

Jane Gonsalves – Ward 5 City Council

I grew up in the west end of New Bedford in a family that was always interested in politics. Local affairs were a regular topic for discussion at our dinner table. My father served on the Redevelopment Authority in the 1960s, and so my siblings and I learned at an early age what was going on in our city. As a result, I have always had a keen interest in serving my community, although I never thought that I would run for office when I grew up!



I returned to New Bedford after graduating from Providence College with a B.A. in Economics. I was lucky to find a job locally in insurance and have worked in that industry until recently. Several of my friends were also living in New Bedford and over time, one by one, they seemed to gravitate toward public service. In 1992, I volunteered for Mark Montigny's first campaign for State Senate. I got very involved and spent most of my free time doing campaign work. I really enjoyed it and realized that I was learning valuable skills. The next year, in 1993, I ran for the Ward 5 City Council seat and was elected from a field of 5 candidates. It has been a wonderful experience, despite the stress that sometimes accompanies public service. I know that I have made a difference for people and neighborhoods during my tenure. I'm not afraid to say what I think and that sometimes results in criticism, but my constituents know that I will fight for them whenever they need me to. Residents who have contacted me by phone or email, or through my Facebook page or website, know that I am accessible and responsive. They also know that I'm relentless in seeking solutions and getting action on

their behalf. I get things done!

I have had the opportunity to do a lot of small things for a lot of residents in the time I have served as Ward 5 Councillor, like getting trees removed and planted, sidewalks repaired, and zoning issues resolved, to name a few. These may seem like small things, but have made a big difference to the people who needed my help. This is a big part of the role of City Councillor and I find it rewarding to act as a resident's champion in City Hall. Not only have I solved problems for individuals, I have also had the chance to vote on bigger issues as well that affect the entire city. First and foremost in my mind is always what is best for New Bedford.

I'm proud to say that I have practiced fiscal responsibility. I've chaired the Finance Committee for four years and requested that the meetings be televised so that city taxpayers would know how the city was spending its money. I've sponsored many budget cuts annually to ensure that our city departments are run efficiently. I've questioned spending requests made by the administration for things like capital improvements and pay raises. The Finance Committee is responsible for voting on bonding requests and I make sure that, before any vote is taken, the committee has all of the necessary information, including the reason the bonding is needed as well as the cost of that borrowing. These actions have contributed to the maintenance of the city's superior credit rating from Moody's.

I've always believed in the importance of New Bedford's unique neighborhoods and the necessity to maintain them by being vigilant on quality of life issues. I continue to advocate strongly for historic preservation in the city, and worked over several years to slow down the rush to demolish historic properties, through the passage of a demolition delay ordinance. The ordinance requires a public hearing, and a delay of several months before granting a demolition permit.

This has forced real estate developers to find alternatives to demolition. The property now owned by the Waterfront Historic Area League (WHALE) at 38 So Sixth St is one of the properties saved from demolition by this process. I've also sponsored several other amendments to zoning ordinances to strengthen the integrity of our residential neighborhoods. Roadway improvements to Rockdale Ave, Hawthorn St and Brownell Ave were completed recently to improve traffic flow and public safety in that important travel corridor, a project that I lobbied strenuously for. I was also a driving force behind the extension of the walking path around Buttonwood Park, which is enjoyed by so many citizens on a daily basis. I have also supported the building of new schools, which will improve educational opportunities for our children, and will be reimbursed by the State at a substantial savings to the city. I have voted for funding for AHA night, the Zeiterion and other creative economy projects so that residents and visitors can enjoy arts and culture in local venues.

The proposed expansion of the Buttonwood Park Zoo is an issue that will affect the residents of Ward 5 and the city as a whole for a long time into the future. I've been vocal in calling for further study of the proposed expansion and chaired a task force made up of volunteers who developed a compromise plan for the Zoo. However I know the residents of Ward 5, and in particular, the neighbors of Buttonwood Park, want to be sure that we carefully consider the impact on the neighborhood, the park and the animals before any shovel is put into the ground and any more green space is taken. I continue to work with both the Zoological Society members and the Friends of Buttonwood Park to seek alternatives to expansion that will allow us to improve one of the best small zoos in the country, while maintaining green space for all of our residents to enjoy.

