

New Bedford's Mayor Mitchell Leads group of U.S. mayors to Israel

Delegation from U.S. Conference of Mayors met with Israeli and Palestinian officials on trip sponsored by Project Interchange.

“NEW BEDFORD – Mayor Jon Mitchell chaired a group of U.S. Mayors on a trip to Israel earlier this week on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the leading organization representing American cities. Mayor Mitchell is a member of USCM’s Board of Trustees.

The delegation spent four days in Israel meeting with municipal leaders, academics, business leaders, and experts from both Israel and Palestine. They also held discussions with released hostages and their families, and others coordinating humanitarian aid in the region. Site visits included Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem, and the city of Sderot on the border with Gaza. In the Oct. 7, 2023 attack by the terror group Hamas, 70 civilians, including 20 police officers, were murdered in Sderot.

Mayor Mitchell was back at City Hall on Friday.

“Although this is the USCM’s fourth mayoral delegation to Israel, the issues in the region today are more relevant than ever to Americans,” Mayor Mitchell said. “The current conflict is widening the political fault lines in our country, and I believe that it is important for mayors, as the leaders of their cities, to take opportunities like this to deepen their understanding of a situation that, as everyone can agree, is complicated and difficult.”

The trip was sponsored by a joint program between the USCM and

the American Jewish Committee's Project Interchange, which facilitates exchanges between Israeli, Palestinian, European, and American officials. The mission of the program is to enhance Americans' understanding of the region's politics by exposing mayors to diverse perspectives and promoting new and mutually beneficial relationships with Israeli and Palestinian leaders. This is the program's fourth mayoral delegation to Israel, which was funded entirely by the program.

Participants included Mayor Daniel Rickman of Columbia, South Carolina, Mayor Travis Stovall of Gresham, Oregon, and officials from the USCM and AJC. Based on security considerations, the USCM requested that members of the delegation refrain from announcing the trip beforehand or releasing details of the itinerary prior to return."-City of New Bedford.

Dominican living in Massachusetts convicted of Fentanyl distribution, felon was previously deported

"BOSTON – A Dominican man was sentenced today in federal court in Boston for reentering the United States and distributing fentanyl after previously being deported.

Juan Carlos Santos-Ocasio, a/k/a "Cristhian Aybar-Done," 44, of the Dominican Republic, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Leo T. Sorokin to six years in prison, followed by five years of supervised release. He will be subject to deportation upon the completion of his sentence. In October

2023, Santos-Ocasio pleaded guilty to one count each of distribution of and possession with intent to distribute 40 grams or more of Fentanyl and unlawful reentry of deported alien.

In October 2007, Santos-Ocasio was arrested in the Bronx, N.Y. for heroin distribution conspiracy. In November 2008, Santos-Ocasio pleaded guilty in the Eastern District of New York and was subsequently sentenced to 37 months in prison. He was removed from the United States upon completion of his sentence in the summer of 2010.

Sometime after his removal, Santos-Ocasio reentered the United States unlawfully. In November 2022, he was arrested in Lawrence, Mass. for reentering the United States without authorization. In addition to being in the U.S. without authorization, Santos-Ocasio also distributed 40 grams or more of fentanyl.

Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy; Stephen Belleau, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division; Todd M. Lyons, Field Office Director, Boston, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations; and John E. Mawn Jr., Interim Colonel of the Massachusetts State Police made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kaitlin Brown of the Worcester Branch Office prosecuted the case."- Massachusetts Department of Justice.

City of New Bedford: "Heads

up! MBTA is closing parts of Rt. 18 to work on pedestrian bridge.”

“HEADS UP FOR ROUTE 18 DRIVERS:

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority – MBTA is closing parts of Route 18 overnight next week to work on the new pedestrian bridge.

For construction-related issues on the pedestrian bridge project, please call 508-676-3558 or email or SouthCoastRail@dot.state.ma.us.”-City of New Bedford.

New Bedford: Pedestrian Bridge Overnight Work and Detours

Construction continues for the new pedestrian bridge across Route 18 and Acushnet Avenue connecting to the New Bedford Station.

As crews begin to start erection of the permanent bridge steel structure over Route 18, night work and detours on Route 18 and adjacent roads are expected to resume next week.

