



**CITY OF NEW BEDFORD**  
JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
NEW BEDFORD, MA  
2022 JUN -3 PM 1:20  
CITY CLERK

June 3, 2022

City Council President Ian Abreu and  
Honorable Members of the City Council  
133 William St.  
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Council President Abreu and Honorable Members of the City Council:

I write in objection to two Ordinances passed unanimously by the Council which increase the pay grades of two senior staff positions in departments under the Council's control, the Assistant City Clerk and the Assistant City Council Clerk.

As the Council is aware, the Administration has commissioned a study to review the labor market competitiveness of salaries of managers across all city departments and develop a new schedule in the City Code which establishes their salaries. The purpose of pay studies, like the one underway, is to ensure that local governments are able to attract qualified municipal professionals to open positions, while maintaining equity within and among departments. Best practice calls for municipalities to conduct such studies and revise their salary schedules every three to five years.

New Bedford has faced increased difficulty in recruiting and retaining managers, as labor market trends have put the City at a clear disadvantage. The result has been undue turnover and prolonged vacancies for important positions. The current pay study is intended to help rectify the problem. As Councilors know from periodic updates that have been provided by the Administration, the study is in its final stages after several months of consultation with independent personnel consultants and feedback from department heads.

Given the progress made on the study and its imminent submission to the Council, the Council's decision to approve salary changes for its own managers ahead of the study's completion and submission, is at odds with the process and undermines public confidence that employee salaries are established based on a deliberate and structured procedure.

To be clear, the specifics of the two pay grade changes are not the basis for my objection. In fact, both changes are consistent with the current draft of the pay study, and they reflect, in part, specific input of the City Clerk whose feedback was actively solicited by the Personnel Office as part of the study.

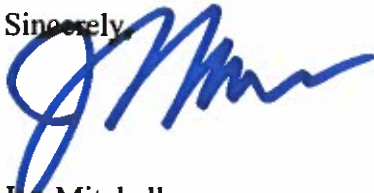
For these reasons, I hereby veto the measure entitled *Amending Chapter 19, Section 19-7 (c) by inserting title "Assistant City Clerk" at pay grade M-12*, presented to me on May 26, 2022.

Likewise, I hereby veto the measure entitled *Amending Chapter 19, Section 19-7 (c) by inserting title "Assistant City Council Clerk" at a pay grade M-10*, presented to me on May 26, 2022.

Again, I have no objection to the substance of these pay grade changes. I agree with the need to modify them as proposed in the current study draft, and I support their inclusion in the final draft that will be presented to the Council in the next few weeks. But to preserve the integrity of the pay study already underway, and in fairness to those across city government who have participated in the process, I feel compelled to take this action.

Know that I remain appreciative of the dialog the Council and Administration have had on the importance of the City being able to retain and compete for effective managers, and I thank you for your consideration in this particular matter.

Sincerely,



Jen Mitchell  
Mayor



# CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

In the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Two

## AN ORDINANCE

### AMENDING CHAPTER 19 PERSONNEL

31- 509

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of New Bedford as follows:—

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 19, Section 19-7 (c) is hereby amended by inserting the title of "Assistant City Clerk" at pay grade M-12. The amended portion of the salary schedule shall read as follows:

Title	Grade
Assistant City Clerk	M-12

**SECTION 2.** This Ordinance shall take effect in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 43 of the General Laws.