I believe a strong local economy needs strong small businesses. Therefore, I sponsored an effort to assist our

struggling fishing industry by requesting a summit with federal officials be held in New Bedford to address changes to the current fisheries management regulations. I also drafted an amendment to existing zoning ordinances to allow recreational facilities to locate in renovated mill buildings. I have supported tax increment financing agreements to encourage businesses to expand or relocate to New Bedford.

Looking forward, I know that my work to improve New Bedford, and in particular the neighborhoods that comprise Ward 5, is not done.

In the next term, I will work with the School Committee to improve educational opportunities for our children and to reduce the dropout rate. An educated workforce is central to attracting new businesses to New Bedford, which will provide job opportunities and expand our commercial tax base.

I will work on making New Bedford more attractive to businesses and aggressively pursue opportunities to get new businesses to locate here and existing businesses to thrive and expand.

I will work to finish the plans for a dog park in New Bedford.

I will also seek to use Community Development funds to work with the neighborhood on a plan to update the Hathaway Courts playground. I will encourage the completion of a request for proposal for the redevelopment of the parcel at 478 Union St, which has finally been cleared and is ready for sale.

I will continue to lobby for the re-establishment of Community Policing as a means of reducing crime in our neighborhoods.

I will work with City staff to develop a plan for regular maintenance and replacement of city trees and sidewalks in order to make our neighborhood beautiful and safe for pedestrians.

If you would like more information about my campaign, please visit www.janegonsalves.com.

I am running for re-election because I have a passion for New Bedford and for serving its citizens. I ask for your vote on November 8th for Ward 5 Councillor.

All candidates running for office in New Bedford are provided the opportunity to submit articles for publication. Candidates should submit relevant articles to info@newbedfordguide.com. The final municipal election election will be held on November 8th, 2011. Check out our 2011 New Bedford Elections Page for articles, interviews and other useful information.

2011 New Bedford Municipal Election Preview



by
Michael
Silvia

The first round of debates are over and the 2011 New Bedford preliminary election results are in. The disappointing part of the election was the 28% voter turn-out. There are 50,117 registered voters in New Bedford, but only 14,259 voters shows up to the polls on October 4th. While better than the 2009 elections, New Bedford is yet again letting a minority of residents decide the city's leadership and future.

For those new to local politics, the preliminary elections decide which candidates move on to the final municipal elections. In New Bedford the final municipal elections will be held on 8 November, 2011. The preliminary elections narrow down the candidate field down from as many candidates that qualify to two candidates for mayor and for each ward city council seat. If there are two or less people running for office they skip the preliminary elections and automatically move on to the final municipal election. City council-at-large and school committee have more seats up for grab and allow a larger field to move on to the final municipal election. Here is a break down of the races:



Mayor's Race



There were five candidates that qualified for the preliminary elections; Antonio Cabral, Jon Mitchell, Linda Morad, E. Michael Janson and Thomas Pina. The results were:

Antonio Cabral (5,296)

Jon Mitchell (4,787)

Linda Morad (3,863)

E. Michael Janson (171)

Thomas Pina (78)

Antonio Cabral and Jon Mitchell finished as the top two candidates and move on to the November 8th election. This effectively removed Linda Morad from elected office for 2012.

You can't run for city council and mayor at the same time, so Linda Morad will not represent Ward 1 unless she pushes for a write-in campaign. Who will Linda's supporters vote for in November? That answer will likely tell us who becomes our next mayor.

School Committee

The New Bedford School Committee consists of seven members; six elected to the committee and the mayor who serves as the chairman. Every two years three school committee members face re-election. In the preliminary election seven candidates qualified for the ballot, but only the top six candidates move on to the November 8th election. The 2011 New Bedford School Committee election results:

Thomas Clark (6,044)
Marlene Pollock (5,281)
Jill Marie Ussach (5,108)
Joaquim Livramento (4,195)
Erik Andrade (3,044)
Guillermo Gonzalez (1,947)
Adrienne Wilkins (1,591)

Adrienne Wilkins was eliminated and the other six candidates move on. Of note, the three incumbents received the top votes. It appears that the incumbents are looking strong for November. In 2009, the cut off for school committee was 5,088. Unless something drastic happens, New Bedford will be re-electing all three incumbents.

Ward City Council Races – Learn more about the New Bedford City Council [here](#).

