



City of Fall River Massachusetts
Office of the City Clerk

ALISON M. BOUCHARD
CITY CLERK

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ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MEETING: Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, One Government Center

PRESENT: President Cliff Ponte, presiding;
Councilors Shawn E. Cadime, Joseph D. Camara, Steven A. Camara,
Bradford L. Kilby, Pam Laliberte-Lebeau, Stephen R. Long,
Leo O. Pelletier and Derek R. Viveiros

School Committee members Kevin Aguiar, Paul Coogan, Mark Costa,
Joshua E. Hetzler, Thomas Khoury and Joseph Martins

ABSENT: None

IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Jasiel F. Correia II

President Cliff Ponte called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with a moment of silence followed by a salute to the flag. There was a presentation of the colors by the Fall River Police Department and Fall River Fire Department Honor Guards.

Mark Costa, Vice - Chairperson of the Fall River School Committee called the School Committee to order and asked the clerk to call the roll.

President Cliff Ponte introduced Mayor Jasiel F. Correia II and stated that the purpose of the meeting was for the Mayor's State of the City address, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes.

On a motion made by School Committee member Joshua E. Hetzler and seconded by School Committee member Paul Coogan, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn. On a motion made by Councilor Bradford L. Kilby and seconded by Councilor Steven A. Camara, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:46p.m.

List of documents and other exhibits used during the meeting:

Agenda packet (attached)
CD and DVD of meeting

A true copy. Attest:

Alison M. Bouchard

City Clerk

In City Council, June 12, 2018
Approved.



**City of Fall River
Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor**

JASIEL F. CORREIA II
Mayor

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CITY CLERK _____
FALL RIVER, MA

NOTICE

Date: 3/12/18

**Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and School Committee
Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 6:00 PM
City Council Chamber, One Government Center**

**The purpose of the meeting is for the delivery
of the State of the City Address.**

Signed: _____

Jasiel F. Correia II, Mayor

ADA Coordinator:

Gary P. Howayeck, Esq. 508-324-2650

Good Evening, Good evening everyone, what another exciting night!

Let me start out by thanking all of our elected officials who are here tonight. Please join me in applauding our School committee and City council members. I also want to thank our State Delegation members who are here tonight — Representative Alan Silvia, Representative Paul Schmid, Representative Carole Fiola and State Senator Michael Rodrigues.

I also want to thank every single city employee; from our clerks to department heads, police officers and firefighters, school teachers and EMS staff, Our DCM and Water and sewer workers, and all of our city board and commission volunteers. Thank you for your commitment to Fall River, Please join me in applauding the efforts of every municipal employee and volunteer.

I also want to extend a warm welcome to our invited guests here tonight, including my family, my parents and my grandmother who many of you have come to know. Thank you for being my rock, I love you.

It has been just over two years since taking office as your mayor, the mayor of the great city of Fall River. As we begin a new term I want to assure all the citizens of Fall River that the Correia Administration remains completely focused on continuing our unprecedented turnaround.

YOU voted for continued progress and a commitment to fiscal stability and responsibility, and I have delivered and I promise to continue to deliver.

At my last state of the city address, I declared that we overcame challenges and charted a new course.

A course that renews Fall River's central promise, the promise that you and your family can **Make It Here.**

And tonight, once again, I reaffirm that central promise and I am thrilled to report to the citizens and business community of Fall River that the State of our City remains strong!!!

Over the span of my first term in office, Fall River has certainly moved forward. Amazon has found success in Fall River, and under the leadership of Hil Camara, Joe Vianna, Tom Pereira, Holly Hill-Baptista and the entire staff of BCTC and the Career Center, Amazon employs and continues to employ thousands of people.

The South End of our city is seeing an unprecedented revitalization.

South Coast Market Place has opened, welcoming residents and visitors from out of town to the nearly 25 stores, restaurants, a theater and of course Market Basket. I want to thank business partners Ron Goulab and Steve Cohen for making a \$100 million dollar investment in our city and transforming the outdated Harbor Mall site to what is now a bustling shopping and entertainment destination in our South End!

South Coast Marketplace combined with the redevelopment of the plaza across William Canning Blvd and the construction of the Tiverton Casino over the border in Rhode Island will continue to create new economic development opportunities for our entire region.

