



# Finance Committee Report

## City of Newton In City Council

**Monday, December 9, 2019**

Present: Councilors Gentile (Chair), Cote, Rice, Noel, Lappin, Ciccone, Grossman and Norton

Also present: Councilors Leary and Krintzman

City staff present: Commissioner of Public Works Josh Morse, Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux, Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle, Chief of the Fire Department Gino Lucchetti, Director of Sustainable Materials Waneta Trabert, Director of Transportation Jason Sobel, Comptroller Sue Dzikowski and CPA Program Manager Alice Ingerson

**#441-19**      **Accept a grant from Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to accept and expend a grant from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to buy a server to place at Fire Station 3 to support the back-up dispatch center.

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:**      Chief Gino Lucchetti presented the request to buy a server for Fire Station 3 for a back-up dispatch center. The department applied for the Emergency Management Protection preparedness grant for the funds. The grant includes the material, the installation fees and a maintenance package.

It was asked if there any reports that need be given to the agency?

Chief Lucchetti explained they do get audited and they keep all the paperwork from the contractor; which is submitted to the agency.

Councilor Ciccone motioned to approve the item which passed unanimously.

**#386-19**      **Referred to Zoning & Planning and Finance Committees**  
**Request to appropriate \$50,000 in CPC funds for Pigeon Hill Trail Design**  
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending the appropriation of fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000) to the Planning & Development Department for a grant to the Newton Conservators, as the fiscal agent of the Riverside Greenway Working Group, for design of the Pigeon Hill Trail in Auburndale as described in the proposal submitted to the CPC in September 2019.

**Zoning and Planning Approved 8-0 on 11/14/2019**

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 7-0-1 (Councilor Gentile abstaining)**

**Note:** CPA Program Manager Alice Ingerson explained that the original proposal was to spread the grant money out to different projects, but the State decided they only wanted the money spent on the Pigeon Hill Trail because of the upcoming Mass DOT bridge project.

Ted Chapman, member of the Riverside Greenway Working Group, presented the attached summary of the project. With the current grant funds the project can be taken at 25% design and the funds that are being requested now should bring the project to 100% design. A map of this trail is attached. The cost of this project includes having to meet Mass DOT standards, making the project eligible for State funding.

Committee Questions:

- What will be the cost of the actual construction of the project?

Mr. Chapman explained the preliminary studies state that the cost will be between \$800,000 to \$1 million.

- Is the expectation that the State will be funding the project and what happens if the state does not fund the project?

Mr. Chapman explained the State will be paying \$162,000 for the design and the remaining funds will come from the request of the \$50,000 from the Community Preservation Commission. The expectation is that the State will be funding the project and if the funds are not available through the bridge construction project then Mass Trails are also an option for a funding source.

There was concern about how close the trail is to the Mass Pike and how the noise from that impacts the users of the trail. It was also expressed that their other ways that to reach the same destination.

Mr. Chapman explained that the overall project has two functions. One function is for recreation and the other is for transportation because the Riverside, Auburndale and Brandeis T-station can be reached by this trail. The Charles Street underpass is ideal for the transportation aspect of the project. The trail will allow access to the park from the Pigeon-Hill neighborhood. The trail is noisy at the end of Oak Hill Avenue and Evergreen Avenue; but once the trail moves towards the park, the Mass Pike is more of a background noise. Mr. Chapman explained that the Riverside Working Group has met with the neighbors of the project and will continue to do so.

Additionally, there was concern on re-routing pedestrians into the Pigeon-Hill neighborhood. It was explained that at the bottom of Pigeon Hill a pedestrian has the option of going along Auburn Street, which is a paved walkway and taking the right on Charles St. to access the park area rather going under the Mass Pike to reach the park, as the new trail suggests. Chair Gentile questioned spending all of this money on design and the overall project budget, when there are other connections/trails that would make more sense to invest in and for that reason will be abstaining from the vote.

It was noted that if the State is going to invest in the trail, then the Council should consider this project.

Councilor Lappin motioned to approve the item which passed 7-0-1, Councilor Gentile abstaining.

**Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#443-19      Appropriate \$300,000 for the site remediation at 687 Watertown Street**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) from Free Cash for the continuation of the site remediation project at Newton Early Childhood Program, 687 Watertown Street.

**Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

**Action:      Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:**            Commissioner of Public Buildings Josh Morse presented the request for the \$300,000 for site remediation at 687 Watertown Street. The contamination occurred in the 80's and each year the department uses a wells system for removal and then files the result of the removal with the State. Now a full remediation of the site will be performed. If this is not successful, then they would need to add a sub slab depressurization system. In the 80s there was break in the supply and return lines that fed into the oil tank where the boilers are located. Some of the oil was being pumped into the ground, the department is expecting to find low amounts of oil in the soil. The results of the remediation should test above the background levels required to dispose of it. The sub slab depressurization system will cost 50 to 75 thousand dollars if it needs to be added to the site.