Ward 1



Will Linda Morad
run a write-in
campaign for Ward
1 city council?

Ward 1 was vacated by incumbent Linda Morad. Here are the results for 2011 New Bedford Ward 1 City Council:

James Oliveira (1,213)

Nelson Ostiguy (932)

Frank Ribeiro (466)

Robert Rebello (451)

Randy Santos (284)

James Oliveira and Nelson Ostiguy finished as the top two candidates and move on to the November 8th election. There is a good chance Linda Morad will run as a write-in candidate.

Ward 2

Incumbent Steven Martins is running unopposed so there was no need to have a preliminary election for Ward 2. Unless there is a write-in candidate (unlikely) Steven Martins will be re-elected to Ward 2 for another 2 years.

Ward 3

Here are the results for 2011 New Bedford Ward 3 City Council:

Henry Bousquet (551)

Kathy Dehner (456)

George Rodgers (402)

Christopher Barros (297)

Henry Bousquet and Kathy Dehner finished as the top two candidates and move on to the November 8th election. These results are a little surprising as Kathy Dehner the incumbent finished in the top two, but finished second. Not great results for an incumbent with the final elections just a month away. Expect this race to be close in November.

Ward 4

Bruce Duarte Jr. and Dana Rebeiro are the only candidates running for Ward 4 City Council so there was no need for a preliminary election. This election is a repeat of 2009. Bruce defeated Dana 972 to 618. Expect a close race in November.

Ward 5

Jane Gonsalves and James Roy are the only candidates running for Ward 5 City Council so there was no need for a preliminary election.

City-Council-at-Large

The City-Council-at-Large is not ward specific and is elected by residents city-wide. There were not enough candidates to force a preliminary election so all qualified candidates move on to the final municipal elections on November 8th. The top five candidates will serve City-Council-at-Large. The candidate list:

David Alves (I)

Brian K. Gomes (I)

Deborah Coelho (I)

Denis Lawrence, Jr. (I)

John T. Saunders (I)

Jan Baptist

Naomi Carney

John Moniz

Derek Sylvia

Chuck Dade

Assessor

Marty Treadup is running unopposed.

In conclusion ...

New Bedford Residents have until October 18th, 2011 to register to vote in the November 8th elections. If you already registered for the primary elections there is no need to register again. Read my article on registering to vote [here](#). New Bedford Guide will soon present a Political Survey System to help voters get educated before they vote. Voters have just over a month to get informed on the candidates before voting. Let's hope for a better turn-out of informed voters on November 8th. Until then stay tuned to New Bedford Guide as we push out important news and information on the candidates. Check out our election page with interviews, links and other useful information on all the candidates.

New Bedford Political Survey System



by
Michael
Silvia

Who are you voting for in the 2011 New Bedford elections? Not sure? If you already know who you are voting for, how did you come to that conclusion? Are you certain it is the right choice?

The biggest problems regarding elections are that too many people do not vote (20% voter turnout in the 2009 New Bedford elections) and those that do vote are not always informed. The result is elected officials voted into office by a minority of the city and elected officials put into office that are not the most qualified. New Bedford deserves more than that.



Soon New Bedford Guide will launch a Political Survey System that will allow voters to take a survey to find out which candidate they match up best with. Think of it as an eHarmony type service for politics.

Here's how the system will work. Candidates will answer 10-20 survey questions that are important subjects like South Coast Rail, crime, education, economic development and the casino issue. The candidates will answer each question free-text. Voters will then be able to take a blind-survey (not knowing what answer belongs to what candidate), select the answers they like best and see who they match up with when it comes to the most important topics. All candidates are for economic

development, but you will be able to find out which candidate's policies match up best with your views on improving the economy. This survey system will become available next week in time for the Preliminary Election on October 4th and remain available (reset with final candidates) for the final Municipal Election held on November 8th.

For example, there are five candidates running for New Bedford mayor. Voters will be able to take the survey and see which candidate they match up best to least. We will produce surveys for the mayoral race, city council-at-large, one for each ward council race and one for school committee. Surveys questions will be a mix of overall New Bedford issues with the ward-specific races and school committee surveys having specific questions related to the specific ward or schools.

The goal of this survey system is to get voters to vote for the candidates they match-up best with and not vote for people based on party affiliation, who a newspaper endorsed or yard signs. Hopefully, this will ensure we have the best man or women for the job and a strong mayor for the next two years.

