

Olympics 2024 Redux

SOUTH BOSTON TODAY
Staff Report

The public statement of John Fish at the Greater Boston Chamber Breakfast this week endorsed a statewide vote and offered to help gather the signatures required to get the Olympics 2024 measure on the ballot was a positive step at the end of a series of missteps that included a questionable consulting agreement with former Governor Deval Patrick, and generous salaries being paid to its staff, which include a nearly wholesale grafting of both the Patrick and Mayor Marty Walsh political brain trusts onto the bid committee team.

Mr. Fish, who is also chief executive of Suffolk Construction, the region’s leading construction firm, pledged that if the measure

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EDITORIAL

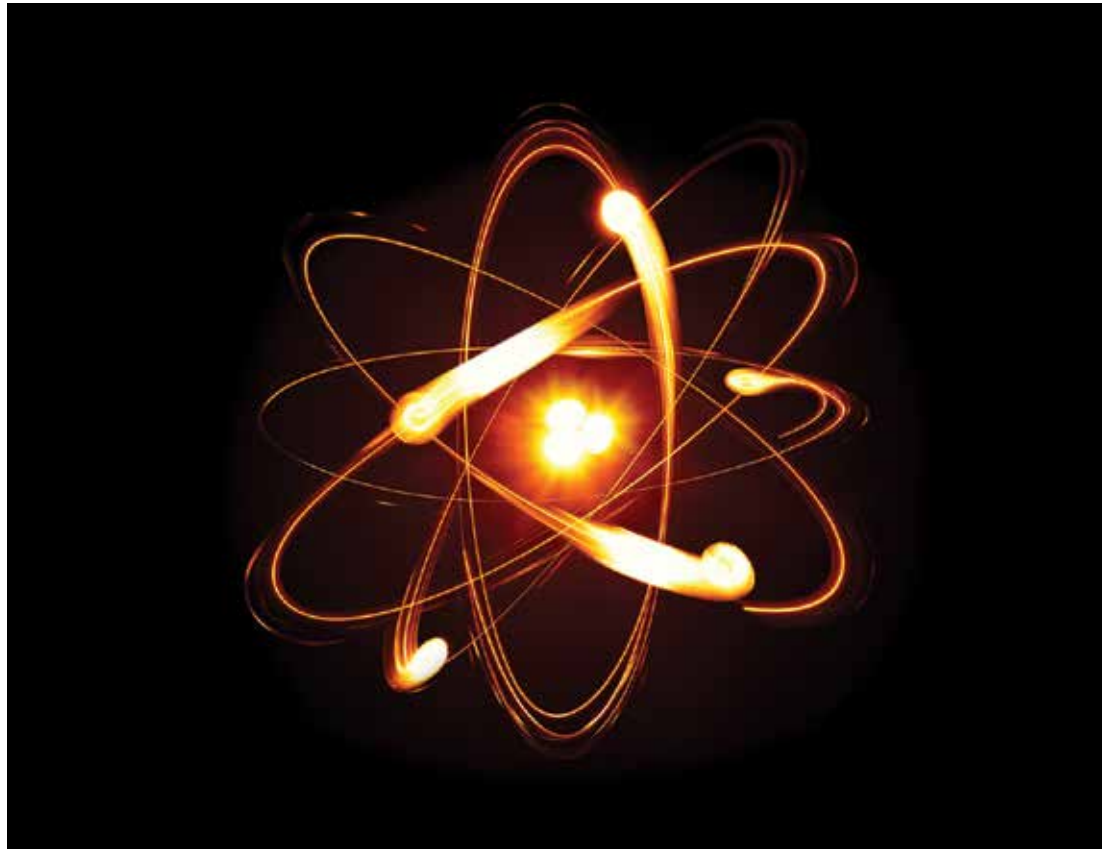
“A Treaty Ain’t Boilerplate”

Monday, March 23, Ayatollah Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran publicly called, yet again, for “Death to America”. Despite this obvious negative attitude, President Obama wants to sign a nuclear treaty with Iran by March 31st - A treaty which will allow Iran to legally build a nuclear weapon that can attack America in ten years; a treaty whose contents are unknown.

For those who may not know its definition, boilerplate is “ready made content, design, or format that fits a variety of uses”. This treaty ain’t boilerplate.

It is understandable that the average citizen is ignorant of what is being proposed. Many mistakenly think we are safe and have some missile shield or defensive umbrella that will protect us. We do not. More importantly the citizens rely on those tasked with our protection to do their job. The unfortunate consequence of this treaty for America and the world, if not thoroughly examined, are so horrible that our leaders’ attention must not to be focused anywhere else. We need to know now what promises are being made on our children’s future.

What’s in the treaty?



“Spring is a season when you feel like whistling even if you have a shoe filled with slush” - Douglas Larson

Last Week’s Poll

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SOUTH BOSTON TODAY

John Ciccone

Note: talk back to John Ciccone by email at jciccone@southbostontoday.com

As we all continue to thaw out from this winter with its record breaking cold and snow fall, I'd like to give Al Gore a bit of a shout out. The colder it got, the quieter the world's most infamous "Global Warming" alarmist became. But recently, it seemed he just could no longer contain himself as skeptics worldwide, including many in the scientific community, came forward to say that Gore, the corrupt con artists at the UN, John Kerry and so many others were, ahem, 'full of bull'. In response, a frazzled and wild eyed Gore re-emerged briefly to demand that anyone who doubted his theory for any reason - he calls them "deniers" - must be severely punished. And this brings us to this week's theme for the column: The absolute intolerance that liberals have for any other opinion but their own.

