

New Bedford City Council Candidate Forum at Alma Del Mar

Live for the candidate forum at Alma Del Mar on Wednesday, October 16. All the Ward and At-Large City Councilors will be asked questions from the children at the school.

Carlos Felix, Michael Janson and Brian Gomes argue at New Bedford candidate forum

Carlos Pimentel Felix calls out Brian Gomes; Brian Gomes almost walks out; Michael Janson tries to grab the microphone from Carlos Pimentel Felix and then walks out.

Here's a look at the pandemonium during last night's at-large City Council closing statements.

Tyson Moultrie asked about his claim that "the Mitchell

campaign seems a little corrupt.”

During Tuesday night’s candidate forum held at Gomes School hosted by Buddy Andrade, New Bedford Mayoral candidate Tyson Moultrie was asked to clarify his comments that “the Mitchell campaign seems a little corrupt.” Mayor Mitchell also responded.

New Bedford at-large City Council closing statements

Here are the New Bedford at-large City Council closing statements from last night’s candidate forum at Gomes School in New Bedford.

OPINION: Include texting and driving in the definition of “driving under the influence” and make punishment the same

We now live in a world where scrolling through social media on your phone or using it text someone is ubiquitous. In fact, it so the new norm – you are the weirdo if you are sitting at a

cafe, standing in line or in public and your phone is not glued to your hand.

It is so prevalent that if you observe people in a line that is 20 people deep, to say 18 of them will be buried in their phone would not be hyperbole. The art of small talk with your neighbor or stranger next to you in line is dead. Social skills be damned.

It is such an epidemic that it is also normal to see people texting while driving. It's everywhere, everyone is doing it. This is one reason very little is done about it – it is accepted and ignored because people know they do it too and if they have a sense of integrity they won't be hypocritical by being very vocal about banning and punishing people for it when they do it.



It is a form of addiction which has commonalities with other addictions. There is a “substance,” e.g, heroin, crack, meth, gambling, pornography, phones. You need a fix regularly to appease brain receptors. You are willing to do extreme things

to make sure your habit is fed – with opiates people often steal or commit petty crimes, even rob or mug people. With gambling and pornography, you hurt your family and friends through spending too much money or time “feasting” on your substance. With alcohol, there is that plus the common verbal or physical abuse when inebriated.

With the phone, people are willing to risk their passengers or other people on the road. The only difference between phone addiction and the others is in the preferred substance, but the result is the same: hurting others or placing them at risk – risk that can lead to injuries or even death.

A study by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) demonstrated texting while driving is six times more dangerous than driving while inebriated. Car and Driver magazine published a report actually show how poor reactions times are on par with being drunk or worse.

This begs the question: if it is as bad or worse than being drunk why are the penalties not the same? In some states, like Massachusetts, our feckless politicians have made 5 attempts to ban it. Meanwhile, residents continue to be hurt or killed on our roads. The saddest part of everything is that these people are doing nothing important: they are simply scrolling their social media news feed, having a general conversation, even sending a “LOL” or “What u doing?” Even if it was an important message, common sense which is now uncommon these days would dictate waiting the few minutes to get where you are going or if you are on a long commute, pull over and text.



If people are going to be selfish with their phones it's time to have a punishment that matches it. If texting or using your phone while driving is as dangerous or more so than being drunk, we need to have the same punishment for it. Since police cars and officers themselves typically have cameras now, we have video evidence that can back it up and phone records can be accessed.

One of the problems for years is the dishonesty of the people who use their phones while driving. They will deny they were being ignorant so they can escape a fine.

Until such a time as driverless cars are safe and infrastructure can be put in place for them, people will continue to hurt to kill themselves or others unless our politicians and law enforcement officers do something about it.

I don't see people changing their behaviors under current law and policing – they seem determined to win Darwin Awards. It's time to get their attention by including phone use while driving under the umbrella of driving “under the influence” because the end result is identical.

- **1st Offense:** up to 2 1/2 years in jail, \$500 to \$5,000 in fines, and a 1 year license revocation,
 - **2nd Offense:** 60 days to 2 1/1 years in jail, \$600 to \$10,000 in fines, and a 2 year license revocation.
 - **3rd Offense:** 180 days to 2 1/2 years in jail or 2 /12-5 years in prison, \$1,000-\$15,000 in fines, and an 8 year license revocation.
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Deadline to register to vote in New Bedford's municipal election is October 16

The New Bedford Board of Election Commissioners reminds New Bedford voters that Wednesday, October 16, 2019 is the deadline to register to vote in the November 5, 2019 municipal election, as well as to notify the Board of Election Commissioners of any change in voter name or address.