Registering to Vote in New Bedford



by
Michael
Silvia

If you haven't heard, New Bedford is having local elections in October and November. Check out our election page for timelines, who is running and other information related to the 2011 New Bedford elections.

An important part of the election process is registering to vote. New Bedford residents have until September 14th to register to vote in the preliminary elections that will be held on October 4th. Here are the key dates for New Bedford voters to keep in mind:

- 14 Sept: Last day to register to vote for Preliminary Elections
- 01 Oct: Absentee Voting (9 AM – 12 PM)
- 03 Oct: Last day to file an absentee ballot application for Preliminary Election (12 PM)
- 04 Oct: **Preliminary Election** (7 AM – 8 PM) – top two move on to the Municipal Election
- 19 Oct: Last day to register to vote for Municipal Elections (8 PM)
- 05 Nov: Absentee Voting (9 AM – 12 PM)
- 07: Nov: Last day to file for an absentee ballot application (12 PM)
- 08 Nov: **Municipal Election** (7 AM – 8 PM)

In 2009, there were 56,423 registered voters in New Bedford, but our voter registration numbers for 2011 are down 6,518 to 49,905. This decrease happened while New Bedford increased its population. It is more important than ever to bring up these registration numbers so everyone has the opportunity to vote.

Registering to Vote

Registering to vote is easy!
You can head over to the city hall and fill out a voter registration form, or you can request the form by calling (508) 979-1421 and it will be mailed to you. Here is an example of the form: front and

Register
to **VOTE**

back. It is recommended that you get an original form vice printing out one. Once you receive the form, you can personally deliver it to the Election Commission Office in the New Bedford City Hall, Room 114 or mail it to the address on the back side of the form. If you fill out the voter registration form and mail it in, you will receive a confirmation letter in the mail detailing the best place for you to vote. If you do not receive a confirmation letter contact (508) 979-1421.

The qualifications for Registering to vote are simple: you must be a citizen of the United States, a legal resident of New Bedford and be 18 years old on or before election day.

On Thursday, September 8th from 5 – 7 p.m., New Bedford Guide will be hosting a registration drive with the New Bedford Election Commission and there will be an opportunity for people to meet the candidates for Mayor, City Council and other elected offices. The event will be held at:

BCC eHealthCareers
800 Purchase Street (Room 126 and Lobby Area)
New Bedford, MA

You can follow the Facebook event here:
<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=221097841273143>

Take a few minutes out of your busy day between now and September 14th to ensure you have the opportunity to vote in October and November. The future leaders of New Bedford will

be decided soon and you should be part of the process.

Bringing Them Home

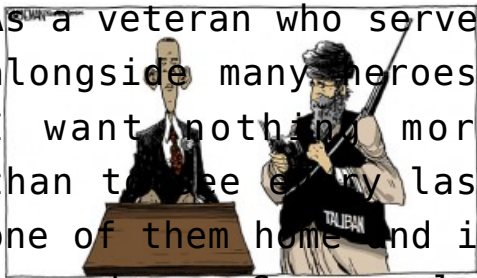


by Nate
Winkler

On Wednesday, June 22nd, President Obama addressed the nation, unveiling his drawdown plan for U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Although it seemed to be overshadowed in this area by the capture of notorious Boston mob boss James “Whitey” Bulger, this is a big story that has far reaching implications.

Not surprisingly, in today’s partisan political world, it has been difficult to find anyone who whole-heartedly agrees with the plan. Most Democrats believe that the President’s plan isn’t aggressive enough, and the troops should be coming home in larger numbers at a greater frequency. Most Republicans believe it is very risky to take fighting troops out of the hands of the generals on the ground, and withdrawing too much too soon could undermine all the progress that has been made in the region over the last decade. My opinion lies somewhere in between.

As a veteran who served alongside many heroes, I want nothing more than to see every last one of them home and in one piece. Conversely, if we leave before the job is done, and instability returns to the region, then a decade's worth of blood, sweat, and sacrifice is seemingly in vain, and history will not look kindly on what "Imperialist America" so arrogantly tried to accomplish. I believe President Obama had a very difficult task of juggling those objectives, and the plan he put forth shows balance and resolve.

