

Massachusetts, Rhode Island & Connecticut agree to nation's first "Multi-state offshore wind project of large scale"

Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut recently announced the nations first offshore wind multi-state coordination memorandum of understanding (MOU). Through this MOU, the three states will together seek multi-state offshore wind proposals.

"The climate crisis requires us to act in new and innovative ways. Massachusetts is proud to join with our neighboring states to continue to grow New England's offshore wind industry," said Governor Maura Healey. "By working together, we can amplify the many benefits of offshore wind for all three states, including regional economic development opportunities, healthier communities, lower energy bills, and advantages to environmental justice populations and low-income ratepayers."

In New England, we work best when we work together.

*I'm proud to announce with @GovDanMcKee and @GovNedLamont a first-in-the-nation multi-state agreement to deliver affordable offshore wind to our region and create cleaner, healthier communities across New England.
pic.twitter.com/6QNvp0glQI*

– Maura Healey (@MassGovernor) October 4, 2023

"Offshore wind is an important resource in meeting our Act on Climate and renewable energy goals," said Rhode Island Governor Dan McKee. "Regional collaboration through this three states MOU will not only help in advancing offshore wind

projects of large scale by securing cost-effective energy prices for ratepayers – but it also provides a significant opportunity for long-term economic development that the offshore wind industry will bring to the three states.”

“We can go further when we work together, and I’m excited to be collaborating with our neighbors in Massachusetts and Rhode Island on this MOU, which opens up the potential for us to procure clean energy from offshore wind together at more competitive and affordable rates, for the benefit of the residents and businesses in our respective states,” Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont said.

Connecticut’s deepwater ports, direct water access, and long history of advanced manufacturing make our state a natural home for offshore wind projects serving all of our region.
pic.twitter.com/cFxu7foGlZ

– Governor Ned Lamont (@GovNedLamont) October 5, 2023

The multi-state coordination MOU is an agreement between the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources (OER).

Mariano: Biden Should “Start Paying Attention” To Migrant Crisis

President Joe Biden “better start paying attention” to the emergency shelter crisis straining Massachusetts and other

states and cities, House Speaker Ron Mariano said Wednesday while signaling he still has not gotten the information he wants from the Healey administration about the costs of the situation.

Three weeks after Gov. Maura Healey filed a more than \$2 billion spending bill to close the state's books on fiscal year 2023, Mariano said the chairs of each Ways and Means Committee are "negotiating the closeout supp now."

The negotiations are preceding debate and amendments to the bill in both branches.

Healey proposed drawing down \$250 million from a reserve account to cover emergency shelter costs, which have skyrocketed to unprecedented levels amid record demand on the state's system, much of it fueled by new arrivals to the country.

"Again, we've been waiting for numbers ... some sort of framework to surround the cost. We haven't got it yet," Mariano told reporters after an unrelated bill-signing event. "So we're still up in the air about: is \$250 (million) way too much, or is \$250 million nowhere near enough?"

"We're going to be talking to some of the Washington folks, too," he added. "There are a lot of questions that we've been asking, and we need to get some answers before we can frame any sort of commitment of payment."

Healey for weeks has been unsuccessfully pushing for the Biden administration to expedite work authorizations for newly arrived migrants and make federal funding available to offset some of the costs states bear.

Asked if he wanted the Biden administration to establish a point person to coordinate with Massachusetts, Mariano replied, "The guy's running for president. He better start paying attention to this."

New Bedford Police officers frustrated after not seeing promised pay increase by city

The New Bedford Police Union is raising concern over officers not seeing the promised pay increase from the collective bargaining agreement reached between the City of New Bedford and the Police Union in July.

"The wage increase is yet to be seen by officers, despite the three-month mark approaching. The issue of wages is certainly important to any employee. But the underlying problem, once again, is a lack of communication and attention by the department administration regarding such a common concern.

The only information shared was in an email sent by a member of the Union Executive Board to the department in September. That email was a result of asking Chief Oliveira about the increases and included a date in the second week of October for the wage increase to take place.

Interestingly, officers who happened to be present at certain roll calls this week were provided with a different date, the following pay period, for the wage increase. That information was provided by Chief Oliveira, and was only provided to the limited number of officers who were present.

No department email. No record of the communication. No consistency in the message. Seemingly no care to create such a public record, in the event that any of the words are possibly questioned in the future."



City of New Bedford photo.

Below is the original July 12th press release from the City of New Bedford detailing the agreement.

New Bedford, MA – After months of negotiation, the City and the New Bedford Police Union have entered a new collective bargaining agreement, which will increase police wages and benefits to address the Police Department's staffing shortages. The agreement also paves the way for the use of body-worn cameras by all officers. The agreement runs from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2024, and is subject to City Council approval.