The Election Commission office is located at City Hall, 133 William Street, in Room 114. The office will remain open on Wednesday, October 16, from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. in order to allow the public more time to complete their voter registration process and make necessary updates to their names or addresses.

In the municipal election on November 5, 2019, New Bedford voters may cast their vote for Mayor, Councillor at-Large, Ward, Councillors, Assessor, and School Committee.

Any voter who is unable to get to the polls on Election Day may vote by absentee ballot during regular Election Commission office hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00

p.m., or may request to have an absentee ballot application mailed to their home address by calling the Election Commission office at 508-979-1420. The Election Commission will announce further information regarding absentee ballots as soon as they are available.

In addition, the New Bedford Election Commission office will be open on Saturday, November 2, from 8:00 a.m. until 12 noon to give voters additional time to cast an absentee ballot.

Any New Bedford resident whose address has changed since the last election, would like to request an absentee ballot, or is uncertain about their voting status or designated polling location, should contact the Election Commission office at 508-979-1420.

U.S. Attorney Lelling renews opposition to drug injection sites in Massachusetts

The following is a statement from U.S. Attorney Lelling regarding **drug injection sites in Massachusetts**:

“Opioid overdose deaths are down 11% over this time last year, a substantial drop and the continuation of a multi-year trend. Now would not be the time to open a site for the purpose of making it easier to take heroin and fentanyl.

Despite the constant repetition by proponents of these sites, there are no reliable studies showing that they reduce overall numbers of overdose deaths or, more importantly, help addicts get clean. And, yes, people have died in drug injection

facilities. Meanwhile, these sites are harmful to the communities that host them, as they attract high concentrations of drug users, followed by drug dealers, and so an increase in crime.

We're aware of the decision yesterday by a single district court judge in Philadelphia. We respectfully disagree with it, and it is only the first step in a long process of judicial review for this important issue. As the Deputy Attorney General said yesterday, efforts to open injection facilities, including here in Massachusetts, will be met with federal enforcement."

Mayor's Youth Council Hosts New Bedford Candidate Forum

The Mayor's Youth Council and the New Bedford Whaling Museum invite New Bedford voters to attend a candidates' forum on Thursday, October 10th from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM in the New Bedford Whaling Museum Harbor View Gallery. The forum will include 3 events for candidates running for citywide offices. The forum for City Council- At -Large Candidates will be 5:00 to 6:30 PM, the School Committee forum will follow from 6:45 to 7:45 PM and the Mayoral forum from 7:50 -8:45 PM.

The format for the forum will include a series of questions presented by the Youth Council involving current issues related to New Bedford and the public schools. If time allows, there will also be an audience Question and Answer period for the candidates. Each participant will have the opportunity to share with voters who they are, why they are running for office, and what they hope to accomplish.

This forum will be conducted by members of the Mayor's Youth Council. The Mayor's Youth Council began hosting candidates' forums in 2007 and this is the seventh forum hosted by the Mayor's Youth Council as an opportunity for youth to participate and share their voice in the election process.

Mayor Jon Mitchell to hold October Neighborhood Office Hours at Domino's Pizza

Mayor Mitchell will hold neighborhood office hours for the month of October on Tuesday, October 8, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at Domino's Pizza, 821 Rockdale Avenue.

Mayor Mitchell announced he would set aside time each month to hold office hours in city neighborhoods so that residents could meet with him outside of normal business hours and in their own neighborhood.

In his State of the City last year, the Mayor announced that a new format of office hours would be established, inviting residents to join him at local restaurants in different neighborhoods of the city. Food will be available at the office hours.

City residents are invited to attend the neighborhood office hours to meet with Mayor Mitchell directly and share their concerns and ideas, as well as a bite to eat. The sessions are open to all New Bedford residents, no advance appointments are required and meetings with the Mayor will be done on a first-come, first-served basis.

New Bedford man overdoses two days in a row

A New Bedford man in his 30s overdosed twice in as many days at his north end New Bedford home. The first overdose occurred on Wednesday, October 2 at 5:52 pm. The second overdose occurred on Thursday, October 3, at 10:14 am. **There were a total of five drug overdoses in New Bedford on Wednesday (one of them was fatal)** and two non-fatal overdoses on Thursday.

While family and friends can attempt to “Section” someone who overdoses, no law currently mandates a hold of someone who overdoses in Massachusetts. Governor Baker did propose a 72-hour involuntary hold for people who overdose, but Massachusetts legislators killed that idea so people who overdosed are immediately free to leave medical care.

Overdoses can cost taxpayers thousands of dollars each as many police, EMS and fire personnel are called to the scene and medical care is administered immediately and later at the hospital.