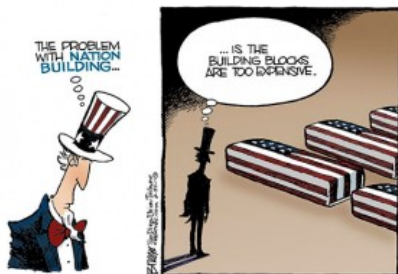


Before we can fully appreciate where we are going, let's take a quick look at where we came from. Everyone has the memory of the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 seared into their minds. I was a Marine

on active duty at Marine Corps Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue, a small airstrip between Cherry Point & Camp Lejeune on the coast of North Carolina. Even as the 2nd plane hit, we were preparing for war; before the sun set that night, we were patrolling our base with the use of deadly force authorized for the first time in my military career. Although I didn't personally know anyone who tragically perished in the attacks, I never remember feeling more sorrow than I did over those coming days. I don't remember ever feeling more patriotic and unified, either.

Fast forward a couple of weeks to October 7th, 2001, and Operation Enduring Freedom officially begins. The original intent of the invasion was to Find Osama Bin Laden & other Al Qaeda leaders and

bring them to justice, as well as remove the Taliban from power. The coalition air campaign led to the quick ouster of the Taliban from Kabul, but the subsequent insurgency has led to many ups and downs in the decade since.



Many believe the cost of the war in Afghanistan is too high.

Afghanistan took a backseat to the war in Iraq for a couple of years, and it wasn't until the controversial troop surge, initiated by President Obama in December 2009, that enough progress was made to consider an exit strategy that didn't include tails between legs.

The raid in Pakistan that led to the death of Osama Bin Laden gave the American public the sense that victory was within reach, and all indications are that the demise of the iconic leader has crippled the terrorist organization. That brings us to where we are now, with the big red circle on the calendar for 2014, and the hope that the next time we talk to one of our brothers, sisters, sons, or daughters who serve in the military, the question, 'When do you have to go back?' doesn't even enter our minds.

So now let's take a look at Obama's plan to withdraw troops. Over 10,000 troops will be home before the end of this year, and another 23,000 by the end of the summer of 2012. That seems

fairly aggressive, over a 30% reduction in essentially a year's time. This brings us back to a pre-surge troop number, after which we will begin a transition from combat to support. Afghan security forces must be ready to shoulder the load at this point. If the region remains stable politically, which is the big wild card, the drawdown will continue over the next two years until we have essentially completely withdrawn. Many would argue that even if there is instability at that point, we must cut our losses and as the President put it, "...focus on nation building here at home". With billions of dollars being spent in Afghanistan every day, and the myriad social and economic problems going on within our

borders, it's hard to disagree with that.



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employed to
Afghanistan, so I
can't speak first
hand on to what is
really going on
there. I was in Iraq
in 2003, and I didn't
necessarily agree
with my being there,
but I did what I had
to do in order to get
home safely, and I
genuinely think the
world is a better
place thanks to what
we did there.
Hopefully in a few
years, we will feel
the same way about
our role in
Afghanistan.

To draw a parallel
between the two
countries, it is my
belief that you
cannot force

uncivilized people to be civilized. It's just not that easy to convince a guy that uses his left hand as a Charmin substitute that he needs democracy. We've stayed the course for what will be 13 years if the plan unfolds as expected, which will go down as the longest continuous conflict in the history of the United States. It is safe to say at this point, we, as a nation, can look ourselves in the mirror and say we did everything we could to make Afghanistan and the world a safer place. But let's not forget, the reason we are there in the first place is to make the United States of America a safer place. Everything else is, and should be, secondary.

**This article is not meant to be a historical recollection of Operation Enduring Freedom, but the author's opinion on the feasibility of the troop withdrawal proposal.*

Holding Scott Brown Responsible

The Massachusetts Senator's voting record on environmental issues comes into question.

The New Bedford City Council



Michael Silvia in the New Bedford City Council Chambers.

What if I told you that I had a job for you that pays a part-time salary, but you will have to put in full-time, thankless hours? Would you take it? Wait. Before you answer, it doesn't stop there. Your home phone number will be available to 93,000 people, and the angry, upset ones will call you at all hours to complain about their

problems. Not only that, but they expect results yesterday. Oh, and since this job pays little you will also have to manage a full-time career, because waitresses (minus the tips) will earn a higher hourly rate than you. Welcome to the world of the New Bedford City Council.