The following is a list of possible closures to be implemented [beginning Tuesday, April 16](#). Signage and police details will be in place to direct traffic.

Acushnet Avenue: traffic will be diverted to Herman Melville Boulevard

Route 18 Northbound at Route 6/Mill Street and Hillman Street: traffic will be diverted to Herman Melville Boulevard and Purchase Street (see detour map below)

Route 18 Southbound at Purchase Street exit: traffic will be diverted to Purchase Street (see detour map below)

Route 18 Purchase Street Ramp: Traffic will be diverted to the next Route 18 exit (Route 6 West exit onto Pleasant Street/Purchase Street)



Location of work: •Purchase Street (between Pearl Street and Willis Street)
•Near the MassHire Greater New Bedford Career Center (618 Acushnet Ave)
•Route 18 at the Purchase Street exit

Dates/Hours of Work: •Weekdays, 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM •Nighttime work hours, 8:00 PM to 5:00 AM

To accommodate the construction of the west side plaza of the bridge, there will be no street parking on the east side of Purchase Street between Pearl Street and Willis Street.

Bristol County Sheriff Heroux signs proclamation confirming commitment to our veterans

“Sheriff Heroux signed a proclamation confirming the BCSO’s commitment to veterans with the U.S. Army Reserve. Sgt. Curtis Mateus and Lt. Nelson Cabral from the newly formed BCSO Veteran’s Committee joined the Sheriff for this signing.

The BCSO Veteran’s Committee consists of both current and former staff who have served in the military. Members volunteer their time in giving advice on departmental issues pertaining to military service members and veterans, guide service members in accessing veteran benefits, coordinating drill, activation, and deployment scheduling, as well as connecting veterans in the community with careers at the Sheriff’s Office.

This new partnership between the BCSO and the Army Reserve will assist soldiers, families, and veterans overcome barriers to obtain meaningful employment opportunities with the Bristol County Sheriff’s Office.”-Bristol County Sheriff’s Office.

Massachusetts State Police “Cops for Kids w/ Cancer” present family with check to help with medical expenses

“Cops for Kids with Cancer met with a 7-year-old, and his family, from Worcester to present a \$5,000 check to assist with medical expenses as he undergoes cancer treatment.

Trooper Alexa Harvey, from the Sturbridge barracks, was connected with the boy and his family and knew the troopers from C-5 would love to meet him while the family was presented with this check.

The hope of Cops for Kids with Cancer is to remove some financial burden from parents, so all their energy can go to helping their child beat cancer and live a healthy life.”-Cops for Kids with Cancer.

**OPINION: “It’s distressing
that people support
Netanyahu, Trump’s
narcissistic, destructive
agendas”**

The following is an opinion sent to New Bedford Guide. It does not reflect the opinion of New Bedford Guide, nor is it an OP-

ED. In fairness and objectivity, we share opinions from our readers whether we agree or disagree with their opinion.

Do you have a counter opinion to this opinion? Have an opinion about something else? Email us at info@newbedfordguide.com.

“The stunning defiance and arrogance of Benjamin Netanyahu and Donald Trump.

Each phase of Israel’s response to the Hamas attack of October 7th reveals the depth of arrogance, self-righteousness and selfishness of Benjamin Netanyahu. The comparison to Donald Trump is startling. Each man is facing criminal convictions and is delaying judicial accountability: Netanyahu by continuing the horrendous war upon Gaza and Trump by fomenting and threatening civil war and utilizing every trial delaying tactic.

Devoid of compassion or commitment to the founding principles of their nations each man is doubling down on hateful rhetoric and is appealing to the vindictive and nationalist tendencies of millions of supporters.

Each man has the ability and possibility of completely destroying any international respect or support previously accorded their nation. The principles of rule of law, equality and fairness have no significance to them but are obstacles to their dictatorial aspirations.

It is particularly distressing that in two of the most educationally advanced nations, with unlimited access to accurate news, that hundreds of thousands of citizens continue to believe obvious lies, and support each man despite overwhelming evidence of their unethical, narcissistic and destructive agendas.”-Betty Ussach, Dartmouth.