Thanks to a \$2.2 million dollar MassWorks grant secured by this administration and the entire State delegation, working with the Baker/Polito administration, soon all three of these major

projects will enjoy a completely new William S. Canning Blvd. which will include wider lanes and pedestrian access and safety improvements.

Just last week another milestone was achieved in our South End. The King Philip Mill saga, which has plagued that neighborhood for over a decade, has finally come to a successful conclusion and will deliver not only an amazing result but also the recovery of \$195k dollars to our city coffers.

As promised the Mill complex will be revitalized including a preservation element of one of the three buildings and a demolition component, that will, for the first time in generations open that neighborhood to Cook pond with green space and water access; as well as the development of up to 26 new single family homes which will continue to promote home ownership and new tax growth in one of the most scenic parts of our city.

The King Philip mill project was complicated and it took the combined efforts of the neighbors from the South End Neighborhood Association, led by State Rep Alan Silvia. It took the skill of Matthew Thomas and City Administrator Cathy Ann Viveiros and it took the commitment and will of local developer Robert and his wife, Lorrie Khfoury who are both here tonight.

And it's not just the South End enjoying the revitalization. The North End and Center City have and will continue to see new growth through public and private investment as well. We are working with the new owners of the Capitol Theater and we will unveil plans for the Bank Street armory which will become a hub for arts and culture.

Route 79 South has been completed and the Redevelopment Authority has commissioned waterfront and downtown urban renewal plans, which will be a catalyst for the reconstruction of Route 79 North and will restore Fall River's Downtown to its former glory.

Fall River is not a community of one main street, rather it is a city with many main streets. By now many residents and businesses in the Purchase Street, East main Street, Bedford Street, South Main Street, and Bank Street neighborhoods have seen much of the underground utility, water and sewer work be completed making way for the much anticipated Streetscapes.

New streets that will transform these neighborhoods and make our city more desirable. Streetscapes combined with our chapter 90 money will ensure that not just main streets get upgraded but side streets in all parts of our city will be upgraded as well.

Streets are not complete without safe, handicapped accessible sidewalks and over the last two years my administration has committed the most amount of money to sidewalk repair totaling in excess of \$560k dollars allowing our city to become pedestrian friendly.

In addition to this much needed street and sidewalk repair our administration has sent the City Council a capital plan ensuring that all buildings and city property can be properly maintained and upgraded without becoming a burden to our taxpayers.

We have and will continue to make a strong commitment to our city infrastructure. In the last 2 years alone we have committed \$440,000 dollars to park upgrades. We have upgraded neighborhood parks like Griffin Park and will transform Pulaski, Chew, Maplewood, Kennedy Park and the Bank Street Tot lot.

All these park improvements would not be possible without the advocacy of each respective neighborhood associations. Neighborhood Presidents and volunteers like;

- Earl Guadette, Arther Flores, and Ron Sevigny from the Maplewood Association,
- Alan Silvia and Sue Mathias from the South End Association
- Councilor Steve Camara and Jim Bartley from the Lower Highlands
- Carlos Cesar and Joe Carvalho from the Flint
- Natalie Melo from the Bank Street Association.
- Helen Rego from the Niagra Association.

Most importantly, we have a strong partnership with our Community Development Agency. Thank you to Michael Dion and his staff for helping maximize the benefits of our Community Development Block Grant funding.

PAST PRACTICES NOT BEST PRACTICES:

Although our city has enjoyed these improvements we must not forget that upon taking office in January of 2016, our city had been bruised by poor planning and fiscal instability. Government had swelled and new fees were necessary just keep city services operational. The city entered into a number of poorly negotiated contracts.

Leaders even stated that the city was on the brink of receivership. Our city was left with a mere 500k in stabilization funds and a negative outlook by the credit agency Moody's.

Past administrations rolled the dice on school funding, and fiscal policies in which, year after year made our city councilors chose between layoffs to police officers, firefighters and teachers or create new fees and maximum tax increases.

Additionally the city has been burdened by the federally mandated CSO project. And lastly but most challenging was the negative reputation and slump that citizens and businesses desired to shake off.

Through hard work, cooperation with our partners in government, and the assembly of one of the best executive teams in the city's history, combined with the resolve of our residents and businesses; my administration began the greatest turnaround of any community in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Under the leadership of CFO Mary Sahady and City Administrator Cathy Ann Viveiros working with City Auditor Jen Argo and the cooperation of every department head; We continue to implement zero based budgeting practices.