First up, we'll touch on the embarrassing attempt by the owners of Starbucks to have their employees preach to customers. The now cancelled program - it lasted less than a week - was called 'Race Together'. The goal was to have the Starbucks employees behind the counter start up a conversation on race relations with their patrons or, at the very least, write little notes of enlightenment on their coffee cups on the topic in an effort to convince all to live together in harmony. Not that living in harmony is a bad thing, but this did not go over well at all as indignant customers all over the country from all ethnic backgrounds, races and colors lambasted this attempt. 'Good morning racist, what can I get for you today', for the price of your latte you get a free lecture from a self-righteous boor. Few people appreciate being scolded, however nicely, on how to live their

lives. It's been reported that some of the employees wanted even less to do with this than the customers themselves. But here's the kicker. With a little research, it was reported that Starbucks, though they like to politely scold the world on race relations and other selected social issues, tend to seldom open their stores in predominantly minority inner city neighborhoods. What?! Here again we have libs telling others what they should do and how to think, while not practicing what they themselves preach. Personally, I listen carefully to and enjoy the sermons I hear at Church. But for my morning caffeine fix, please, just shut up and pour the coffee.

Moving to Barack Obama, as we usually do, last week he stated that people should be forced to vote. He wants to make it mandatory with a penalty to pay if you don't. It would be nice if everyone voted to be sure, but as Americans we have a choice. This is something Obama and his crew would like to eliminate on so many things. I know the concept of Americans being free may be a bit 'foreign' to him. Here again, we have a lib wanting to force people to do what he wants them to. Coming from a guy who missed more than 300 votes during his 4 years in the Senate, this serves as another example of do as I say, not as I do. And in his case, it was his job and obligation to cast those votes.

How would you like a visit from the Environmental Protection Agency at your backyard family barbecue this summer? Oh yes, get ready folks. The EPA now wants to regulate your grills. They attempted to ban the use of wood burning stoves, the only source of heat to millions of Americans in northern states. They got resistance and a road

block from Republicans and even some Democrats in Congress. Now it's barbecue grills that they are after. If these federal agencies are not reined in and brought under control quickly, there's going to be an uprising. You can tamper with people's taxes and healthcare - sometimes, but try messing with their burgers and tips and there's going to be a problem.

The moonbats strike again, this time in Lexington, Massachusetts. Students in the high school there are very patriotic, even if their

wacky parents and teachers are not. The students are having a dance and voted for 'American Pride' to be the theme for the dance. But, the horrified school administration quickly stepped in and cancelled it. Why? Because, the patriotic theme would be 'offensive' to some of the foreign-born pupils, and did not convey the proper amount of 'inclusiveness'. Let me see if I have this right. A patriotic American theme in an American school in a

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Window Into The State House

Window Into The State House provides our readers a synopsis of important issues of interest, past and current, that are being proposed, debated or acted upon by the Massachusetts Legislature. Many issues that are not related to local city government services are acted upon and have a direct impact on daily life. They are tax policy, transportation infrastructure, judicial appointments, social services and health, as well as higher education. We will excerpt reports from the gavel-to-gavel coverage of House and Senate sessions by news sources focused on this important aspect of our lives. These sources include a look ahead at the coming week in state government and summaries and analyses of the past week, re-caps of a range of state government activity, as well as links to other news.

Lt. Gov Polito: Strong Baker Administration Presence to Remain at MBTA

The Baker administration is maintaining a strong presence and partnership with the state's public transit agency, according to Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito. "You'll see a strong presence from our executive staff with the MBTA and the rail folks for a long time to come, because we want to make sure that the rail works and people want to get to work on time," Polito said. At a breakfast put together by the public relations firm Denterlein, Polito was interviewed by former New England Cable News anchor R.D. Sahl,

covering a range of topics, from her aspirations for higher office to the MBTA and the Olympics. Polito noted that the Baker administration does not control the board of directors that oversees the MBTA, an agency that failed to maintain regular service when faced with several winter storms. "At the same time, now that we are governor and lieutenant governor, many in the public feel we own the problem, right?" Polito said. "So we want to fix the problem but we need the control and the tools to fix the problem, too." Polito said many claim more money is needed for the MBTA. "And what we need

is management and operation, reliability, predictability. We need it to work," she said. Polito said the MBTA has imposed multiple fare increases, receives a penny on the sales tax that is devoted to the agency and now the Baker administration has proposed using state operating funds -- "your tax dollars" -- to close a funding gap. "So we can't continue to operate that way," she said. - Gintautas Dumcius/SHNS

Gaming Slots Seen Delivering Local Aid \$\$\$

The opening of the state's first slot parlor in Plainville should provide more than enough money to fund the governor's proposed increase in unrestricted local aid, Massachusetts Municipal Association Executive Director Geoffrey Beckwith told lawmakers Tuesday. Plainridge Park Casino will generate \$86.7 million to \$118.5 million, according to Beckwith, who said the funds are required to flow into a local aid account. The slots parlor is set to open June 24. The group representing cities and towns backed Gov. Charlie Baker's proposed \$34 million increase in unrestricted local aid at a hearing before the House and Senate Ways and Means committees, which met at Greenfield Community College Tuesday. "The governor's increase would be a return to the concept of revenue sharing," said Beckwith, who was more critical of Baker's proposed minimum \$20-per-student increase in local education funding. Baker's budget would increase local education funding, also known as Chapter 70, by \$105.3 million. The funds are sent to cities and towns based on a formula. Beckwith pushed for a \$100-per-student minimum

increase and said the governor's proposal is "insufficient." - Andy Metzger/SHNS

Treasurer Goldberg Sees Clerical "Challenge" In Early Retirement Program

State Treasurer Deb Goldberg is concerned about getting slammed with clerical work associated with the administration of an early retirement incentive program that is gaining momentum on Beacon Hill. Goldberg, who this year also expressed concern that budget cuts could erode projected Lottery profits, told WCVB's On the Record Sunday that the early retirement program, which could launch in mid-April, offers a challenge for her shop, which oversees the State Retirement Board. State employees recently hit Goldberg's offices with 1,000 inquiries after word first got out about the potential program, which Gov. Charlie Baker hopes will help take 4,500 workers off the payroll. "The amount of clerical work that will be involved, we'll need to put people towards that work," Goldberg said during the televised interview. "So internally it's a challenge." Goldberg also said she wanted to examine the impact of the program on the state's unfunded pension liability since payouts would be made over a 15-year period. "A lot of things can happen over 15 years," she said, expressing concern about impacts on the state bond rating. House leaders have been sitting on Baker's early retirement plan since early March and signaled Monday they intend to put it before the House for a vote on Wednesday without the benefit of a public hearing. - Michael Norton/SHNS