Dominican national living in Massachusetts sentenced for selling counterfeit U.S. Currency

“BOSTON – A Dominican man has been sentenced in federal court in Boston for his role in a conspiracy in which he sold over \$150,000 in counterfeit U.S. currency.

Ruben Dario Diaz Sanchez, 68, was sentenced on April 3, 2024 by U.S. District Judge Allison D. Burroughs to time served (approximately one year in prison). In January 2024, Diaz Sanchez pleaded guilty to four counts of counterfeit acts committed outside of the United States, one count of dealing in counterfeit obligations and securities and one count of conspiracy.

Diaz Sanchez was indicted by a federal grand jury in October 2019 along with co-conspirator Maximo Morillo. The defendants were subsequently extradited to the United States in April 2023. Following sentencing, Diaz Sanchez was transferred to the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for deportation proceedings.

In or about October 2014, Diaz Sanchez, who resided in the Dominican Republic, solicited an individual in the United States to purchase and smuggle counterfeit U.S. Currency into the United States. Morillo served as the point of contact with a printer manufacturing the counterfeit U.S. Currency in the Dominican Republic. Between May 2015 and January 2016, in the Dominican Republic, Diaz Sanchez arranged, negotiated and coordinated the sales of 1,590 counterfeit \$100 bills for a

total face value of \$150,900.

On Feb. 15, 2024, Morillo was sentenced to time served (approximately one year in prison).

Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy and Michael J. Krol, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by Dominican Republic law enforcement. The Justice Department's Office of International Affairs provided substantial assistance in securing the arrest and extradition of Diaz Sanchez. Assistant U.S. Attorney David G. Tobin of the Major Crimes Unit prosecuted the case."- Massachusetts Department of Justice.

Wareham Police announce passing of retired Off. William Fihlman, "a true public servant"

"The Wareham Police family sadly announce the passing of retired Officer William Fihlman.

Officer Fihlman was a true public servant, where he served a full career with the United States Navy and also with the Massachusetts Air National Guard, before joining the Wareham Police Department.

After his retirement from the Navy, Officer Fihlman proudly served the Wareham community for ten years (10) years. Throughout Officer Fihlman's career at the Wareham Police

Department he held the positions of, patrol officer, department photographer, and accreditation officer.

Outside of work Officer Fihlman was an avid fisherman, photographer, and loved spending time with his family and friends. Officer Fihlman will truly be missed.”-Wareham Police Department.



Wareham Police Department photo.



Wareham Police Department photo.

New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of April 15, 2024 – April 19, 2024

“The City of New Bedford has roadwork sites for the upcoming week of April 15, 2024 – April 19, 2024, and they are as follows:

City offices will be closed on Monday, April 15th in observation of Patriot’s Day

Eversource will be working on gas main relays and services on:

- Main relay on Acushnet Ave from Phillips Rd to Bowles St
- Main relay on Acushnet Ave from Phillips Rd to 3082 Acushnet Ave
- Main relay on Brook St from Irvington St to Clifford St
- Main relay on County St from Cove St to Rivet St
- Main relay on Princeton St from Church St to Ashley Blvd
- Services on Central Ave from Church St to Conduit St
- Services on Jouvette St from County St to Crapo St
- Services on W. Rodney French Blvd from Calumet St to Bayview St
- Test holes on Church St from Park Ave to Nash Rd

Other:

- Contractor (Barletta Heavy Division) scheduled to start night work at future pedestrian bridge across Rte 18. Starting Sunday, April 16th through Thursday, April 19th MassDOT will be closing Acushnet Avenue, Rte 18 Northbound, Rte 18

Southbound and the Purchase Street Ramp during overnight hours from 8:00PM to 5:00AM for one night each segment. Traffic detours will be in place.

- Contractor (PA Landers) will be working on a road reconstruction project at West Rodney French Boulevard from Cove Street to George Street. Overnight sewer work at the intersection of Warren St scheduled for Tuesday night into Wednesday morning.

- Contractor (JH Lynch) will be working on the MassDOT road construction project at the intersection of Rockdale Avenue at Allen Street Traffic detours will be in place during workday hours of operation.

- Contractor (various utility companies) will be working on utility pole transfers at the MassDOT road construction project on Kings Highway from Mt. Pleasant Street to Oliver Street.

