

The 2011 New Bedford Elections



by
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2011 is a very important year for the city of New Bedford. In November we will have a new mayor and likely several new city council members. Mayor Scott Lang will not run for re-election, leaving the mayor's race wide open. This guarantees there will be new people taking over key leadership positions for the city. We will need this leadership to move New Bedford forward and to continue the revitalization taking place here.

NewBedfordGuide.com's function in this process is to provide an encyclopedia of facts about the elections that will be readily available to our readers. In order to ensure that all candidates have an equal voice, our official policy is not to back any candidates or viewpoints. While New Bedford residents can write articles either supporting or opposing the different candidates and issues, these articles will be posted in the 'Opinion' section of the site and clearly marked with notes from the Editor.

We firmly believe there are five key components that will ensure the best candidates are available and that the election results are truly reflective of the people of New Bedford.

1. Higher Voter Turnout

In 2009, there were 56,423 registered voters in New Bedford, but only 11,551 (20%) showed up to vote. That means 4 out of 5 registered voters stayed home on election day. Our goal is to significantly increase these numbers and ensure that all voices are heard on election day.

2. A Well Educated, Informed Voting Public

While it is important to achieve a high voter turnout, it is equally important that the voters know exactly who and what they are voting for. Through numerous candidate profiles, interviews and other election articles, we aim to keep the voting public informed. We want voters to vote for candidates who represent their values, and not vote based simply on a yard sign, a television ad, a newspaper, or because a union head said to vote for a candidate.

3. No Candidate Runs Unopposed

Out of the six ward-elected City Council elections, two of the candidates ran unopposed (Ward 1 and 2) and in Ward 5 the opposing candidate dropped out of the race.

Our goal is to get as many quality candidates as possible to throw their hats into the ring. New Bedford residents deserve choice. To find out more about running for office in New Bedford, [click here](#).

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4. All Citizens Get A Voice

Everyone deserves to be heard! First, NewBedfordGuide.com will be available for anyone to submit articles to for consideration. If you have an opinion or simply want to present some facts, you can e-mail your articles to info@newbedfordguide.com. Second, we will solicit questions from everyday citizens and attempt to get the candidates to answer them through interviews and debates.

5. Give New Candidates a Fighting Chance

Incumbents have a significant advantage when it comes to

getting re-elected. In 2009, out of 16 possible seats (Mayor, six Ward City Councilors, five At-Large City Councilors, three School Committee and one Assessor) incumbents won 13 of those spots. Not a single incumbent actually lost. All three non-incumbent winners ran against other non-incumbents. Incumbents have several significant advantages over non-incumbents, including more cash, better name recognition and an experienced election staff. Our goal is to provide non-incumbents with an equal playing field by giving them a chance to build name recognition, inform people about upcoming fund raisers, and recruit experienced staff.

Our overall goal is simple: to get the best and brightest people to lead our city for the next two years. Without backing any candidates, we will provide the citizens of New Bedford all the information they need to make informed choices on election day. We hope this leads to higher voter turnout, and in turn, a better New Bedford.