

City, AFSCME Union Announce Agreement on Multi-Year Contract

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell and the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) union Local 851, Council 93 have reached a new labor contract. The City of New Bedford employs nearly 370 AFSCME union employees, who serve the public in a variety of roles including clerks, custodians, carpenters, electricians, maintenance workers, mechanics, inspectors, pipefitters, zoo keepers, 911 dispatchers, paramedics among others.

Mayor Mitchell said, "I am pleased that we have reached a fair and equitable agreement and I am grateful for the union's good faith efforts throughout the process. I appreciate the dedicated and professional service the men and women of AFSCME provide to the City every day."

"Local 851 is pleased to have reached an agreement with the Mayor and the City. This contract will assure the protection of AFSCME members while they continue their hard work for the public and City of New Bedford," said local Union president, Mark Messier.

The parties have executed a one-year agreement from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013 and a three-year agreement, which spans the period from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016. AFSCME had been working without a settled contract since the prior agreement expired on June 30, 2012. No wage increases were granted for the first two years. For the remainder of the contract, AFSCME employees will receive modest wage increases of 1.5% on July 1, 2014; 1.5% on July 1, 2015; 1.25% on June 30, 2016. AFSCME employees will receive a \$1,000.00 signing bonus.

Other highlights of the contract include the requirement that employees utilize direct deposit for their paychecks and that the employees convert to a bi-weekly payroll system. These changes are expected to streamline the City's payroll system and make city government more efficient.