The combination of Zero-based budgeting and privatization of trash collection led to the fulfillment of a campaign promise to eliminate the \$120 household fee.

The continued focus of this financial team and this administration's commitment to fiscal stability and responsibility will lead to the fulfillment of yet another campaign promise, the promise to eliminate the PAYT purple bag program!

We are a few months away from revealing our fiscal year 2019 budget which will continue to deliver our stable progress.

These new fiscal policies allowed the city to begin to refund its stabilization account. Two years ago the city was left with a just \$500k in stabilization funds and today I am proud to tell you that we have over \$8million in stabilization funds.

Last year I set a goal to reach \$10million in stabilization funds by 2021 and I am thrilled to report that we will surpass \$10million dollars by the end of this year!

This impressive financial turnaround from 500k to 10+ million dollars will open the door to less tax and fee increases and more stable government in the years to come.

This financial stability allows government to focus on other important financial obligations such as our OPEB Trust Fund and unfunded pension liability.

PUBLIC SAFETY AS A TOP PRIORITY

The safety of every member of our community is a top priority of this administration. However as any firefighter or police officer can tell any politician, actions speak much louder than words. I believe our administration and this council have taken more action to improve the staffing and equipment in all of our public safety departments than any other administration in the last decade.

We have and will continue to increase the staffing levels of our police department. We will continue to invest in the latest and greatest equipment for our officers including the continuous upgrade of the police vehicle fleet, new radios, mobile camera systems and much more.

We in Fall River are certainly not immune to crime, as a city we encounter challenges all urban communities face, however there is no question that we have one of the best police forces in the state, one of the few that is both state and nationally accredited.

And under the leadership of Chief Al Dupere we will continue to increase the number of officers and get drug dealers and criminals off our city streets.

The Fire and EMS departments continue to enjoy an unprecedented amount of support. The department's equipment languished behind many other fire departments from across the state and today the Fall River Fire Department is considered one of the top departments in the commonwealth.

Due to all these improvements, the fire department, working with our city water department recently achieved a rating milestone; the Insurance Services Office adjusted the city rating to class 1 due to our exemplary fire suppression programs.

We are only one of 7 communities in the commonwealth to achieve the highest rating. This rating is used in the calculation of insurance premiums and therefore should result in lower premiums for all.

These incredible improvements have been made possible by the tireless leadership of Chief John Lynch and Fire Union President Jason Burns working with my administration and our city councilors.

All these improvements to our Police and Fire Departments are a foundation for the future which will ultimately produce a safer city leading to more economic development opportunities and a better quality of life.

Economic Development

Fall River has seen its economic hay-days and its recession lows. However, over the years, as the textile industry began to slow the Fall River Office of Economic Development filled the job gap for many. FROED while past its prime, did serve the city in times of need.

Today, we begin a new chapter of economic development, a strengthened Redevelopment Authority that will transform the Bio-Tech Park, the Waterfront, and our downtown as well as promote our city through a regional approach to economic development.

In the next month we will unveil the details of our new Economic Development Office. Over the last several months we have been testing the city's capability to provide high quality economic development results across a variety of areas, including; Big and small business growth, job creation, small business lending, and housing.

I am happy to report that we have seen success and that the new economic development office through the RDA will be poised to bring about the next generation of economic development.

Education, business growth, housing and a safe city; are all contributing factors to our economic development outcomes.

We cannot expect better paying jobs and bio-tech companies if we do not fund our schools above net school spending.

We cannot expect continued business investment if we do not add more police officers and firefighters to our city streets.

We cannot expect to garner the attention of the Statehouse if we put ourselves down and promote false narratives.

We must work together and challenge ourselves to be better and to do better.

Housing has been a priority of my administration. Whether it's beautiful new Single family homes in the North and South ends of our city,

or the right to clean, safe, affordable housing at Riverview towers,

or the previously thought to be impossible market rate housing sweeping across our city on Alden Street, Commonwealth Landing and at 64 Durfee Street, this administration has focused on creating housing policies that are fair and diverse.

We have rolled back the tsunami of low income and project based housing that has been coming to Fall River for years, while still working to protect those that are here and in need of affordable housing.

