signatures of at least 50 registered voters on it. My suggestion is to get at least 70 signatures. Why? Because signatures can be disallowed either in the certification process or through challenges.

Here are the rules for collecting signatures:

- The person signing must be a registered voter.
- Make sure the person signing fills out their correct name and it matches the name they used to register to vote.
- Make sure the name is legible and signed in pen.
- Make sure the signer includes their present address and not mailing addresses, like P.O. boxes.
- No nicknames or initials.

- Voters can sign for multiple candidates so don't be fooled into thinking a person can only sign for one candidate.
- Candidates running for Councilor At-Large seats can get signatures in any ward within the city. Ward candidates must get signatures from the residents in the specific ward they reside in and want to represent. New Bedford Ward maps can be found **here**.

2015 New Bedford Election Timetable

- May 22nd: Nomination papers become available at the New Bedford City Hall – First day on which nomination papers can be obtained from the office of the Board of Election Commissioners for Mayor, School Committee, Assessor and City Council. Each candidate must sign with Board of Election Commissioners, before he/she can obtain papers. A sign up sheet will be available for individuals who wish to take out nomination papers. It will include the name, address, telephone number and office for which the person intends to be a candidate. Anyone other than a candidate must present a signed authorization from the candidate to secure papers on candidate's behalf. Each candidate will be issued five (5) nomination papers.
- Aug 15th: Last day and hour to submit nomination papers to the Board of Election Commissioners for certification of signatures. (5:00 PM)
- Oct 3rd: **Preliminary Election** (7:00 AM – 8:00 PM) – top two move on to the Municipal Election
- Nov 3rd: **Municipal Election** (7:00 AM – 8:00 PM)
- Jan 2nd, 2018: Winning candidates are sworn into office

New Bedford Elected Offices

There are a total of 16 elected offices in the New Bedford elections.

- **Mayor** – Chief executive of the city.

- **City Council** (11 Seats) – Responsible for setting the city budget and appropriating all funds to run the city. Confirms all mayoral appointments and is responsible for confirming all mayoral appointments. There are two types of city councilors; Councilors-at-Large and Ward Councilors:
 - **Councilors-at-Large** (5 seats)
 - **Ward Councilors** (Wards 1-6)
- **School Committee** (3 seats) – There are seven seats on the school committee; the mayor and six elected officials. Each serve four years and three come up for election every two years.
- **Assessor** – Determine the value of all real and personal property located within the City of New Bedford for taxation purposes.

Important Resources:

- 2015 New Bedford Election Timetable
- 2013 New Bedford Election Results
- 2011 New Bedford Election Page
- 2011 New Bedford Election Results
- The Federal Election Commission
- Massachusetts Elections Division
- New Bedford Elections Commission

New Bedford Election Commission

City Hall, Room 114

133 William Street

New Bedford, MA 02740

Tel. : 508. 979.1421

Fax: 508. 979.1422

Hours: Mon-Thurs 8-4, Fri 8-12

School Committee member Josh Amaral testifies to Joint Committee on Education

The following is New Bedford School Committee member Josh Amaral's testimony to the Joint Committee on Education on July 25, 2017:

"Good afternoon Chairs Chang-Diaz and Peisch and members of the Joint Committee on Education.

My name is Josh Amaral, I'm a member of the New Bedford School Committee. It's a privilege to be before you today. I know several members of this committee have served on a School Committee or have worked as an educator, so I know I'm in good company. It's further encouraging to know that several members of this Committee served on the Foundation Budget Review Commission.

The purpose of my testimony is to express the sense of urgency that is needed in implementing the recommendations of that Commission. As have many others, the New Bedford School Committee unanimously passed a resolution calling for that implementation.

Those recommendations are much needed in all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth, but foundation budget reform is especially critical to the success of students in New Bedford and similar cities. The impact to New Bedford alone is estimated to be well over 20 million dollars, almost all of which would go directly into our students' classrooms.