I've recently been exposed to the world of the City Council and I thought I'd share some insight with the rest of you. To put it bluntly, most New Bedford residents know little, if anything, about one of the most important functions of our city. I hope to change that with this article.

So what is the City Council and what do they do? I'm glad you asked. From the City of New Bedford's official website:

The City Council, under Plan B, is responsible for setting the city budget, appropriating all funds to run the city and is responsible for confirming all mayoral appointments. The Council is primarily responsible to the citizens of New Bedford, and is responsive to the concerns of city residents on those matters which concern said residents. The City Council is responsible for making all laws (ordinances) to govern the City.

A little research yields some basics about the City Council. There are 11 City Council members; six Ward Councilors and five "At-Large" Councilors. One of

the city council members serves as the President and has increased powers and pay. The Ward Councilors are elected by their specific wards and the Councilors-At-Large are elected by all residents of New Bedford. As a body, the combined City Council confirms mayoral appointments, approves and/or cuts the mayor's budget, and is the primary legislative body responsible for producing all laws/ordinances for the mayor's approval. In simple terms, they are the "check and balance" to the chief-executive of the city (the mayor). As a recent example of the City Council in action, on April 25th of this year the City Council confirmed David Provencher as the new Police Chief by a vote of 10-0.



2011 New
Bedford City
Council Pay –
Click to
Enlarge!

A PITTANCE FOR YOUR TIME

When I first started researching the New Bedford elected offices, I found that three of the city council members ran unopposed, which I think is totally unacceptable. We deserve choice, right? There should be dozens of talented, qualified individuals lining up to become city Council members! This was my thought before I found out that city council members make less than \$15,000 a year (\$14,653 base pay to be exact) and haven't received a pay raise since 1995. The job really does require someone who cares more about

the city of New Bedford than making money. I researched the 2010 and 2011 New Bedford City Budgets and there are over 100 city employees that make over \$90,000 a year, with 51 of them making over \$100,000. If income is your primary focus, then you should become a police officer or fireman, because they are at the top of the income pyramid for city employees.

IN NEED OF CITY ASSISTANCE

If you are a resident of New Bedford and need something done with the city, chances are it will be an employee at the city hall or a City Council member that will take action. All City Council members are approachable and accessible through phone. For general

issues, I recommend starting with the council member that represents your ward. For example, I live in downtown New Bedford which is Ward 4, which falls under Bruce Duarte's jurisdiction.

For specific issues, you should research the standing and special committees and contact the city council members that are part of the committee that can help with your issue.

The public city council meetings are held at the New Bedford City Hall (133 William Street, City Council Chambers – Room 214) on the first Thursday of each month and start at 7 P.M.

In general, Americans have lost interest in their state and federal governments because they are not accessible (unless

the politicians are getting re-elected). This is not the case when it comes to New Bedford municipal government. Each resident has immediate access to their city officials to include the City Council and even the Mayor. When you need assistance, start with the New Bedford City Offices (for simple issues) or the New Bedford City Council (when you need guidance or action). Just remember that while the City Council works for you, it is a part-time, under appreciated job: They don't have personal assistants and likely work full-time jobs. Enjoy some photos of our City Hall and Council Chambers!

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Special thanks to

City Council members Jane Gonsalves and Steven Martins for providing me access to the City Council Chambers and insight into the New Bedford City Council. Ready to run for public office in New Bedford? Read my article detailing what it takes to Run for Office in New Bedford.

The 2011 New Bedford Elections



by
Michael
Silvia

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 . N o c **Register to**

andidate 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](#).

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.

Running for Office in New Bedford



by
Michael
Silvia

In the 2009 New Bedford elections, several candidates ran unopposed. Out of the six ward City Council elections, three of the candidates had no opposition (Wards 1, 2 and 5*). Little changed for the November 6th, 2012 elections. Nine out of 11 south coast Massachusetts candidates ran unopposed. There may be numerous reasons for this, but in my opinion, the citizens of New Bedford deserve to be given a

choice between several qualified candidates for all elected, political offices in New Bedford. The process to become a candidate for a New Bedford office is simple, but there are strict requirements and time lines that must be fulfilled.