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Reading Between The Lines

“Moving On And Pay Attention”

SOUTH BOSTON TODAY
Brian R. Mahoney

Note: talk back to Brian by email at bmahoney@southbostontoday.com

Apparently, like the “Penguin” in the “Batman” series, the unfurling of an umbrella, is enough to land a story on the front page of the Herald. Although if they’re going to “stake out” my house all Saturday morning just to ask questions, they could get all the answers in a half hour interview and not just the 3 minutes they used to sensationalize controversy.

Thank God for South Boston. What would the media cover if not every aspect of South Boston life? If they wanted to be really informative they could give coverage to issues that actually affect the quality of South Boston life. For instance, in the midst of recent events an 11-story hotel that we are just learning about is being proposed for an area designated as parcel K. This area is directly across the street from the Music Pavilion. Proposals for hotel/motels in the new zone around the BCEC have been made, but this is outside of that zone on the waterfront itself. If you can see the Music Tent from your house you’re looking at the proposed hotel location.

Meanwhile, farther away from residential Southie, a number of major concerns exist. Runway 27R faces the waterfront and planes climbing must maintain a minimum safe point (MSP) of 500 feet which has become an issue with development heights on the waterfront. The Menino towers proposed for South Station had to be scrapped for that reason.

The reluctance of the city to dump snow into the harbor raises another issue with this hotel. The first half hour of rain floats the most contaminants like, oil, animal waste and chemicals, which normally are filtered. Large scale development like this has historically had insufficient drainage, forcing them to divert any overflow into the harbor. This obviously defeats the purpose the city was trying to avoid, not to mention the efforts of the “Save the Harbor” organization. Density and of course access in and out of the development and the effect on “L” Street, Pappas Way, First and Summer Streets are of prime importance to the entire community. Amazingly a public hearing will be held March 31 with a comment period ending April 10. A very short review period with no other community input planned.

Also, on Monday, at the LaBoure Center, the first of what will be a series of discussions on the rezoning of South Boston. Mark McGonigle from Southie is chairing the meetings for the BRA. Initially, representatives from community organizations will meet Mr. McGonagle to focus on the concerns from each neighborhood. Later when a ground work is established public meetings will be held to allow everyone to be heard.

These are just a few of the many issues actually affecting our quality of life. The lame stream media might give coverage that informs and not inflames.

Take care till next week.

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town famous for a Revolutionary War battle that helped gain our country its freedom and it’s cancelled because it’s too offensive.

Americans are standing up to the PC (politically correct) tyrants who want to ban our flag and destroy cherished traditions all across the country. This needs to happen in Massachusetts as well. Benjamin Franklin once said “Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God”. Maybe a good place to start would be that high school in Lexington.

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New England Council President & CEO Jim Brett, a Dorchester resident, with U.S. Representative Stephen Lynch at a recent event hosted by The New England Council at the Hampshire House in Boston.

AG Maura Healey Opposes “Full Legalization Of Marijuana”

While maintaining her support for decriminalizing possession of small amounts of the drug, Attorney General Maura Healey declared her opposition to legalizing marijuana. Healey told Boston Herald Radio, “What I oppose though now is full legalization of marijuana.” Healey said her opinion was informed by conversations with attorneys general from Washington and Colorado, where voters passed marijuana legalization referendums in 2012. Healey said that those law enforcement officials have not seen a drop in drug trafficking and saw people



from out of state purchase “vast amounts” of the drug to traffic it. “Certainly they’ve seen some revenues and that was part of the motivation behind this, but at the end of the day they’re seeing some real problems, particularly with the illegal drug and gun trafficking,

because oftentimes guns go along with the drug trafficking there,” Healey said.

“There’s a real difference between drug users and addicts and drug traffickers,” Healey added. “Do I believe that we should put drug traffickers in jail or in prison? I do. I do. You see what’s happening in our communities. You see what’s happening with the gang and the gun violence that’s attendant to the high-level drug trafficking.”

As reported in MassLive by Andy Metzger, following successful ballot initiatives to decriminalize possession of small amounts of marijuana in 2008 and to legalize marijuana for medical purposes in 2012, Massachusetts voters may be asked to decide another ballot question in 2016 regarding the full legalization of marijuana. Some lawmakers have filed legislation to legalize marijuana, an effort

that would at the very least give elected officials some control over the process and head off a ballot drive. Bay State Repeal, which backs a ballot question, said the bill includes “excessive” taxes on the product, making it more difficult for the legal variety to compete with the black market. Gov. Charlie Baker also opposes the legalization of marijuana.

A Democrat who won office last November, Healey said she supports putting drug traffickers behind bars and said “we don’t see” people in Massachusetts locked up simply for possession charges.

It is important to further note that the law that allows for medical marijuana dispensaries to treat certified patients has strict guidelines. Some of the companies that have been awarded state licenses have indicated that they have no plans to be in the retail marijuana business.



Huh? Prime South Boston Hotel Site Looking For Tax Break?

Is another tax break for a high end luxury hotel warranted? “Not before there are tax breaks for the elderly homeowner or middle class family looking to

stay in South Boston”, said one incredulous resident. Because of the rise in home values, the tax bill of local residents, especially seniors, who have owned their home and are desperately trying to hold onto it, has risen such that they have to choose between food, fuel or paying their taxes.