Thanks to our new housing initiative, dubbed, the Make it Safe program, we are now addressing blighted properties and cleaning up our neighborhoods, all while preserving due process through our Corporation Counsel, Judge Macy and our Housing Coordinator Faust Fiore.

Housing is an economic development issue that will continue to take center stage as we continue to transform our city.

Education for All

Even with all these great economic development initiatives, there is one economic development issue that continues to trump all.

An ever improving Education system that prioritizes our public schools and provides every student in our system a top quality education is my highest priority.

Students and families in Fall River and gateway cities like Brockton, Lowell, and New Bedford should have access to financial support greater than the currently outdated chapter 70 formula.

It is simply not right that in the most educated state in the country, communities with far greater home values and median incomes have access to more funding for schools.

That is why I will champion an effort to encourage the state to recalculate the disbursement and access to education money within commonwealth.

Whether if you voted yes or no on the funding of a new Durfee High School, most agreed we needed to replace our aging beloved high school.

Through the success of the ballot question, our community has demonstrated to the state our willingness to invest in ourselves. We only ask that state reward our commitment.

We, like other gateway cities, have had our challenges meeting and exceeding net school spending but it is simply not an excuse to just meet the bare minimum. That is why my administration has erased previous net school spending shortfalls and continues to fund our school system above net school spending, reducing classroom sizes and increase teacher retention.

Teachers need to know that their job is secure and that pink slips will not be issued simply because the city cannot meet its net school spending obligation.

Superintendent Dr. Matthew Malone has in just a years' time improved the school department's culture and morale in ways you can feel and see every day. Not only is he a champion for teachers and students but he also rolled up his sleeves and worked with his team to implement zero based principles in his budget leading to a strong commitment to meeting the needs of our school system.

It is not just the Fall River public schools that are thriving but it's also our parochial schools and charter schools that are thriving as well.

Atlantis Charter has opened a new state of the art school and the Argosy Charter School continues to expand its grade levels; both charter schools now educate thousands of students in

our community and our parish schools like St. Michaels School under the leadership of parish priest Father Jay Mello continue to provide many educational options to parents in our city.

Diman Regional High School has seen an unprecedented amount of growth, applications are through the roof. And under the leadership of the superintendent, Tom Aubin, I know there will be even greater growth especially as we begin the process of exploring the reality of constructing a new Diman High School in the near future.

We funded and facilitated a relationship with Resiliency Preparatory Academy and People Inc., a partnership that yielded a community center to train students that may have OTHERWISE failed and instead now have an opportunity at a successful job.

Lastly, Educational partnerships with BCC and UMASS under the leadership of the new president and chancellor will be essential to providing everyone in our region and opportunity to Make It Here.

Relationships are Key

In order to continue all this progress, we need a network of relationships, in both the public and private sectors, through which we can make our needs felt and our views heard.

I have established those relationships and will continue to strengthen them at every opportunity. We now have a strong working relationship with both our local Legislative and Congressional Delegations.

Perhaps most importantly, I have a positive and productive relationship with Governor Charlie Baker and Lt Governor Karyn Polito. I have met with them many times both in Boston and here in Fall River.

This has resulted in my appointment to the States Economic Seaport Council and yielded numerous grants for our community.

It is because of this Legislative Delegation and my administration working with our governor that we will deliver a rail connection to Boston by 2022.

This is just the beginning of our comeback story. We will tell our story to the world through our marketing and branding campaign. Fall River is the place to be. You truly can Make It Here.

Ask George Matouk from Matouk in our industrial park or Michael Benevides from Portuglia Marketplace they will tell you their businesses are booming!

Ask Charlie Mellow from Mellow manufacturing or Brian Lecomte from Gold Medal Bakery if manufacturing is dead in Fall River and they will tell you it's never been better.

Ask Donald Woods and Lee-Ann Wilber owners of the Lizzie Borden house; ask Joanne Sbrega from the Children's Museum; ask Carl Sawejko of Battleship Cove and they will tell you people are visiting Fall River.

Fall River is not on the decline its best days are not stuck in the past, Fall River's prime is happening right before our eyes.

Fall River has always been mindful of the sacrifices that our veterans have made. They are very much a part of the fabric of our community.

A replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. will soon be erected at Bicentennial Park. Using private donations and all available grants, we will augment our wonderful tribute to all veterans and make a spectacular addition to the monuments already present there.

