



NEW BEDFORD POLICE UNION
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The City of New Bedford Police Department recently sent out a press release hyping two training classes that the New Bedford Police Officers are attending: Blue Courage and Polish The Badge.

While the Union welcomes the idea of any de-escalation classes, cultural diversity programs, dealing with persons with mental health issues and any other program about working with the general public, the release mistakenly states, "Both subjects are critical to success as a police officer and in the ability to interpret the practices of de-escalation and duty to intervene." Numerous Officers that have attended the classes report that these classes have nothing to do with de-escalation. It is obvious that the Chief is only using the currently popular phrase "de-escalation" to appeal to the public's concerns.

These two classes are self-help programs that do offer some training, but at a time when Mayor Mitchell and Chief Cordeiro are defunding the police and reducing the number of police officers that are keeping the City of New Bedford safe these classes are a luxury that the City cannot afford. The combined cost for these two training classes is approximately \$50,000 which does not include the thousands of dollars that have been spent on police officers forced on overtime to backfill for the police officers who are required to attend the classes despite the Union warning the City about the increased cost of forced overtime.

Over the past few months, the New Bedford Police Union has given the City alternative cuts in the police budget, eliminating fat, non-essential positions, training classes and a meditation program. In total, these cuts can save hundreds of thousands of dollars, but the City and Chief refused to listen to us. Instead, the City is moving forward with reductions in the number of police officers, putting the City, our citizens, our neighborhoods and our Police Officers in jeopardy.

The Chief's unnecessary projects should be deferred until the City is in a financially secure position. Curiously, members of the New Bedford Police Union have been denied training that would be paid for by the individual officers at no cost to the City.

Please contact the Mayor and your City Councilors and demand that the Mayor not defund the Police or reduce the number of Police Officers answering the 90,000 plus dispatched calls a year. Instead, urge him to adopt the cuts to the budget that the Union has proposed.

Respectfully,
Hank Turgeon
President
New Bedford Police Union

Sent from my iPhone