

# Councilors Dunn and Coelho miss fifth New Bedford 2021 budget meeting

City Councilors Debora Coelho and Hugh Dunn have now missed all five New Bedford 2021 budget meetings.

Three days ago we reported that At-large City Councilor Debora Coelho and Ward 3 City Councilor Hugh Dunn have not attended any of the four New Bedford 2021 budget meetings and At-large City Councilor Brian Gomes has attended two of them. Gomes was in attendance last night, Dunn and Coelho were not.

Due to COVID-19, New Bedford City Council meetings are held on Zoom which makes attendance very easy. Councilor Dunn has stated, **"My absence has no impact on my ability to effectively represent my constituents as we navigate the budget process."** Councilor Coelho hasn't responded to an email request but **announced her retirement shortly after getting elected.**

The FY2021 budget review comes during a COVID-19 pandemic, shrinking revenues, and **mayor requested cuts to the police and fire departments.** The budget will determine the need for future property tax increases and fees, so the City Council's role in the budget process is considered the single most important job city councilors have.

There are six total budget meetings for the New Bedford City Council this year with the final meeting among department heads scheduled for 12 August. The final budget meeting and vote is on Aug 24.