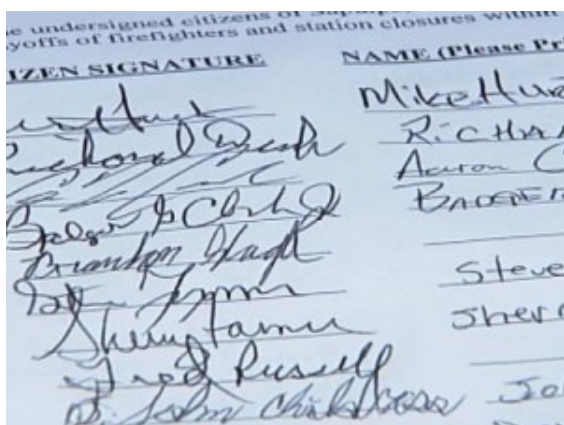
It is important that potential candidates understand the election cycle time line, the requirements to get on the ballot, the rules established by the election commission, and the office positions available.

New Bedford Elections

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Unlike state and national elections, local elections are non-partisan. This means there are no parties involved or attached to a candidate (i.e.

Democrats versus Republicans). By law, preliminary elections are held on the 4th Tuesday preceding city elections. This means on the first Tuesday in October (4 Oct, 2011), all qualified candidates are voted on by registered voters. The top two finishers move on to the final municipal election on 8 November, 2011. The winner of the Municipal Election is sworn in and serves office on 1 Jan, 2012.



You must get at least 70 signatures to run for a New Bedford Office.

Candidate Requirements

All persons wanting to run for public office in New Bedford must fill out and submit official nomination papers to the Board of Election Commissioners. These nomination papers, which aren't available until 19 May, 2011, must be filled out completely, correctly and have signatures of at least 70 registered voters on it. While the requirement is 50 signatures, registrars are required by law to certify 2/5th more than the number of signatures required. Why? Because signatures can get be disallowed either in the certification process or through challenges. My suggestion is to get at least 100 signatures and follow these rules:

- The person

signing must be a registered voter.

- Make sure the person signing fills out their correct name and it matches the name they used to register to vote.
- Make sure the name is legible and signed in pen.
- Make sure the signer includes their present address and not mailing addresses, like P.O. boxes.
- No nicknames or initials.
- Voters can sign for multiple candidates so don't be fooled into thinking a person can only sign for one candidate.
- Candidates running for Councilor At-Large seats can

get signatures
in any ward
within the
city. Ward
candidates must
get signatures
from the
residents in
the specific
ward they
reside in and
want to
represent. A
New Bedford
Ward maps can
be found here.



2011 New Bedford Election Timetable

- 19 May:
Nomination
papers become
available at
the New Bedford
City Hall
- 16 Aug:
Deadline for
filing

nomination
papers for
certification
of signatures
(5 PM)

- 30 Aug: The last day to officially file nomination papers (5 PM)
- 01 Sep: The last day to withdraw from race or object to nomination papers (5 PM)
- 14 Sept: Last day to register to vote for Preliminary Elections
- 26 Sept: Last day to file Political Finance Statements with the Board of Election Commissioners (5 PM).
- 01 Oct: Absentee Voting (9 AM – 12 PM)
- 03 Oct: Last day to file an absentee ballot application for

Preliminary
Election (12
PM)

- 04 Oct:
**Preliminary
Election** (7 AM
– 8 PM) – top
two move on to
the Municipal
Election
- 11 Oct: Last
day to file
recount
petition with
Board of
Election
Commissioners
(5 PM)
- 19 Oct: Last
day to register
to vote for
Municipal
Elections (8
PM)
- 31 Oct: File
Political
Finance
Statements with
the Board of
Election
Commissioners
(5 PM)
- 05 Nov:
Absentee Voting
(9 AM – 12 PM)
- 07: Nov: Last
day to file for

an absentee
ballot
application (12
PM)

- 08 Nov:
**Municipal
Election** (7 AM
– 8 PM)
- 18 Nov: Last
day to file
recount
petition (5 PM)
- 1 Jan, 2012:
Winning
candidates are
sworn into
office
- 20 Jan: File
Political
Finance
Statements with
the Board of
Election
Commissioners

New Bedford Elected Offices

There are a total of
16 elected offices in
the New Bedford
elections.