Greg Sullivan, research director at the Pioneer Institute, a conservative think tank in Boston said, “If the convention center

expansion can’t attract a major hotel company to build a hotel directly across the street from the convention center on its own merits,” he said, “then what is the point?”

According to Boston Globe reporter Jon Chesto, City and convention center officials are considering property tax breaks to help build a massive hotel complex across from the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center,

even as the area has emerged as one of the hottest urban real estate markets on the East Coast.

Mayor Martin J. Walsh said officials are “in discussions” about providing a public subsidy for the South Boston waterfront project, which would have at least 1,200 rooms and cost roughly \$800 million to build. “Everything is on the table,” the mayor said Thursday night. “If it’s going to help grow the area, I’m certainly not going to walk away from it.”

This stance has often found itself in conflict with Mayor Walsh’s efforts to maintain and grow the middle class. Somehow, the City continues down a path of underwriting major development projects based on its speculation that the investment grows the economy. Some economists argue that the economic growth has an inverse if not divergent effect on residency and affordability. Property values rise and costs go up. Jobs pay more but can’t keep pace with costs. Home values rise and get out of reach to most middle class buyers. The aging population that wants to hold onto their only asset are pinching pennies and sacrificing yet again.

According to the Mayor’s Boston 2030 Housing Initiative, admittedly 4,325 Senior Homeowners (22.5% of all seniors in Boston) earn less than \$25,000 and another 5,031 (26.2%) earn less than \$50,000. Perhaps it’s time to consider a full tax break to this segment of the economy. If not a direct tax forgiveness for a period of time, an interest free deferral, just like Jordan’s Furniture.

Governor Baker spokesman Tim Buckley said the administration is not considering additional state funds for the hotel, and the administration recently shared that view with the convention center leadership.

Last month, three development teams submitted a total of six proposals for the hotel project.

An eight-member panel with

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Gatey Response to Globe Editorial

Last Thursday's Globe editorial proclaimed "After delay, BRA makes the right call on Southie condos". There is a long held general theory that if the Globe thinks something is good for Southie, it must be bad, and this is one more example proving that theory correct. It's not surprising that Globe would endorse luxury condos over a charter school, especially since most Southie residents oppose the idea. Once again, the out of touch Globe thinks they know what's better for the community than the residents in our community. Do we need luxury condos more than a charter school or elderly housing? The Globe and the developers think so.

Ironically, the Globe had an article by Peter Schworm the same day praising the success of Boston's charter schools. Of course, if one of the last remaining school buildings in Southie is converted to condos with all the others, that opportunity for Southie to add a quality charter school could be lost forever. Today, only 1 of the 36 Boston charter schools operates in South Boston. The Globe thinks charter schools are great-just not for Southie.

The editorial and preceding article on March 12th lay the blame fully on the neighbor's inability to find a school tenant, leaving the recalcitrant owner of the property (the Archdiocese), and the developers blameless. Their

major point is that the neighborhood association had 8 months to find a new tenant. How was that possible when the Church had a legal purchase and sale agreement with the developer during that time that is still in effect? The church was precluded from talking to any other suitor and what school would be willing to commit to a building without being able to inspect the building or negotiate a deal?

Despite the obstacles, over the last 4 years there have been two elderly housing groups and 4 charter schools who have expressed interest in this building. Last week, the best Charter School in the city has reached out to us expressing their interest in leasing or buying the property after the alternative they had been working on fell through.

We were told that if a school could be found for the Gatey building, the luxury condo option would be dead. So why isn't it and why is the Globe pushing it?

More to the point, why do the Archdiocese and the developer have more influence over the City than the residents who supported the church, and the community who helped elect the mayor. If there was a genuine interest in preserving the middle class, then the City should call upon the archdiocese and the developer to amend the purchase contract with a proviso that the archdiocese is free to enter into discussions, show the property and entertain other offers/uses with total transparency by including a neighborhood committee at the table.

South Boston Today ran two online polls. The February 20, 2014 issue reported the result that 97% of over 5,000 respondents wanted a charter school on that site with 3% favoring condos. In their April 3, 2014 issue, 88% voted against rezoning the Gate of Heaven School building to accommodate luxury condos. In the two meetings run by the Gate of Heaven Civic Association and one by the BRA, the opposition to luxury condos was overwhelming and passionate.

Unhappy with those results, the developer asked the mayor's office to poll only residents on the immediate block of the school.

The mayor's representative reported the results as 85% against the condos. The Globe dismissed this with a quote from a firefighter and nearby resident who said "...the neighborhood isn't nearly as united in opposition to the project as the informal poll made it seem". A paper with higher journalistic standards would have pointed out that the firefighter is the brother-in law to someone on the developer's team.

So once again, the Globe gets it wrong when it comes to Southie. We don't need any more luxury condos, what we need is a quality charter school and please don't tell us we can afford to lose those 40 parking spots.

