

New Bedford Commission on Police Use of Force Policies kicks off review and recommendation process

Public Safety Committee Chairman and Councillor Brian K. Gomes convened the Commission on Police Use of Force Policies last week with a clear mandate to review three existing policies at the NBPD that embody “use of force” and produce recommendations for improvement within a 60-day timeframe.

Mayor Jon Mitchell created the commission in June as a part of his commitment to The Mayor’s Pledge aimed at addressing use of force policies in police departments across the country. The Obama Foundation’s Mayor’s Pledge calls on mayors across the United States to commit to the following four actions:

- REVIEW your use of force policies.
- ENGAGE your communities by including a diverse range of input, experiences, and stories in your review.
- REPORT the findings of your review to your community and seek feedback.
- REFORM your communities police use of force policies.

The Commission now meets weekly on Wednesdays and has plans to host a public meeting to hear input from city residents later this summer before formulating its recommendations to the Mayor and Chief Joseph Cordeiro by the end of August.

Gomes instructed members of the commission who represent a broad spectrum of community leaders and subject matter experts to keep open minds and be willing to learn. “We are fortunate to have some incredible individuals among us who have dedicated their lives to serving the community and are committed to advancing the City of New Bedford,” said Gomes.

“The Mayor has requested that we not lose this very moment in history to secure a more equitable future. We must do the hard work of reform,” he added.

If you have any questions or to request copies of the policies, please contact Melissa Batchilder at 508-991-6300 Ext. 79428.