- **Mayor** – Chief
executive of
the city.
- **City Council**
(11 Seats) –

Responsible for setting the city budget and appropriating all funds to run the city. Confirms all mayoral appointments and is responsible for confirming all mayoral appointments. There are two types of city councilors; Councilors-at-Large and Ward Councilors:

- **Councilors-at-Large** (5 seats)
- **Ward Councilors** (Wards 1-6)
- **School Committee** (3 seats) – There are seven seats on the school committee; the mayor and six elected officials. Each

serve four
years and three
come up for
election every
two years.

- **Assessor** –
Determine the
value of all
real and
personal
property
located within
the City of New
Bedford for
taxation
purposes.

Important Resources:

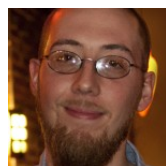
- The Federal
Election
Commission
- Massachusetts
Elections
Division
- New Bedford
Elections
Commission

New Bedford Election Commission

City Hall, Room 114
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
Tel. : 508. 979.1421
Fax: 508. 979.1422
Hours: Mon-Thurs 8-4,
Fri 8-12

* During the 2009 Ward 5 election Elliot Matthews dropped out of race against Jane Gonsalves. He still received 689 votes compared to Jane Gonsalves 1,511 votes.

Senator Scott Brown Visits The Catwalk Bar & Grille in New Bedford



by Ian
Baker

Awaiting Senator Scott Brown's arrival on Friday evening was akin to waiting for the guest of honor to show up at their

surprise party, except that in this case the guest already knew about the surprise. A crowd of about 50 people were there to take part in a fundraiser for his re-election at the Catwalk Bar and Grille. The group consisted primarily of supporters of Scott Brown, while a few others were present out of sheer curiosity, seeking to catch a glimpse of the newest Massachusetts senator. Each time the door would open, the volume at the popular downtown New Bedford bar would lower noticeably as the patrons' collective gaze shifted towards the newest arrival. When the senator finally did enter, the mood in the room quickly transformed from anticipatory to excited.

After ordering a drink, Senator Brown made no hesitation to meet every person in the room. With snapshots constantly being taken he made his way around the entire establishment, weaving about the crowd, shaking hands and chatting, his affability exceeded only by his efficiency at speaking to so many people in such a short time. Smiling supporters waited patiently for their turn to have their picture taken and to speak to the Senator, all the while snacking on hors d'oeuvres provided by the Catwalk.



Senator Scott Brown address his supporters at the

Catwalk.

Senator Brown has made headlines in recent days regarding his soon-to-be-released memoir, *Against All Odds*, in which he comes forward about having been abused as child. He appeared reticent to speak about the issue during a brief speech at the end of his visit, stating only that although it was a significant event in his life. "It's only about 10 pages out of 400 in the book," he said, cautioning against sensationalism.

The senator went on to congratulate Tom Hodgson on his recent election victory for sheriff, and thanked him and the crowd for their support. He continued by addressing his re-election campaign in 2012, stating that he expects a competitive

race. He is seeking to raise \$25 million to prepare for the race, a figure he has described as "sick." Senator Brown has already raised \$8 million toward that goal. Almost \$5 million is left over after his upset defeat of Martha Coakley last January in a special election to fill the late Ted Kennedy's senate seat.

It was an especially personal event for the owners of the Catwalk, Barry Flynn and Dennis Keohane. When they purchased the Union Street establishment in 2002, it was a lawyer named Scott Brown that helped them to close the deal, and the three have remained friends. He has since returned to the venue a number of times, including a very successful fundraiser for his

election in 2010.



NBG writer Ian Baker poses for a picture with Senator Brown.

For better or worse, Scott Brown has lived up to his campaign rhetoric of independence since taking office last year. He has voted with the Republican party on many issues, including health care and the Bush-era tax cuts. However, he has strayed from the mainstream right on many key issues such as financial regulations and his approval of the new START treaty. He has also drawn the ire of his party by supporting the repeal of the military's

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy.

Locally, however, his supporters were unperturbed by this behavior, dispensing large applause to Brown’s statement that, “If you’re looking for an ideologue, I’m not your guy.” On the topic of fishing regulation, an issue that is critical not only to the state of Massachusetts but specifically to New Bedford, he remained decidedly cautious, acknowledging a proper role for regulation concerning the environment, but also stating that the government needs to know when to back off when jobs are at stake.

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