The agreement includes the following new provisions:

- The residency requirement for new officers would be reduced from ten years to four years, and the City is authorized to waive the requirement if the Department's staffing needs demand it.
- 2% cost of living adjustment in each year of the contract.
- 2% added to the base pay for the officer's certification by the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission,

effective January 1, 2024, and again on June 30, 2024.

- Effective on July 1, 2022: Step 1 on the pay scale is eliminated.
- Effective on July 1, 2023: Step 2 on the pay scale is eliminated and a new step, Step 6, is created at 2% above Step 5.
- For officers with 15+ years of service in the New Bedford Police Department, a new 15-year step is created at 4% above Step 5.
- Step 5A becomes the 25-year step at 6% above Step 5 for officers with 25+ years of service.
- Rank differential is increased to 18%.
- \$3,000 retention payment for officers who remain employed with the City 30 days after City Council funds the contract.
- Education incentive payments are increased, and additional degrees are added to the list of qualifying degrees.
- Vacation time added for officers with 15-20 years of service.
- Added pay for officers who work on Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- Restrictions on the use of sick time.
- The police chief may use retired officers to conduct background checks.
- After training, the department can begin to introduce body-worn cameras.

"I am pleased that both sides worked toward a resolution that enables us to address staffing shortages with which departments across America are struggling," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. "I am proud of the work our officers do to keep New Bedford safe, and I believe that this new contract will put them in a stronger position to achieve professional success."

"I'm very pleased that the City has reached an amicable agreement with the union and settled this contract," said Police Chief Paul Oliveira. "I look forward to working with

the union leadership as we continue to serve the citizens of New Bedford. As always, I remain very proud of the men and women of this department.”

The term of the contract is estimated to cost \$3.5 million from the City’s General Fund.

City of New Bedford launches Leadership Institute so department heads, senior managers can be more effective

“As part of the continuing effort to modernize and professionalize municipal government, the City has launched a Leadership Institute so that department heads and senior managers refine skills needed to be more effective in their roles.

The initiative, managed by the Personnel Office with support from AllOne Health Employee Assistance Program (EAP), will provide city managers with professional development training through a series of six seminars over the next several months, with additional classes planned for Spring 2024.

Topics include:

- Creating a Culture of Excellence: The Role of Leadership
- Moving from Manager to Leader: Inspiring Trust
- Creating Vision

- Executing Strategy
- Coach Potential
- The Role of Leadership in Navigating Change: A Leadership Roundtable

“The Leadership Institute will be a valuable and useful initiative for our managers,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell. “Although similar programs are common in large corporations, they are relatively rare in municipal government. I am pleased that this important leadership training is being offered to our department heads and managers.”

In addition to the leadership institute, the Mitchell Administration has pursued wide-ranging reforms across city government to bring municipal services into the 21st century and modernize the way local government serves its residents.

Examples include:

- The establishment of “The New Bedford Way,” the statement of city government’s organizational values.
- The establishment of the positions of Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer.
- Consolidation of municipal departments.
- Reforms of the budgeting process that have resulted in the City’s receiving the GFOA award for nine years running.
- The establishment of a See-Click-Fix app for municipal services.
- Reform of the City’s procurement process.
- Soon, the establishment of a city-wide 311 system.
- A citywide performance management initiative in which all city departments establish operational goals based on extensive data collection and analysis.
- A performance contracting partnership with Siemens Corporation which allowed the City to finance and retrofit municipal buildings with energy efficiency measures, modern heating and cooling systems, and climate controls. The partnership with Siemens Corporation also allowed the City to

replace street lights citywide with high-efficiency LED fixtures.

- The installation of one of the largest municipal solar initiatives, adjusted for population, anywhere in the United States. In all, ten major solar projects totaling more than \$60 million in privately financed construction are saving City taxpayers nearly \$1 million annually.

“Developing the leadership skills of municipal managers is fundamentally about providing better city services,” said Mayor Mitchell. “It is also a prime example of the kind of improvements we have been introducing to city government so that we operate more effectively, more efficiently, and ultimately put ourselves in a position to deliver more for our residents.”

Mitchell added, “I also want to thank our Personnel Director Judi Keating and Katie Gilfeather of AllOne Health who both were instrumental in developing the Leadership Institute.””

OPINION: “Hypocritical McCarthy, the ultra-Trumpist, was undone by pandering to Trump.”

The following is an opinion sent to New Bedford Guide. It does not reflect the opinion of New Bedford Guide, nor is it an OP-ED. In fairness and objectivity, we share opinions from our readers whether we agree or disagree with their opinion.

Do you have a counter opinion to this opinion? Have an opinion

about something else? Email us at info@newbedfordguide.com.