- Contractor (PA Landers) scheduled to commence work on Monday, April 15th at the MassDOT road reconstruction project on County Street from Nelson Street to Rivet Street.

- Contractor (Various utility companies) will be working on utility pole transfers at the MassDOT road reconstruction project on Acushnet Avenue from Tobey Street to Pequot Street.

- MassDOT will be staging installation and beam end cleaning and concrete encasements at I-195 East and West bound lanes over Purchase Street, County Street and State Street. Work will take place Sunday – Thursday with overnight operations only.

- Contractor (SCR Constructors) will continue site work at the future South Coast Rail station platform locations in the city. (Church Street at Carlisle Street and Wamsutta Street at Acushnet Avenue.) and continue site work at future pedestrian bridge across Route 18 impacting parking along Purchase Street between Willis Street and Pearl Street and at the Division of Career Services on Acushnet Avenue. If you have questions, please email the project team at SouthCoastRail@dot.state.ma.us

- MassDOT scheduled to start pavement preservation and related

work on Route 140 both northbound and southbound from mile marker 0.0 to mile marker 5.2 starting April 1st and is scheduled until January 15th, 2026. Work to be conducted during overnight hours. Police details and ramp closures with detours to be expected.

**Project: Lead Service Line Replacement Program Phase II
General Contractor: C. Naughton Corp. (Monday-Friday 7:00am
-5:00pm)**

- The contractor will be working Lead Service Line Replacements. Tuesday on Clover Street between Allen Street and Grape Street, Allen Street between Winter Street and Brownell Street. Wednesday on Short Street between Allen Street and Grape Street. Thursday on Field Street between Allen Street and Grape Street, Short Street between Allen Street and Grape Street. Friday on Oak Street between Allen Street and Grape Street. At times during working hours, these locations may be closed to thru traffic with signs posted to detour traffic around work areas. Police details will be on-site allowing access to residents only and assisting with traffic management.

Project: Grape Street Collector Rehabilitation General Contractor: Green Mountain Pipeline Services Subcontractor: Duke's Root Control and Ribeiro Construction Inc (Friday 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM)

- The Subcontractor is scheduled to continue installation of the drain manhole and 36-in PVC drain piping at Buttonwood Park between the pond and Kempton Street.

Project: Phase 4 Transmission Main Reinforcement Project Contractor: C. Naughton Corp. (Monday-Friday 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM)

- The Contractor will continue replacing a section of the existing 48-in water transmission main north of the railroad crossing at Chipaway Road in East Freetown.

Project: Shawmut Avenue and Howland Street Pumping Station

Improvements Project General Contractor: WES Construction Corp. (Monday-Friday 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM)

- The contractor is scheduled to continue installation of granite curb and concrete sidewalk replacement along Nash Road between Shawmut Avenue and Mount Pleasant Street. Lane restrictions will be in place during working hours, with one lane of alternating traffic open. Police officers will be on-site to assist with traffic management.”-City of New Bedford.

New Bedford Police charge two teens after alleged moped theft, assault at south end plaza

“NEW BEDFORD – Patrol officers arrested two suspects after attempting to steal a moped in a south-end plaza.

On April 7th, at around noon, south-end patrol units responded to a call for two males wearing ski masks involved in an assault in the area of the Seabra parking lot. Upon arrival, it was learned that the owner of a moped had witnessed two males in the act of attempting to steal it. He confronted the suspects, and a brief struggle ensued, during which they threatened to shoot him.

The suspects made their way out of the plaza and were observed by an officer who attempted to stop them. They fled and crashed the moped at the Frank St./Hemlock St. intersection before continuing to flee on foot. Sgt. Bryan Safioleas and Ofc. Patrick Kustka apprehended both suspects shortly thereafter in the area of Hemlock St. and Rockdale Ave.

One suspect was identified as DAMIAN BRETON, 18, of Maitland St. The other was a 17-year-old juvenile. Both were taken into custody and have been charged with masked armed robbery.

If you have any information you would like to share with the police, you can do so anonymously by visiting our website, newbedfordpd.com, or by calling 508-99-CRIME."-City of New Bedford Police Department.