

Opening Statement from Chief Oliveira:

The Jensen Hughes Consultant Firm finished an extensive evaluation of the New Bedford Police Department approximately one year ago, providing us with a comprehensive report that outlines various areas in which we can enhance our operations.

To date, the NBPD has implemented or acted upon most of the report's 89 recommendations, including many that were initiated before the report was published.

As we move forward to implement additional recommendations, it is important to recognize that change within any organization must be incremental to be effective. Rapid shifts can lead to confusion and resistance, but gradual, well-planned adjustments allow for adaptation and long-term success.

To navigate these challenges, we are fortunate to have the guidance of Robert Wasserman, a consultant from Jensen Hughes who is working closely with our department. Wasserman is a respected figure in the law enforcement community, known for his extensive experience and expertise in helping police departments improve their operations. His involvement is invaluable as we strive to make the necessary changes while maintaining the trust and cooperation of our officers and the community.

We understand that the process of change can be daunting, but with careful planning and collaboration, we are confident that we can successfully use these recommendations to lift the NBPD to new heights.

In the time between the first engagement with Jensen Hughes and the report's publication, the NBPD implemented 22 initiatives that were recommended during the process. These can be found on pages 10-12 of the report:

- **One-Officer Cruisers:** All patrol units are now one-officer cruisers. This was done temporarily during the COVID-19 pandemic but has now been made permanent. This has allowed more police unit coverage in the city's neighborhoods.
- **Detective Vehicles:** All detectives are now outfitted with a reliable and presentable unmarked cruiser.
- **School Resource Officer Cruisers:** Now in the process of outfitting all School Resource Officers with brand new cruisers. The first two have arrived; a Chevy Camaro wrapped with an Autism Awareness theme, and another with a Suicide Awareness theme. The others are in the process of being wrapped with similar themes before being added to the fleet.
- **Elderly Outreach:** Applied and received a grant that enables officers to conduct house visits with the elderly. The grant pays for the overtime for officers to visit the elderly and check on them and their residences for safety (lights, locks) and other needs they may have.
- **Homelessness:** Since August 2021, began conducting a proactive outreach program with the homeless. Invited social service agencies to engage this community to be sure all needed services were being offered to them.

- **Challenge Coins:** Created a challenge coin for the department and distributed two coins to each department employee. A Chief's Coin was also created to be given to a member of the department each month for a recent accomplishment that is then highlighted in the bi-monthly internal department newsletter. Department coins are still handed out to officers volunteering for events or for doing exceptional work.
- **Newsletter:** Started a newsletter in January 2022. The newsletter is distributed to the entire department and all retirees.
- **Roll Calls:** The chief and deputy chief periodically attend roll calls. These meetings update members of the department on what is going on and give them an opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions and file complaints.
- **New Cruisers:** Purchased dozens of front-line cruisers putting the NBPD in the best position it has ever been in with the condition of frontline cruisers; more are on order.
- **ASHER training:** All officers now receive ASHER (Active Shooter and Hostile Environment Response) training. The NBPD is one of the first police departments in the state to have all personnel receive this training, which the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (MA EOPSS) has adopted as the statewide standard for active shooting training. The department also implemented an ASHER policy; the department did not have an active shooter policy prior to this.
- **ICAT training:** Three officers received ICAT instructor training. This training – Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics – provides officers with the tools, skills and options they need to defuse a wide range of critical incidents successfully and safely. The department is having all officers trained under this model, which is the leading de-escalation model endorsed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).
- **Tasers:** New Tasers have been purchased for all officers to be equipped with them. All officers will soon be trained on this newest, state-of-the-art Taser device.
- **Firearms:** The department is now in the process of purchasing new 9mm firearms for the entire department, moving away from the 40mm caliber and going to the 9mm which is the recommended firearm for law enforcement following a report issued by the FBI. The department is also equipping the new 9mm weapons with optics for the first time in the history of the department.
- **Recruitment Officer:** A recruitment officer has been appointed, who will help address the department's manpower shortage.
- **Renovations:** The police headquarters building is being renovated. The payroll office was renovated with grant money and a new classroom is being added in the building. This will allow officers to conduct training in the building and no longer go to 1204 Purchase Street, which is not suitable for police training.
- **Liaison Officers:** The department established liaison officers to engage with the Central American population, who have already had great success with building trust within this community. Several successful investigations have resulted in positive and trustworthy relationships. This has been expanded, and the NBPD now has a Muslim liaison officer with the Muslim community and is in the process of introducing an officer as a liaison to the LGBTQ community. All the liaison officers are given department issued phones and business cards.
- **Business Cards:** All officers were offered the opportunity to have business cards purchased for them with their personal department information, of which many officers have taken advantage.

- **Cameras:** The department has continued to expand the camera system in the city, with the newest approval to spend nearly \$200,000 on cameras that will cover areas in the south end.
 - **Software Update:** The department has been approved to update the reporting/dispatch software. This will replace the current software, which is out of date and has outgrown its capabilities. The new software will be installed in 2023.
 - **Lights On Program:** The department partnered with the “Lights On Program” and solicited the New England Patriots football team to also partner, which they did, to implement the program. Officers are now equipped with vouchers to issue to members of the community that they pull over for having a light out on their vehicle. The voucher allows them to go to a repair shop and have the light fixed at no charge. The voucher is issued instead of a civil citation. The department was fortunate enough to have a Patriots player come to New Bedford to ride along with one of the officers and issue some vouchers to introduce the program.
 - **Clinicians:** The department has expanded its access to mental health clinicians, now working with two agencies that supply these clinicians. The department also applied for and received a new grant from the Department of Mental Health that allows for a mental health clinician to accompany an officer in a cruiser that is available to respond to all mental health-related calls and follow up with previous calls that dealt with these situations. Prior to this, the department did not have a dedicated cruiser on the road to prioritize these calls for service.
 - **Gang Database Review:** The gang database policy was reviewed and updated to match current best practices.
-

The following is a list of the recommendations in the Jensen Hughes report and the NBPD’s update on each:

- Create new patrol sectors in each precinct to which officers should be assigned. Have officers generally patrol the same sector as their regular assignment.

New patrol sectors are in the works and will be implemented when the new records management system goes live next year.

- When not responding to a call for service, ensure officers are engaging with the community, getting to understand the issues of concern to neighborhood residents and businesspeople.

NBPD leadership has requested a training program focusing on community and precision policing. Robert Wasserman is putting this together, and it will result in expanded community engagement.

- Provide sector officers with business cards that can be given to community members, should they want to contact the officer.

Business cards were offered to all NBPD officers, many of whom accepted the offer and are now carrying them while on duty.

- Officers must fully understand the elements of precision policing and the underlying philosophy that will avoid citizen complaints about biased policing.

NBPD leadership has requested a training program focusing on community and precision policing. Robert Wasserman is putting this together.

- Supervisors must carefully observe field activities to ensure officers are abiding by the principles of precision policing.

Not applicable as the requested training on community and precision policing has not happened yet.

- Problematic tactics, such as pretext stops and the use of special anti-crime task forces, must be carefully monitored and generally eliminated.

Specialized anti-crime units that focus on, for example, gangs, narcotics, cyber crime and other areas of public safety concern, are an effective tool to keep New Bedford residents, businesses and visitors as safe as possible. NBPD will continue to ensure that all traffic stops are done in accordance with the law and department policy.

- The dated situation where all supervisors and managers aside from the chief of police and deputy chief are in the police officer union should be changed to modernize the supervision and management of the department and reflect best practices across the country.

This is subject to collective bargaining.

- The city should recommend that supervisors and managers be in a separate union from police officers. Captains should be in the management union and lieutenants could be either in the supervisor union or the management union.

This is subject to collective bargaining.

- The non-union position of superintendent should be established for two senior management positions. One should oversee all field operations and services working from the two police stations. Another position should oversee all other support functions in the department. The deputy chief should remain in charge of internal affairs and use of force reviews. The salary for the superintendents should be sufficiently higher than the salary for captain. Individuals who are selected to fill those positions should be able to return to their former rank if they are not successful in the superintendent position. Applicants for the superintendent positions should be accepted from officers of the rank of lieutenant and above.

These two positions have been created with the titles of assistant deputy chief.

- The department is unable to use workload data contained in its computer aided dispatch system (CAD) system to measure patrol workload and staffing needs. Current minimum staffing levels need to be changed based on that information. A new CAD system was purchased and is being implemented, which will solve the current issues.

The new CAD system has been purchased and is going live early next year.

- CAD data should be used to identify calls for service that do not require dispatching a patrol officer, such as checks on welfare, medical calls and minor property damage collisions.

We have amplified the utility of our Civilian Report Form to allow the reporting of incidents that cannot be further investigated or do not call for the dispatch of an officer. Our new records management system, which should be live at the beginning of 2025, will have increased online reporting capabilities. This should cut down calls for service dramatically. Additionally, the city is close to debuting a 311 system in which residents can report fallen trees, malfunctioning street lights, and other non-emergency events that sometimes end of being reported to police.

- The city's false alarm reduction ordinance and program need to be evaluated to determine if those calls can be reduced.

A proposal to change the existing ordinance has been submitted and is currently before the City Council for consideration.

- Time saved from reducing patrol workload could be used on proactive work related to neighborhood policing.

This will be considered once the amount of time saved is studied and quantified; the above-mentioned measures on false alarms and CAD, are being acted on but not yet complete.

- The patrol work schedule does not fit staffing to the workload by day so service to the public is inconsistent. A new schedule could be developed that would make better use of patrol staff time, reduce overtime, and improve wellness and work-life balance for patrol officers.

Creating a new schedule would have to be collectively bargained.

- Steps need to be taken to reduce the shift relief factor for patrol. By doing so, this will reduce the amount of sick time being used by officers and allow officers to take desired time off.

Reducing the shift relief factor would have to be collectively bargained.

- Redesign beats to promote ownership of neighborhood areas by patrol officers.

The beats have been redesigned and are expected to go live along with the new computer system.

- Patrol officers need 40% of their shift time for proactive work to implement neighborhood policing in New Bedford.

Not applicable as of yet as, while NBPd patrol officers commonly engage with neighbors, kids, and business owners and patrons while on shift, current staffing levels do not allow it to be quantified into a percentage of shift time.

- Lieutenants should ensure sergeants have a regular presence in the field, responding to some calls along with the responding officer.

We are in the process of arranging additional training for supervisory staff that will better equip them to promote the neighborhood policing philosophy among the patrol officers.

- Sergeants must develop video review skills and regularly review samples of videos of officers' interactions with the community.

This is included in the upcoming policy on body worn cameras.

- The department needs to develop an acceptable list of call types that can be handled with non-response. Reporting online through the department website could also be an option. Citizens could be provided with a template to follow so they provide all the necessary information that police need to respond.

This is in the works along with our new computer system.

- The department should ask the city for an ordinance setting up the process for handling false alarm calls. Before the ordinance goes into effect, businesses must be fully informed of the new policy.

An ordinance change on false alarm calls has been proposed and is before the City Council.

- The department should regularly review the use of confidential informants. Annually, the existing policy should be reviewed to ensure it matches best practices and all confidential informants should be audited to ensure they have not been involved in any criminal acts.

This policy is reviewed annually.

- All department personnel who may be authorized to engage confidential informants should be oriented to the informant policy before they can move forward with the recruitment of an informant.

All new detectives are given the Confidential Informant policy upon entry in the unit. Additionally, detectives are regularly sent to training that addresses the use of confidential informants.

- The city should direct the personnel department to share recruitment responsibility with the police department.

The city's personnel department promotes careers across municipal government, including police, fire and office/administrator roles. That department recently hired a new director, and continues to not only promote career opportunities, but improve culture among all city workplaces. The NBPD will continue to work with the central personnel department on recruiting efforts and career opportunities.

- Consideration should be given to providing officers who recruit new officers who are eventually hired a cash stipend for their referral of a candidate.

This remains under consideration; however, the matter is complicated by the current hiring process dictated by Civil Service.

- The department should increase its engagement with the New Bedford community to identify potential candidates for the department.

We have greatly increased the department's presence and recruiting efforts at community events, job fairs, festivals and other neighborhood activities.

- The starting salary for new officers should be raised to a current second step and to match what surrounding communities are offering new officers. In doing this, the number of pay steps for an employee to reach a normal maximum salary should be reduced. Salary and benefits should be combined in a way to support a higher retention of officers, and consideration should be given to providing incentives to officers having 20 or more years of service to encourage remaining on the job.

The most recent CBA addressed these issues. We will continue to address additional concerns during future negotiations. Additionally, the NBPD offers a \$5,000 signing bonus to new officers.

- Key performance factors for the evaluation of officers should include timeliness, sensitivity to civilians, problem-solving capabilities, general outlook about the job, community connectivity and demeanor.

Any officer evaluation program is contractual and subject to collective bargaining.

- Performance factors for sergeants should include, for field supervisors, time spent on the street interacting with officers, quality of guidance provided to officers, manner of engagement with officers, quality of mentoring and understanding the importance of community engagement.

Any officer evaluation program is contractual and subject to collective bargaining.

- The new evaluation forms should be developed with the participation of those who will be evaluated.

Any officer evaluation program is contractual and subject to collective bargaining.

- Standards should be developed in policy regarding the time frames required for internal investigations, including monthly reviews of the status of complaints. The policy should include when an officer should be notified of the filing of a complaint.

Per NBPD policy and POST standards, all investigations of misconduct must be completed in a timely manner. Extensions must be applied for with the POST commission and must be justified to be considered. The NBPD has made considerable progress on this front over the years with most misconduct investigations being completed in 90 days.

- A disciplinary matrix should be developed, with substantial employee involvement, in determining the content of the matrix. Eventually, the chief of police will determine what the matrix will be, taking into consideration employee suggestions.

This is being developed and is expected to be complete, along with a complete review and revamping of all departmental policies, by the spring.

- The city should develop plans to replace the Northside station with a new facility that can have the needed space for precinct officers working in that area. The plan should provide for the sale of the headquarters building, with the new station also providing space for headquarters units. This would be a far larger facility, but it would reduce the physical buildings from the original four to two, a size appropriate for a city the size of New Bedford. Many other police agencies with populations the size of New Bedford operate with only one or two facilities for the entire city. For example, the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, has a single headquarters building that is the only overall facility for the entire city.

The discussion regarding a new police station has begun.

- Officers should receive roll call training on community engagement strategies that will help them create positive reactions in their patrol areas.

We are gathering information on outside vendor options that provide regular roll call training.

- The two precinct commanders should establish a precinct Advisory Committee made up of representatives of the precinct geographic area. Membership should reflect the diversity of the area.

Our Assistant Deputy Chief of Patrol Operations has begun holding monthly meetings consisting of sworn personnel, as well as dispatchers, where the focus is placed upon upcoming departmental change and staff concerns. A precinct advisory committee is under consideration.

- Precinct commanders should regularly brief City Council members representing the precinct area about the status of public safety issues in the precinct area.

Precinct commanders maintain regular communication with City Councilors.

- As staffing increases, additional detectives need to be appointed for the investigation of crime.

We will increase our specialized units as staffing improves.

- The department's recent purchase of new software will improve the case management of crime investigations by investigators, which the current software is unable to do.

Our new Records Management System is coming next year.

- Several additional crime analysts should be hired. There should be crime analysts in four areas: one for each precinct, one for overall city-wide analysis of crime patterns and one assigned to detectives to examine the nature of various crime types across the city, such as aggravated assault, robbery and burglary to better understand the nature of those events and ways that future such events can be prevented.

The NBPD is in the process of hiring an additional crime analyst and will consider adding more based on department needs and budgetary concerns.

- To improve officer interactions with youth, the course on Policing the Teen Brain, run by the Boston nonprofit Strategies for Youth, greatly improves police effectiveness in dealing with youth. All officers should receive this training, but internal instructors can be trained to carry on the course with the assistance of a local psychologist.

We will consider providing training of this nature.

- Training on bias and harassment protocols should be a yearly part of the in-service curriculum to reinforce existing policies and expectations.

The NBPD in-service training follows the MPTC curriculum to adhere to state policing standards. The curriculum includes lessons and training on bias. The harassment policy is redistributed and reviewed annually by all staff.

- One senior manager should attend the Senior Management Institute run by the Police Executive Research Forum each year. The session is held in the Boston area and is highly regarded.

We have and will continue to send senior managers to this program, as we have found it to be a very valuable program.

- Outside training available for officers should be advertised to employees, allowing interested members to apply to attend.

We advertise training when it is made available. Officers also have full access to the ACADIS portal which regularly posts upcoming training and allows them to apply. We have also invested in immersive Virtual Reality training that will be made available to officers at each station.

- Officers attending outside training should brief the department on what they learned during the training and how it might be applied.

Officers attending outside training are encouraged to share lessons learned and best practices with the command staff afterwards.

- The city and police department recognizes the importance of body cameras both to build public trust and support officers. The city is attempting to negotiate issues concerning body worn cameras through collective bargaining. The department should develop a policy on body camera usage, including detailing when a body camera is to be turned on and may be turned off. The role of sergeants in reviewing footage and how to use video footage to improve officer effectiveness must be determined. The policy must also address public access to body camera footage. A location for body camera storage and charging needs to be established in each police facility. A system must be developed to monitor the assignment of body cameras and ensure body cameras are fully charged before they are used by an officer. Sergeants and lieutenants must be trained regarding how and when to review body camera footage.

Our Body Worn Camera program is scheduled to be implemented in the final quarter of this year and all of the above will be addressed.

- Ensure all officers continue to be trained in de-escalation techniques, including courses with situational role play. The department adopted the Police Executive Research Forum's ICAT training. The ICAT training should be reinforced through yearly in-service training.

All of our officers are ICAT trained. We will reinforce this philosophy with the creation of a new "de-escalation" award to go along with our "valor" and "lifesaving" awards, etc. Our use of force policy is reviewed during firearms training each year, and this policy emphasizes de-escalation. Also, we

can reinforce de-escalation with our new Virtual Reality training which we expect to be very popular.

- Strengthen the working relationship with professionals, allocating funds from the city to pay for their involvement.

We have working relationships with many non-profits. We fund the Shannon Outreach program and employ co-response clinicians.

- Ensure officers have been trained on how to identify individuals who are looking for “suicide by cop” and the steps they can use to avoid taking a life.

Refer to our answer above concerning ICAT training. Also, our clinician co-response is an effective counter for these situations.

- It is important the department be transparent regarding complaints that have been filed and are being investigated, as well as how cases are being handled.

We respond to all inquiries concerning complaints with respect to the law surrounding personnel and consistent with our general order. Our complaint policy is clearly outlined, and we are committed to remaining compliant with it. We also adhere to standards from POST, which maintains a public facing website.

- The department should make its policies and procedures available on the NBPD’s public website. However, the department should delay public posting until they have completed the revision to its policy manual.

We are in the arduous process of updating all our department policies. We hope to complete this task by Spring of 2025.

- The department should collaborate with the Bristol County District Attorney and create a framework in which the department can analyze and discuss investigative outcomes and prosecutorial decisions as it relates to evidence collected during an investigation.

We enjoy a productive relationship with the Bristol County District Attorney’s Office and will examine this recommendation further. We anticipate that our forthcoming records management system should make data collection and tracking easier and more efficient.

- The department should issue an annual report and make it publicly available on the department’s website.

Annual crime reports have been published each of the last two years, and will continue to be published and posted on the department's website.

- The department should release publicly on the department's website an annual use of force data report.

Use of force data will be included in the annual crime report, which is released to the public every year and available on our website.

- The department should release publicly on the department's website an annual report of police misconduct complaint data.

Police misconduct data is available to the public online via the state POST commission. The NBPD will consider providing a link to the state database on its website.

- The department should make public NBPD's aggregate arrest and traffic stop data, including the race, age and gender of the involved officer(s) and civilian(s).

This is included in our annual crime reports.

- The department should enhance current efforts to problem-solve with the community and co-identify solutions to crime and quality of life issues impacting the New Bedford community.

We enjoy a strong presence at neighborhood meetings, as well as open dialogues with many community leaders and activists. We will examine possibilities for strengthening these relationships even further. Patrol Captains also collaborate with their assigned Community Police Officers to problem-solve and address quality of life issues within their respective areas.