Rather than the annual springtime ritual of our School

Committee cutting into bone, we could make more of the kinds of strategic investments in resources that we know work. We could expand pre-school programming, bring in additional teaching support in the early grades, reduce class size, grow our base of impactful reading and math specialists, add enough socio-emotional learning positions to serve the youth coming into our schools, increase our students' access to arts, sports, technology, current curriculum, and for the first time in many decades, go beyond the bare minimum maintenance and upkeep necessary to keep our 25 buildings open, many of which were built around the turn of the 20th century. New Bedford's tax base does not have the means to significantly contribute above minimum net-school spending, which is necessary to cover the extent of our needs. We are making strides in our turnaround efforts, but cannot complete or sustain them without additional resources.

I come before you today as walking proof of the effectiveness of McDuffy, which was heard the year I was born and implemented by the time I was in kindergarten. I'm a proud New Bedford Public School alum, K thru 12, who was afforded a top rate education in a city like New Bedford – one equivalent, or dare I say better – than that of anywhere else in the state.

My fear is that as health insurance costs have risen, as retirement costs have soared, as charters have expanded, as in-district special education costs have ballooned and out of district special education costs have more than doubled, as English Language Learners make up larger proportions of our classrooms and children show up on our doorsteps with more and various challenges, and as families call upon the public schools to meet those needs, we are being stretched too thin, and will reach an untenable situation in which students in urban centers may not be offered the same opportunities I was offered, or that their peers in other communities are offered. Where mass layoffs become commonplace, resources dwindle, our students suffer, and Massachusetts slips from its pole

position in education.

I didn't need to look up the backgrounds of members of this Committee to know that you share my grave concerns. And I can well understand that it's not easy to commit 2 billion dollars when you're already short, but the phrase I used was "sense of urgency." These are our kids, and they only have one shot at school. As I said at a School Committee meeting not long ago, we can either foot a small and worthwhile bill on the front end by paying for top rate education, or we can deal with the longer term societal ramifications of avoidance. In response, a colleague of mine quoted Harvard University's Derek Bok, who said "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

On behalf of our students and on behalf of my colleagues on urban School Committees across the Commonwealth, I implore the legislature to fully implement the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission without delay. Our students can't afford to wait.

Thank you."

New Bedford City Councillors filing motion to curb panhandling

Councillor Dunn filed a motion, co-sponsored by City Council President Joseph Lopes, and Councillors Abreu and Winterson, aimed at curbing panhandling, by giving city residents and visitors a more effective way to donate their money – while also supporting services for this at risk population.

The proposal places traffic signs, at high volume panhandling locations, providing a telephone number for people to make donations to local charities that provide food, shelter and mental health services. The number can also be used for pandandlers to access these services. The program has already been implemented as partnership between the city of Albuquerque, NM and the United Way.

Dunn stated that "New Bedford is a compassionate city, we are our brother's keepers and we care about our fellow citizens. This program will help us to uplift our homeless and most vulnerable population – inaction is not an option. Panhandling, especially in high traffic areas, is inherently dangerous both for the panhandler, and the general public. Giving a few dollars is not going to lead to the life changes necessary to get these individuals back on track. However, by establishing a responsible system of giving and accessing services – we gain confidence that our change is going towards making positive changes in these people's lives."

Dunn also stated "If people consistently give to charities rather than directly to panhandlers – we can be assured that the money isn't being spent on alcohol or drugs and that the panhandlers are more likely interact with organizations that can help identify long-term housing and employment opportunities – thereby reducing the burden on our first responders."

The motion reads as follows:

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Dunn, Abreu, Winterson and City Council President Lopes requesting, that the Health Department, the Department of Public Infrastructure, the Traffic Commission and the Mayor's office explore the implementation of a program that places, at popular panhandling locations, signage designed to encourage and facilitate responsible giving by providing a telephone number to both donate to local charities that provide food, shelter

and mental health services and enable this at risk population to access these services.

The motion will be discussed at the upcoming City Council meeting on August 17th.

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