

June 20, 2023

Councillor Brian K. Gomes, Chairman
Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods
New Bedford City Council
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

RE: Written Motion dated June 13, 2023

Dear Chairman Gomes,

Thank you for your communication inviting myself and Nelson Terra, the NBWM's Director of Facilities & Security, to attend the New Bedford City Council's Committee on Public Safety & Neighborhoods meeting on June 27, 2023.

I certainly appreciate the spirit in which the motion was made and subsequent invitation, however, I am writing to inform you that neither I nor Mr. Terra will attend this meeting or future meetings on this subject.

The New Bedford Whaling Museum is a private 501(c)(3), nonprofit institution. While the Whaling Museum's policies and procedures are not subject to review by the City Council or committees, I am pleased to share that the Museum conducted a comprehensive independent review by a seasoned museum security expert, and we have taken significant steps to reduce future vulnerability. The Museum has had a CORI policy and screening requirement in place for all employees and volunteers for decades. The Museum has maintained full compliance with that policy and screening requirement, and will continue to do so. A full background check, which included a CORI review, was conducted on the former employee who has been charged with 19 counts of larceny. As I am sure you are aware, State background checks are not failsafe nor immune to human error.

Throughout the Whaling Museum's history, it has maintained a strong, positive relationship with the New Bedford City Council. I always welcome an opportunity to build on this relationship, but in this matter which is still before the Courts and the Museum's insurer, I must decline to share any specific information regarding this case and most unfortunate event. I am grateful to the work of the New Bedford Police Department who ensured that the vast majority of items have been returned to our care. We are also deeply appreciative to the Bristol County District Attorney's office who is in charge of ongoing proceedings of the Government's criminal case in Superior Court.

Sincerely,



Amanda McMullen
President & CEO