“Kevin McCarthy’s loss of the House speakership came from the ultra right wing minority of the Republican caucus. For many Democrats this represents a just demotion for an incredibly hypocritical politician who has infuriated them with his pandering and enabling of Donald Trump.

It would be far more satisfying if his loss was attributable to centrist Republicans who publicly demonstrated that Trumpism is anathema to democracy, the U.S. Constitution and the rule of law. But that possibility is presently a remote pipe dream.

One can surmise that McCarthy’s last major concession to Donald Trump was the commencement of a seemingly bogus impeachment of Joe Biden. That maneuver and his ungracious speech after the Democrats had allied with him to pass the continuing resolution, blaming them for the problem instead of utilizing this opportunity to demonstrate that bipartisanship can be productive, was his undoing.

It is realistic to imagine that but for these two assaults upon the Democrats much of his previous self-serving actions would have been forgiven, if not forgotten, and some Democrats may have voted against the motion to vacate the speakership. This would have assured his remaining as speaker and finally silencing this small group of ultra Trumpists.

Now McCarthy’s quest for power, prestige and and a positive legacy has ended in ignominy by the “sixteenth vote.”-Betty Ussach, Dartmouth.

Pathetic turnout at Preliminary Election: 94% of New Bedford's registered voters did NOT vote

New Bedford saw an extremely low voter turnout on Tuesday night with only 6.10% of registered voters casting a ballot. 4,018 of a possible 65,876 registered voters in New Bedford decided to make their voice heard.

The area with the lowest voter turnout was ward 2B (a neighborhood in between Brooklawn Park and Riverside Park) where of 1,450 registered voters, only 17 people (1.17%) casted a vote.

The area with the highest voter turnout was ward 5F (a neighborhood near Buttonwood Park) where of 2,056 registered voters, 271 people (13.18%) casted a vote.

Of the 4,018 voters, 2,544 (67.84%) of them voted for Mayor Jon Mitchell. This strongly indicates that voters are happy with the job that he is doing and will re-elect him in the Municipal Election on November 7th.

Mayor Mitchell posted this message on social media following the results,

"I'm grateful for and humbled by the support I received in today's preliminary election. My commitment remains to get up every morning and do my very best for the residents of New Bedford. Our city has momentum, and we will not skip a beat."

Here is a recap of the Preliminary election. Everyone listed below advanced to the Municipal Election on November 7th.

Registered Voters: 65,876

Votes: 4,018 (6.10%)

Mayor

- Jon Mitchell: 2,544 votes (67.84%)
- Richard Tyson Moultrie: 357 votes (9.52%)

Ward 5:

- Joseph Lopes: 666 votes (56.25%)
- Zachary Boyer: 377 votes (31.84%)

At Large:

- Ian Abreu: 2,067 votes (14.50%)
- Shane Burgo: 1,711 votes (12%)
- Brian Gomes: 1,527 votes (10.71%)
- Linda Morad: 1,447 votes (10.15%)
- Naomi Carney: 1,434 votes (10.06%)
- Scott Lima: 1,386 votes (9.72%)
- Devin Byrnes: 1,170 votes (8.21%)
- Bruce Duarte Jr: 873 votes (6.12%)
- Guelmie Santiago: 852 votes (5.98%)
- Carmen Amaral: 845 votes (5.93%)

New Bedford City Council asks for immediate suspension of looming ban on nip bottles

In a special meeting held at Keith Middle School on Tuesday night, the New Bedford City Council heard the public's concerns over the "nip bottle ban" set to take place November

1st.

Many residents and small business owners felt that Mayor Mitchell and the licensing board overstepped their power by enforcing a ban in the city without a vote from the public or a publicly elected board.

The City Council unanimously passed several motions to halt the November 1st ban and move the date back 1 year to give small businesses time to sell their inventory rather than losing hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Although the council passed these motions, they made it very clear that they are unsure whether they actually possess the power to change anything in this situation.

According to “Freitas Package Store” owner Mark Riley, every other city that has banned nips has at least given store owners 9-12 months to sell through the inventory that they have already invested money in.

This November 1st date in New Bedford gave store owners roughly 3 months to sell all of their nip products which are always bought in high volume due to the small profit margin.

Store owners were insinuating the November 1st date happens to land on the same day early voting kicks off for the municipal election and one week prior to the official voting day.

Below is an exclusive interview with Mark Riley who has been the leading voice against the ban.

Mayor Mitchell addresses the gun violence “beef” going on between two groups in New Bedford

Mayor Mitchell recently gave an update on the concerning uptick in gun violence happening between two groups in New Bedford. He noted, “It’s been focused primarily in the Ben Rose and Blue Meadows housing developments and it is something that is concerning because it seemed to happen out of the blue.”

