

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell ends regular appearance on WBSM's Barry Richard Show

The following was posted to New Bedford Mayor John Mitchell's Facebook page:

"Since I took office nine years ago, I've had a standing weekly appearance on WBSM, in which I take questions from the host and the listening audience about the issues facing the city and region. For the last five years, that appearance has been on The Barry Richard Show. I have been committed to the appearance because doing so serves important public purposes. Being subjected to tough, but fair questions on the minds of listeners serves to hold the occupant of the Office of Mayor accountable to his or her bosses – the 100,000 residents of New Bedford. Disagreements of course are inevitable and common, and sometimes intense, but a healthy exchange of ideas can deepen the public's understanding of matters affecting their families, enable them to sort out fact from fiction, and, in an era in which confidence in government has been severely eroded, build public trust. The program serves these purposes so long as the discussion remains civil and respectful. New Bedford's residents deserve nothing less.

Unfortunately, my appearances the last several months have become less beneficial to our residents. All too often, they have been marked by the host's frequent berating, interrupting and talking over my responses, and unwillingness to allow for a constructive conversation. Although frequent criticism of me comes with my job as mayor, the show has reached a point where the public is deprived of a healthy exchange of viewpoints, and topics important to our residents are being crowded out of

the discussion. Many of you shared similar concerns in emails and phone calls to my office this past week, and you are right. Accordingly, I have informed WBSM's management that I am ending my regular appearance on The Barry Richard Show, which I was asked about and discussed on the air with Phil Paleologos this morning. This is personally disappointing to me, and I don't come to it lightly, but I believe it's in the city's best interests.

I remain committed to using all the platforms available to me, including radio appearances, to provide the residents of New Bedford the information they need to have a productive relationship with their municipal government." – New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell