

# CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

## IN CITY COUNCIL

March 15, 2018

### **RESOLUTION HONORING THE DENNISON MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTER ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

**WHEREAS**, The Dennison Memorial Community Center, one of the oldest community organizations in New Bedford, is named after its founder, the Reverend Tristan Dennison, and was incorporated in 1868 to serve the poor and needy of New Bedford, through free dental clinics, public baths and social activities; and

**WHEREAS**, Prior to its 1868 incorporation, the center was founded in the 1850's, as a place for immigrants who had come here to toil on the boats, docks and mills of New Bedford; and

**WHEREAS**, Initially named the New Bedford Ladies Mission, Reverend Tristan Dennison became the heart and soul of the organization and the Center became a pillar of the community; and

**WHEREAS**, Today, still located in the South End, the Dennison Memorial Community Center's programs, individualized services and staff focus on children and seek to promote self-esteem and values, encouraging each child to grow into a responsible adult, working with at-risk youth and their families, providing intervention services in a safe environment; and

**WHEREAS**, The Dennison Memorial Community Center is also a State licensed, school-aged day care facility accessed through the PACE voucher system, promoting active learning through play-based and child initiated activities, they provide tutoring and homework assistance and computer science labs; and

**WHEREAS**, The Dennison Memorial Community Center also offers afterschool and summer athletic, artistic and academic programs for youth from first grade through high school, educational and recreational field trips, a free summer lunch program and for older youth, career exposure and college planning support; and

**WHEREAS**, In 2004, the old building that housed the Dennison Memorial Community Center was torn down to make way for a new, \$1 million, 12,000 square foot facility, spearheaded by a fundraising drive led by Executive Director Sean Hargraves, who has been with the Center since 1982, and was accomplished without any government funding; and

**WHEREAS**, Most of the five hundred kids at the Dennison Memorial Community Center come from the West and South ends of the City and, according to President and CEO Jim Mathes, there are more than one hundred children in the building on any given day; and

**WHEREAS**, For 150 years the Dennison Memorial Community Center has provided a refuge for local youth to play, socialize, study, learn and build friendships:

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That the New Bedford City Council hereby honors the **DENNISON MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTER, ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**, commends them for their dedication to the education and well-being of our City's children, thanks them for their invaluable service and the positive impact they have made on each succeeding generation and wishes them continued success in the many years to come.