- The department should create an updated Transparency Policy.

We will consider creating this during the above-mentioned process of reviewing all policies department-side.

- Amend General Order 3.20, Anti-Discriminatory Harassment Policy to enhance its ability to prevent, detect and respond to complaints of this nature. Amendments should include:
 - Affirmation that every complaint of conduct in violation of the department's sexual harassment policy will be subject to a thorough investigation and conclusion.
 - A mandate that all employees must immediately report any direct or indirect knowledge of conduct in violation of the department's sexual harassment policy, misconduct or

other related prohibited conduct and that the failure to report may be cause for discipline.

- Affirmation that supervisors, managers and department leaders have a duty to detect, report and enforce this policy and will be held accountable for failing to act in accordance with the requirements of this policy.
- Additional methods for making a complaint, including submission online, in writing and/or through a third-party advocate.
- Prominently post its Anti-Discriminatory Harassment Policy throughout the department, including spaces where members of the public and those who do business with the department can view the policy.
- Create a training program to mitigate, prevent, detect and respond to complaints of conduct in violation of the department's sexual harassment policy and sexual misconduct, bias, discrimination and any infractions of General Order 3.20.
 - The department should provide annual refresher training.
 - Department supervisors and leadership staff should receive supplemental training to address oversight, response and accountability.
 - Training should be supported strongly by the chief, including a personal commitment statement supporting a harassment-free workplace.
- Issue a supplemental directive that provides guidance and direction to supervisors on reporting requirements associated with the identification and/or awareness of conduct in violation of the department's sexual harassment policy or misconduct. This directive should be subject to annual review for any necessary updates.

The NBPd has adopted the City's policy on harassment, and will examine it with a Jensen Hughes consultant to determine if any additions need to be made that are specific to the NBPd. In addition, our Jensen Hughes consultant has introduced us to Tanya Meisenholder, who is the Director of Gender Equity for the Policing Project at the New York University School of Law. In her role, she guides the implementation of the 30x30 Initiative to advance the representation and experiences of women in policing. She is tentatively scheduled to meet with our female staff in September.

- Develop a retention strategy that includes but is not limited to:
 - A mentorship program and leadership training providing all officers with the support, guidance and resources they need to succeed on the job, advance their careers and enjoy a harassment-free work environment.
 - Create a workplace anti-bias coordinator/diversity, equity and inclusion liaison.

We are currently working towards establishing an FTO program. This seems to be a pre-cursor and a step in the right direction towards a mentor program.

Follow-up Questions

- The JH report also recommends the dept. publish annual reports of complaints against officers regarding alleged misconduct. Why hasn't the dept. done that to date? Does the dept. have plans

to publish that information (and if so, when)? NBPD data on complaints against officers is available to the public online from the POST website. We are considering adding a link on our website to the POST site so people seeking that information from us can go directly to POST.

- How can one navigate to the 2023 crime report from the newbedfordpd.com home page? It's under the news tab on the top of the page, then on the second page of news releases. Perhaps we can add it as an FAQ or as its own section under news.

- What is the anticipated timeline for reviewing and "revamping" dept. policies? When will that project be completed? Spring.

- The department used to publish "crime statistical data" on its site, including year-to-year comparisons by offense type, but stopped in July 2022 after the person responsible for the data resigned. Does the dept. plan to resume publishing crime data online as it previously did? If not, why not? The NBPD publishes an annual crime report. It is available on the website.

- What is the role of a crime analyst in the dept.? Crime analysts analyze data to present opportunities for the NBPD to provide better public safety services to the residents of New Bedford.

- When does the dept. expect to finalize the disciplinary matrix? Spring as part of the policy revamp.

- Has the dept. provided supplemental anti-harassment/discrimination training for supervisors and leadership staff? Supervisors and leadership staff receive harassment and discrimination training annually.

- Has the dept. amended G.O. 3.20 (anti-discrim./harassment policy), as recommended by Jensen Hughes? That is the City's harassment policy, but we are looking at it to see if any NBPD-specific changes need to be made.