Gate of Heaven Civic Association

Recent South Boston Real Estate Sales

Property/Type	Price	Sale Date	Rooms	Baths	Sq Ft
25 Channel Center St UNIT PH107 Condo	\$1,275,000	2/2/15	5	2	1528
123 Farragut Rd UNIT 123 Condo	\$990,000	2/19/15	6	2	2017
503 East First St UNIT 5 Condo	\$839,000	2/3/15	4	2.5	1409
104 G Street Three Family	\$720,000	2/10/15	11	3	2358
24 Vinton Street Two Family	\$710,000	2/17/15	8	3	2076
1-3 Springer Street Single Family	\$700,000	2/6/15	6	1.5	1710
215-219 Athens St UNIT3 Condo	\$650,000	2/5/15	4	2	1200
861 East Second St UNIT 2 Condo	\$638,000	2/11/15	4	2	1690
49 L St UNIT 2 Condo	\$635,000	2/13/15	4	2	1047
215 Athens St UNIT 1 Condo	\$630,000	2/11/15	4	2	1200
215-219 Athens St UNIT2 Condo	\$615,000	2/13/15	4	2	1200
639 E Sixth Street Single Family	\$576,000	2/6/15	6	1.5	1700
9 Broadway UNIT 600 Condo	\$540,000	2/19/15	3	1.5	1032
697 East Eighth St UNIT 2 Condo	\$530,000	2/13/15	4	2	1152
505 East Third St UNIT 2 Condo	\$518,000	2/19/15	5	2	880
505 East Third St UNIT 1 Condo	\$492,000	2/9/15	4	2	837
271 Gold Street Single Family	\$455,000	2/4/15	7	2	1400
370 E Eighth Street Single Family	\$433,000	2/5/15	6	1.5	1206
283 Dorchester St UNIT 2 Condo	\$419,000	2/18/15	4	1	741
120 Tudor St UNIT C Condo	\$377,000	2/7/15	4	1	814
85 Baxter St UNIT 2 Condo	\$375,000	2/13/15	5	1	929
206-208 West Ninth St UNIT 2 Condo	\$360,000	2/13/15	5	1	1448

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Councilors Wu, McCarthy and Jackson File Parental Leave Bill, Mayor Walsh Supports

Mayor Walsh announced that Councilors Michelle Wu and Tim McCarthy filed an Ordinance to create the City of Boston's first-ever Paid Parental Leave policy. The City Council will assign the Ordinance to a committee, where a hearing process precedes a vote on the matter. The Mayor will sign the Ordinance should the Council pass it.

The Councilors' Ordinance contains the Mayor's policy of granting up to six weeks of

Paid Parental Leave to men and women, as well as same-sex couples, who have worked for the City for at least one year.

"When we work together, there aren't many limitations on what we can do to make improvements in local government," said Mayor Martin J. Walsh. "It is important for parents to be engaged in a child's early life. I am thankful that Councilors Wu and McCarthy are supportive of this initiative, to grant parents who devote

their lives to public service the hard-earned support they deserve. My office is proud to support and introduce policies that advance both men and women in the workplace and all aspects of city life. It is my hope that businesses will consider taking the same action steps to ensure that families are thriving and healthy."

"As a new working mom, I am especially proud to partner with Mayor Walsh and my colleagues to ensure that Boston continues to lead on access to economic opportunity for working families," said Councilor Wu. "This ordinance will help alleviate some pressure on working parents who have to make tough choices every day to do the best they can for their families. Access to paid parental leave will be good for the City, for parents, and most of all, for kids."

"As a father of two, the bonding period between parents and a newborn is so important, and so is the bonding and support needed to strengthen the parents' relationship during a happy but stressful time," said Councilor McCarthy. "This is the right ordinance for Boston and its families."

Councilor Tito Jackson added, "Both men and women have important roles in the workforce and at home. This legislation will especially ease undue burden on working class families. I am so proud to collaborate with my fellow Councilors and Mayor Walsh, and I hope that this will serve as a model for both the private and public sectors to empower families."

Once adopted, the policy will help eligible City of Boston employees overcome a glaring deficiency in American family leave policies. Presently, the United States joins the countries of Oman and Papua New Guinea as three nations that lack a paid parental leave policy.

Approximately 178 countries offer a form of maternity leave, with over 50 countries offering leave to fathers, as well.

Previous parental leave policies, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act and Massachusetts Parental Leave Act, have focused on protecting parents' jobs during unpaid leave. The lack of income during periods of parental leave is a factor in the wage gap experienced by many women, and forces employees to return to work sooner than their particular family may really need with their newborn or newly adopted child.

Mayor Walsh is proud to work with the Councilors to adopt a Paid Parental Leave policy that features some of these specifics: Up to 6 weeks of Paid Parental Leave to be taken by day or week any time during the first year after the birth or adoption of the child or children. Applies to all exempt employees, both male and female, who have worked for the City for a minimum of one year, including same-sex couples, and employees covered by collective bargaining agreements whose agreements explicitly provide for this benefit. Applies for each instance of eligible employees' birth of newborns, adoption, surrogacy or other methods, and stillbirths.

Pay shall be structured as follows: 100-percent for the first 2 weeks; 75-percent for weeks 3 and 4; and 50-percent for weeks 5 and 6. This new Paid Parental Leave cannot be added to periods of unpaid, job-protected leave and, therefore, runs concurrently.

As a State Representative, Mayor Walsh was the lead sponsor of the legislation that goes into effect on April 7, 2015 to update the former Massachusetts Maternity Leave Act of 1972, renaming it the Massachusetts Parental Leave Act and codifying that it would be available for men, women, as well as male same-sex couples for the first time. Mayor Walsh is proud to work with Councilors Wu and McCarthy to build on that progress with this Paid Parental Leave policy.

CONTINUED FROM front page

failed, or if it failed in the city of Boston, the group would drop the bid, knowing that the International Olympics Committee would not site its Games in a City that does not welcome it. Mayor Walsh also supported that pledge and is hoping for 70% approval in Boston.

The Committee has been stung by recent polling that showed only a third of Boston residents want the city to host the 2024 Summer Olympics. Holding a vote is a high-risk proposition. Officials at both the United States Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee have strong aversions to ballot measures because they can amount to highly public rejections of something they hope to depict as prestigious. In these officials' eyes, an unfavorable vote in Boston would be a public-relations catastrophe. But because of Fish's involvement and his reputation, the United States Olympic Committee told him in advance of his announcement that it supported the referendum.