In addition, we have remodeled the Veteran's Center on Pine Street and will continue to make improvements and serve our Vets. I want to thank Ray Hague and the so many volunteers who do their part in giving back to our veterans.

Some of my proudest moments as mayor have been honoring these outstanding individuals and their families. Thank you to all who have served this great nation.

I want everyone to know that we have accomplished so much together and we will continue this great progress. We have many priorities ranging from economic development to public safety to fiscal management. As you heard tonight we totally improved some of these and strengthened all areas of government to serve our citizens.

As we continue to make progress in all of these areas there is one epidemic that continues to plague our city and our nation.

Drug abuse, is a very important issue to our community, a national disease that has crippled and ruined the lives of many, I want everyone's help to tackle the issue of drug abuse.

We will work together to address Drug Abuse, homelessness and mental health issues by working with the numerous non-profits, volunteers and public safety personnel to make strides in combatting these community challenges.

Already, we have joined the national conversation by suing the big pharmaceutical companies for their role in perpetuating the problem, we have arrested drug dealers and organized targeted drug raids and instituted saturated police patrols, we have funded organizations working to combat the opioid epidemic and opened government centers doors to help those in their time of need.

Organizations like Recover Fall River, SSTAR, JRI, Steppingstone, HealthFirst and so many others need our city's help. Now is the time to provide more treatment not less.

At my last state of the city address I told you the story of my family a family of immigrants who came to make a life here in Fall River. I explained that in just 1 generation their son, the son of immigrants became the mayor of their great city.

Fall River has so much to give its people and another example that I want to share with you tonight is the success of our newest youth of the year Richard Cabral. Richard is here tonight with one of his mentor, Peter McCarthy from the Boys and Girls Club, and he is an inspiration to all of our city's youth. Richard exemplifies the very spirit of our city.

A young man, who has faced enormous challenges and even tremendous tragedy but has remained steadfast in his mission to help others and give back to his community. He is a product of Fall River, a senior at Durfee High School and through Richard's involvement with the Boys and Girls Club and his role as a student leader, he has proven that no matter the obstacles you face you can make it here.

As I stated last year...

Fall River has always promised its residents an opportunity, a chance at success and happiness whether it was the boom of the textile industry in which Fall River led the industrial revolution to the modern Fall River whose generations of people built a city on a hill always reaching for the sky. When we look to our past we have much to be proud of.

Tonight, we look not just to our past, but like the many smokestacks and steeples that define our cityscape we look upward and forward, reaching to new heights and even greater PROGRESS.

Tonight we continue to forge new relationships and invest in our city.

Tonight we renew the commitment our parents and grandparents made to us.

Tonight and together we build a greater, stronger Fall River for the next generation.

With more hard work. With innovative thinking. By furthering those governmental relationships. By refusing to sell ourselves short and by believing in ourselves we will succeed.

If we do not believe in ourselves, no one else will. We all know that there is a sense of negativity being promoted by some in our community. I see it, I hear it and I read it. But make no mistake – I do not accept it.

Just look at what we have accomplished in just 24 months;

- We delivered on campaign promises
- We implemented zero based budgeting
- We went from \$500k to \$10mil in stabilization funds
- We exceeded net school spending and reduced classroom sizes
- We fully upgraded our public safety departments
- We eliminated the \$120 household fee and will eliminate the PAYT program
- We re-branded the city and announced to the world that you can make it here

as a destination, as a place to make goods or as a place to make your life, each of us can make it here.

There is no doubt the city has progressed and I am excited about the future of our amazing beautiful city.

I pledge to continue to devote all my energies to making Fall River great. But I have not done it alone; In the background of all of these successes have been amazing people;

People like my Chief of Staff Gen Andrade, who cares so much about me and our city and Monica Sousa, my special assistant who works tirelessly to improve the lives of others. There are so many people working every single day as a team to improve the lives of our citizens.

We need your support, your help and your cooperation.

Join me in the coming months and years ahead to move this city not only forward but upward to greatness, with confidence and purpose.

As I stated earlier tonight, our best days are not behind us they are happening right be for our very eyes... So make no mistake about it, the state of our city is **STRONG!**

God bless you, God bless Fall River. And God bless the United States of America. Thank you!