On Tuesday, September 19th New Bedford police responded to several shots recorded on a shot spotter near Durfee and Linden street in New Bedford. When first responders arrived on the scene they located an adult male with multiple gunshot wounds and transported the victim to Saint Lukes Hospital.

On Thursday, September 15th the New Bedford Police Department received reports of shots fired at the Blue Meadows Apartments on Dartmouth Street across from Stop and Shop. In addition, they received a report that a person came into St. Luke’s Hospital who had sustained at least one gunshot wound.

At the scene of the shooting at the Blue Meadows Apartments police encountered a vehicle “riddled” with bullets and another car with a bullet hole. NBPD had the car riddled with bullets to police headquarters and impounded as evidence.

The New Bedford Police Union was raising concern in the beginning of the month over an influx in shootings in New Bedford. On September 10th they warned, “Not including a shooting which occurred at 12 a.m. today, 6 of the first 10 days of September have had incidents of shots fired.”

Mayor Mitchell noted that the violence is “not random and there are beefs between two groups and there has been a cycle of retaliation”. The mayor did ensure that the police are working hard in these areas and are “working with the DA’s office to ensure that theres a lot of focus on folks who may have violated a warrant or otherwise might need to be picked up”.

You can watch Mayor Mitchells full statement regarding the situation in the video below.

“Jim Jordan’s disingenuous indignation: where was his outrage when MAGA attacked the capitol?”

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“If only Representative Jim Jordan showed such outrage when the Capitol was attacked by MAGA supporters, when Donald Trump withheld and lied about classified documents, and when the legion of lawyers and public officials joined the chorus of election deniers, thereby contributing to the further erosion

of the public's trust in the electoral system. And of course Jordan looked the other way while Trump and family continually enriched themselves during his entire presidency.

Jordan has spent much of his congressional career inveighing against one person or proposed policy after another. Never leading the charge for something positive ,he always pops up with loud and hyperbolic accusations against any Democrat he can smear and thereby bring media attention to himself.

His anger is never directed at corrupt legislators or officials clearly affiliated with his own party or policies. His fury is also not necessarily aimed at substantiated allegations. Not applying criticism to some of the most blatantly corrupt figures his periodic outbursts ring hollow to those who see it for what it really represents:

anger motivated by pure opportunism.”-Betty Ussach, Dartmouth.

Two biggest issues New Bedford voters will face heading into the 2023 election

Election season is about to kick off in New Bedford and now is the time that residents sit back and reflect on what we can change in our community. Like any city, New Bedford has its strengths and weaknesses.

We recently asked residents what their favorite aspect of New Bedford was and compiled the 5 best aspects of the city. Today

I would like to highlight the two biggest issues New Bedford citizens seem to be currently concerned about.

1. Housing



Affordable housing is an issue that I hear about on a daily basis. Residents of New Bedford have been extremely vocal about the hardships they are facing in this housing market. This issue has taken center stage and our elected officials have recently been vocal on this topic.

In August, Tony Cabral stated “We have a housing crisis in the state, and we also have a housing crisis in New Bedford” at a ground-breaking ceremony of a 45 unit apartment building at 117 Union Street. He then went on telling a story about an elderly woman facing eviction because her fixed income can no longer pay for the rising cost of her rent.

Mayor Jon Mitchell was recently at the construction site of a 15 unit apartment building highlighting “The city’s efforts to create new housing for our residents”.

In July, investor Denis Keohane sparked some controversy by announcing that he built 21 units of luxury apartments in

downtown New Bedford. Some residents looked at this as a positive that an investor is spending money to better the city, while others felt like they are slowly being priced out of New Bedford.

There is no doubt that the entire country is facing a housing crisis, parlay that with the renaissance downtown New Bedford is experiencing and there is no wonder why some residents are concerned about affordable housing.

2. The Police Department



Like many departments across the country, the New Bedford Police Department is facing staffing shortages.

On July 12th the City and the New Bedford Police Union entered a new collective bargaining agreement which, “will increase police wages and benefits to address the Police Department’s staffing shortages”. This seemed like the right move and was definitely popular among New Bedford citizens.

In reality, the department is still understaffed and losing officers to neighboring cities which offer better pay and benefits. In August, the New Bedford Police were understaffed

28 of 31 days with only being properly staffed on August 7th, 30th, & 31st.

The police union recently released survey results from officers who were asked about the current work environment and job conditions. The answers from officers were...brutal to say the least.

There is an obvious disconnect between our police officers and our local officials and it has become a concern for many residents of New Bedford. It's tough to point blame at any elected official when a crime occurs, because unfortunately every city in the world has its share of crime. But ensuring we have a fully staffed and supported police department seems like something that could actually be in the control of local leadership.