CEO Rich Davey's real challenge is not the landscape of international competition; it is dealing with the sub-rosa, parochial and often competing political agendas endemic to Boston and Massachusetts politics. This challenge is coupled with the

jockeying for credit among the political consultants that were hired. The sharp elbows will likely manifest themselves through the usual self-serving leaks to media friends, given the collective egos on the roster that are acutely aware of the public scrutiny of their involvement and the effect that the success or failure of the bid will have on their businesses or careers, not to mention the Mayor's.

Davey's principal role is to design and execute a plan to deliver the Games to Boston. It now appears 'the plan', if designed, was not fully vetted before the call for transparency by opponents of the Olympics bid gained support from the media and has resulted in the PR storm that Davey is hoping to weather.

Mayor Walsh for his part to date has publicly endorsed the bid and appears 'all in', but some observers are wondering exactly when or whether the Mayor will find himself compromised by the many and necessary tactical maneuvers that will need to be implemented along the path to executing the mission. They may include typical campaign tactics such as telephoning or sending personalized audio messages to supporters, providing transport to and from polling stations for supporters, and voter identification. Or if the opposition has gained momentum,



using unpleasant tactics often employed by political consultants, such as placing negative stories through media contacts, a tactic employed during the casino gambling process.

The press has given the Mayor credit for his calls for some level of transparency, yet those calls came after the proverbial horse was out of the barn. Issues such as eminent domain takings, use of historic sites and existing institutional infrastructure, not to mention transportation, all have vested interests looking to either protect or leverage their assets in any number of ways.

As for the impact on South Boston and vicinity, venues under consideration include the former Bayside Expo site, Castle Island, Veterans Stadium at Moakley Park, Fort Point as Olympic Boulevard aka the 'Pedestrian Spine', the main

Stadium at Widett Circle, the Pavilion on the Waterfront and possibly six sporting events at the BCEC. Some consider South Boston ground zero.

Now it appears that the Mayor's political consultants have put the burden on him and Team Walsh to deliver the 'mission message'. Somehow this could create an inherent conflict for the Mayor. It is nearly difficult enough to be perceived as watchdog, if you're a cheerleader and it may be nearly impossible if your political organization is being employed to persuade 70% of Boston to support the Olympics.

Nonetheless, if Davey and his team can weather this squall, then the 'credibility re-building' process can begin. Mayor Walsh in particular has something significant at stake. Will his team be able to deliver? Time will tell, and maybe sooner than later.

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BLEDSOE BACK IN NEW ENGLAND?

SOUTH BOSTON TODAY
Jamie Driscoll

Is Drew Bledsoe back in New England and more specifically, in Massachusetts?

The answer is, “yes”, but not in anything involving football; though this time, like the NFL, there are also high stakes, high risks and weather once again plays an important role in the final outcome.

In 2003, several years before retiring from football, Drew and his wife, Maura, purchased land in Oregon with the goal of growing and making premium wine. The business of making and selling premium wine (those wines retailing for \$50/bottle and up) is a multi-billion dollar, global industry with high expectations,

extreme physical demands and absolutely no control over the weather, which can make or break a vineyard’s annual effort to secure a workable harvest.

Nonetheless, Bledsoe was determined to pursue what had become for him another passion and with the help of childhood friend and noted Washington winemaker Chris Figgins, began making what has become one of the top 100 Premium Wines in America, Doubleback Cabernet Sauvignon.

While building up his new small business, he simultaneously began to lobby for a change in the law in Massachusetts regarding out-of state wine being able to be shipped here

and after a concerted effort, was successful in helping to have a new law approved and taking effect this past January.

“One of the reasons that I became so involved in this campaign was to impress upon everyone the fact that I was serious and fully committed to this business; I hope everyone understands that this is my new career, not just some celebrity endorsement type of thing”, Bledsoe mentioned when I had a chance to catch up with him recently. He also mentioned how the bill, which allows for the direct shipment of up to 12 cases of wine a year to adult purchasers, will bring new revenues to the

state through Registration and Renewal fees, as well as Sales tax revenue; so far over 100 wineries have registered and many more are expected.

He also went on to mention that the tremendous success he’s enjoyed with his first vintages of Doubleback Cabernet prompted him to offer another line of more affordable wines, The Bledsoe Family Wines series.

You can find out more about the new bill here:

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/188/House/H294>

and more about Drew and Doubleback Vineyards here:

https://www.doublebackwine.com/shopping3/account/shopping_login.cfm

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representatives from the convention center and the Massachusetts Port Authority is expected to select a winner by this summer, in time for the hotel project to break ground in 2016 and open in 2019.

The hotel would be built on two Massport-owned parcels totaling five acres along Summer Street and separated by D Street, to be connected with a pedestrian bridge.

The complex would be on par with Boston’s largest hotel, the 1,220-room Sheraton in the Back Bay.

Aside from property tax breaks, there are other ways to help spur construction. Massport is allowing the hotel developer to use the site rent-free for two years over the course of a 95-year lease. The minimum annual rent payment would then ratchet upward to \$1.8 million at the 14-

year point after the hotel opens. Massport director Tom Glynn said the system essentially allows Massport to recoup the lost rent in the early years by charging more during most of the later years in the lease. Massport created a similar system of escalating rents for the Renaissance hotel that opened on Congress Street in 2008, Glynn said.

The bidders for the convention

center hotel project also have another incentive: The convention center authority will guarantee that a certain number of room nights will be filled at the hotel. And Massport plans to build a parking garage next to the hotel with at least 1,500 spaces, alleviating a parking requirement for the hotel developer. The garage would be available to the hotel for its use, but also to others in the waterfront area.



Holy Week Begins This Sunday

SOUTH BOSTON TODAY
Staff Report

This coming Sunday, March 29th is Palm Sunday. This is one of the Holiest times on the Christian Calendar, observed by the faithful worldwide. Palm Sunday marks the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, the week

before his death on the Cross and the Resurrection that followed. Some churches refer to it as Passion Sunday. Traditionally, masses and services are more solemn and subdued than during the rest of the year. Palm Sunday actually marks the beginning of Holy Week, which is the most sacred time of the year

for Christians and it all concludes on Easter Sunday.

The Bible tells us that when Jesus entered Jerusalem the large crowd greeted him by waving palm branches and covering his path with the palm branches. All of this led up to the beginning of his journey to the Cross. Palm Sunday marks the sixth and final Sunday of Lent. It's the opportunity for

Christians to reflect on the final week before the Crucifixion and the Resurrection which is of course marked by Easter Sunday. In South Boston, traditionally, our churches see even larger crowds than usual. Palm Sunday is the day when parishioners and members of the congregation come and receive the Blessed palm branches, provided by the various churches as has been the custom for hundreds of years. These palms are then displayed in Christian homes year round and then replaced by new palms the following year. They are usually hung in a family room for all to see as a reminder of Holy Week and Easter itself.

Another practice by some is to cut the palms into smaller sections and attach them in the shape of a Cross. For more information regarding Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Sunday schedules, you can contact South Boston's local churches for days, times of Masses and Services. South Boston Today will have the schedule of Masses and Services for Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday in next week's issue.



Lowell L. Richards III Memorial Scholarship for \$5,000



Graduating seniors of a Boston public high school interested in applying for the Lowell L. Richards III Memorial Scholarship must have community service experience and must submit a 1,000-word essay. To be considered, all academic and residency criteria must also be met.

Scholarship applications must be received by Massport no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 24, 2015. For more information on the Lowell L. Richards III Memorial Scholarship, including an application checklist, please visit:

www.massport.com/scholarships



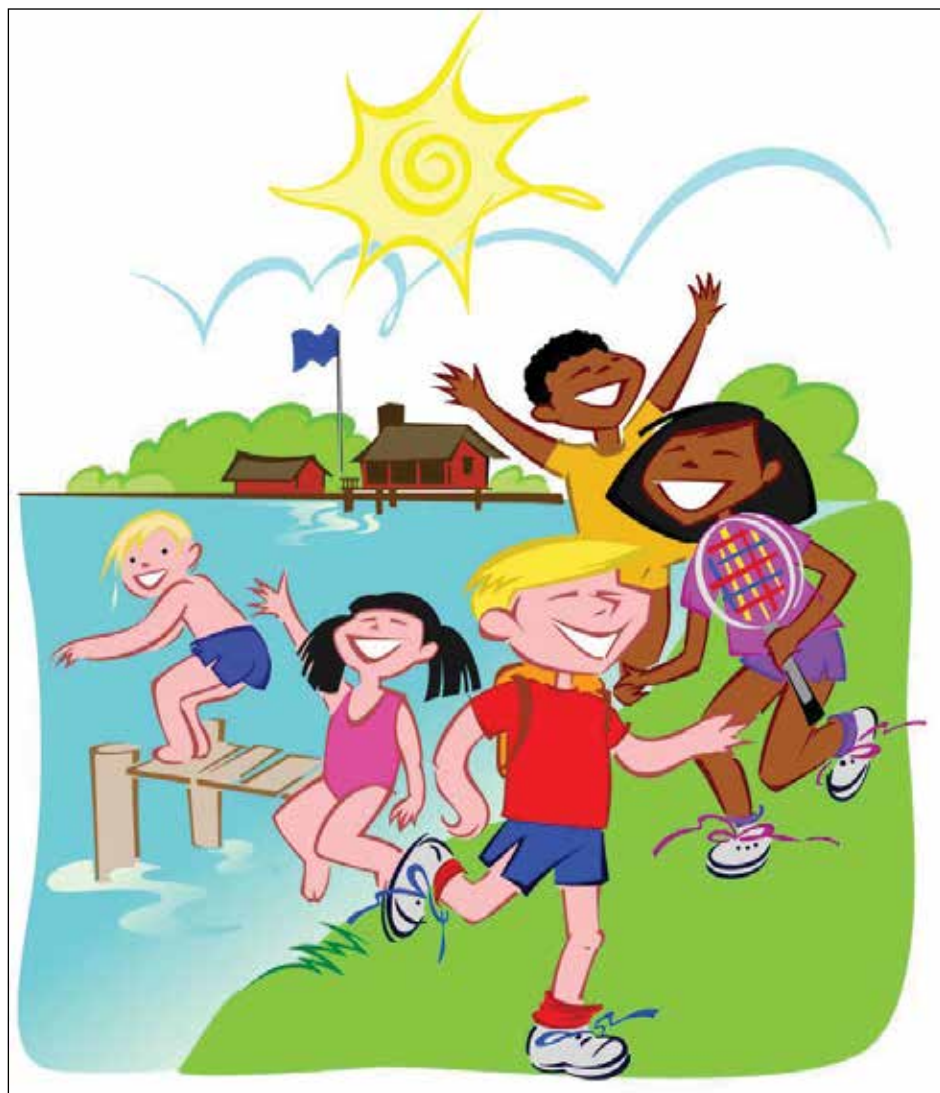
Thomas J. Butler Memorial Scholarship for \$5,000



South Boston graduating seniors interested in applying for the Thomas J. Butler Memorial Scholarship must have community service experience and must submit a 1,000-word essay. To be considered, all academic and residency criteria must also be met.

Scholarship applications must be received by Massport no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 24, 2015. For more information on the Thomas J. Butler Memorial Scholarship, including an application checklist, please visit:

www.massport.com/scholarships



Mayor Walsh Urges Boston Families to Plan for Summer Now

BCYF's FREE Summer Warm-Up Resource Fair April 11th Highlights Programs

Mayor Martin J. Walsh and Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF), the City of Boston's largest youth and human service agency, invite Boston youth and families to "BCYF Summer Warm-Up", a free resource fair to help jump-start summer planning. It will be held on Saturday, April 11th, at the BCYF Tobin Community Center, 1481 Tremont Street, Mission Hill, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"The summer is an important time for young people to be learning, engaged, making new friends and connecting to caring mentors," said Mayor Walsh. "The Summer Warm

Up is an opportunity for Boston families to learn about all that BCYF has to offer this summer and make plans now."

The goal of the event is to connect Boston children, teens and families with information about BCYF's summer camps and programs, youth employment opportunities, teen nights and activities, and community events during the summer. The Summer Warm-Up will have a carnival-like atmosphere with balloons, music, activities and most-importantly-resource tables. There will also be raffle prizes including \$100 scholarships to a BCYF summer program. Most programs are enrolling and this event provides all kinds of information about what's available. Don't get left out!

Boston residents of all ages are welcome. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Before you arrive, take a look at BCYF's Summer Guide 2015 to see what programs will be represented at the Warm-Up at Boston.Gov/BCYF. Hard copies will be available at the event.



"Calling All Kids."

In 2015, the Red Sox are "Calling All Kids" to join Red Sox Kid Nation for free. The first 25,000 kids (14 and under) registered for Red Sox Kid Nation will receive a free ticket to a 2015 game. Free tickets can be redeemed by signing up for Kid Nation: redsox.com/kidnation.

The free tickets are not the only element of "Calling All Kids" as the team is also making Fenway Park an even more kid-friendly atmosphere with the addition of:

•Gate K & Kid Nation Concourse - A special new entrance at Fenway dedicated to children and families located adjacent to Gate B near the corner of Van Ness and Ipswich Streets. The gate will lead fans into the new Kid Nation Concourse featuring new attractions for young fans, including: A seven-foot giant Wally bobblehead, Interactive video wall, Life-size images & footprints Red Sox players, Balloon artist, stilt walker, and face painter, Kid-themed concessions including a \$5 kids meal (mini hot dog, cotton candy, and a small juice)

•Wally's Clubhouse - Red Sox

Kid Nation Clubhouse is being transformed into the new "Wally's Clubhouse," open from the 3rd to the 7th inning season-long, providing families with a respite from inclement weather, a place to play and walk around, and a welcoming venue for children to meet Wally the Green Monster.

•Red Sox Kids Crew - A new group of Fenway Park staff, Red Sox Kids Crew, will greet kids as they enter Gate K, lead children in games, and provide families with assistance and information about kid-friendly Fenway Park activities.

•\$9 Student Tickets - \$9 student tickets for high school and college students will be available for every regular season home game for those 15 and over with a student ID by visiting redsox.com/student. The \$9 ticket is the lowest at Fenway Park, and it guarantees the student at least standing room, but may also include an upgrade to seats when they are available.

You can read more about "Calling All Kids" here:

<http://m.redsox.mlb.com/news/article/112994504/red-sox-unveil-new-initiatives-for-children-in-2015>.



Red Sox Notes Uehara Likely To Miss Opening Day

There is growing concern among the Boston Red Sox that closer Koji Uehara will not be ready for opening day. Uehara injured his hamstring this Spring Training during workouts. He has not pitched in nearly two weeks and has thrown only three innings this Spring Training season. Uehara turns 40 on April. He has saved 47 games in two seasons with the Red Sox, finished seventh in American League Cy Young Award balloting in 2013. He also made the All-Star team last season and has 181 strikeouts and only 17 walks in 138⅓ innings with Boston.

Starting the season without your closer is a tough way to begin a season, but the Red Sox seem to think they can manage with a short term solution. Edward Mujica, who has 49 career saves over nine big-league seasons, is the leading candidate to fill in at closer spot.

Red Sox Manager John Farrell expressed his concern to ESPN whether or not Uehara will be ready for opening day in Philadelphia on April 6. "With each passing day that he's not in a game, there's growing concern in the sense of, 'Will he be ready for April 6?'" We're just working through that." Twelve days until the Red Sox open up at Philadelphia.



W(h)ither The Bruins?

SOUTH BOSTON TODAY
Staff Report

The Bruins are back in a potentially untenable position as the playoffs fast approach. They are once again in ninth place, trailing Ottawa by 1 point. But this is not an easy climb back out of limbo. The Senators are the real deal unlike the Toronto Maple Leafs. The Senators overtook the Bruins with a 5-2 win over San Jose Monday. They are 15-1-1 in their last 17 games. The Bruins on the other hand have been leaking like a sieve. They are 8-5-4 in their last 17 games and 0-3-2 in their last five. The leaks have sprung both in the defense and offense.

They enter a nine-game end-of-year segment without their best defenseman. As noted in a column by Fluto Shinzawa of the Globe, ...'Dougie Hamilton is out indefinitely because of an undisclosed injury. He was hurt in Saturday's 2-1 shootout loss to the Panthers. The Bruins were already thin on defense following the loss of Kevan Miller following shoulder surgery. Losing Hamilton (10 goals and 32 assists while averaging 21:20 of ice time against tough competition) compromises what was already their weakest position.

The Bruins lost their most recent game to Tampa Bay on Sunday, 5-3. The score was deceiving. The Lightning could have easily doubled their output and made it a laugher earlier. There were stretches of the first period when the Bruins never even sniffed the puck. That loss came three days after the Bruins dropped a 6-4 decision to Ottawa...'

Where is the hallmark checking style that has been the Bruins stock in trade resulting in quality goal scoring opportunities? Are players hoping Patrice Bergeron will bail

them out game in and game out? Zdeno Chara looks exhausted from the opening puck drop. The speed of both the Senators and Lightning exposed the sluggish Bruins efforts, underscored by the uncharacteristic turnovers of Riley Smith and others. A piece of good news is the probable return this week of David Krejci.

The burden is squarely on the Bruins. They cannot depend on other teams to falter and then squeak into the playoffs. If they don't collectively step up, their golf season will start in April 12.

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