It was asked if the complete remediation is being done now because of the renovation to the building? Commissioner Morse explained that this is the best opportunity to do this because the site is vacant, the ground needs to be opened up for stormwater and sewer work.

Councilor Norton motioned to approve the item which passed unanimously.

**Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#391-19      Authorization to revise White Goods and Bulky Items City Ordinances**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to revise ordinances pertaining to solid waste and recycling definitions, management of bulky waste items, management of white goods, including amendments to the fees and management of residential moveouts and cleanouts.

**Finance Approved 5-0 on 11/13/2019**

**Public Facilities Approved 5-0-1 (Councilor Lappin abstaining and Councilor Gentile not voting) on 10/06/2019**

**Finance Held 7-0 on 11/25/2019**

**Action:      Finance Approved 7-1 (Councilor Cote opposed)**

**Note:**            Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle and the Director of Sustainability Waneta Trabert updated the committee on the conversation they had with Waste Management about the pending contract. Waste Management agreed to lower the fee for bulky waste to \$20 an item rather

than \$25. At the last meeting the committee discussed having one or two pick-ups for free, but Waste Management confirmed that the City will not see the savings in hauling and tonnage if there is not a per

item fee. White goods will cost \$25 per item because they have a feasible recycling outlet and the item would go to the Rumford Resource Recovery Center after being picked-up.

It was asked if items are left out and are not picked up by Waste Management will there be a refund to the resident? Ms. Trabert explained that Waste Management would still charge the City because they made the effort to pick up the item. Waste Management driving to the pickup and the cost that goes along with that are why the \$20 (bulky waste) and \$25 (white goods) are being collected.

Comments from Councilors:

There is still a concern that the City is going from charging no fee for a bulky waste pick-up to charging everyone for this pick-up. It was suggested that there is a way to deter heavy users and still be able to provide this service for residents.

- Could the City allow one free pick up per year? This would deter residents from placing white goods or bulky waste out each week and would still allow residents to put out a few items for free.

Commissioner McGonagle explained that this would be a separate process from what they are proposing to Waste Management and would negatively affect the savings for the City. Newton would also have to add multiple dumpsters because Rumford Avenue would not have the bandwidth to house all the bulky waste.

The changes to the current ordinance is about aligning the ordinance with the idea of reducing waste and make people think about other ways to reuse these items rather than the City picking it up for free. Additionally, this will take away the administrative burden from the department and let them focus on more important projects.

Was there a further discussion on what counts as an item? Ms. Trabert explained that they do have a draft list of items and they will take feedback from Councilors. The current ordinance is written so that Commissioner of Public Works can amend the pick-up requirements.

The committee decided to bring the item to the full council with the \$20 per item fee for bulky waste and a \$25 per item fee for white goods.

Councilor Noel motioned to approve the item which passed 7-1, Councilor Cote opposed.

### **Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#444-19**

**Appropriate of \$129,250 from the State's Transportation Infrastructure Fund**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend one hundred twenty-nine thousand two hundred and fifty dollars (\$129,250) from the City's FY19 allocation from the Commonwealth Transportation Infrastructure Fund to be used

for concept design engineering services for the Complete Streets design of the Wells-Nahanton Traffic Signalization and Intersection Improvement Project.

**Public Facilities Approved 6-0-2 (Councilors Kelley and Laredo abstaining)**

**Action:** **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the requests for funds for the design of the Wells-Nahanton Traffic Signalization and Intersection Improvement Project. The \$129,250 is from the Uber money that the City receives from the State's Transportation Infrastructure Fund. There are all multiple concepts that range from \$6 million to \$3.5 million, some of the concepts can not be done because of the Conservation land on one side and the ledge on the other. Commissioner McGonagle explained that they are looking to bring one or two conceptual designs to public meetings. Additionally, the department is looking to add a sidewalk down to Nahanton Woods. The \$129,250 will bring the project to full design allowing the department to come back to the Council for additional funds.

It was noted that as of now, there is no pedestrian crosswalk in that intersection, adding a crosswalk will make for a safer intersection. Commissioner McGonagle explained that he will consult with the Ward 8 Councilors as the project moves forward. The changes to this intersection are to make it safer for pedestrians, bikers and will help cars exiting and entering Wells Avenue. There will be a slight improvement to the back-up on Winchester Street but that is difficult because of the high traffic flow through this intersection. There will be new signals and bike facilities added to the street.

Commissioner McGonagle explained that so far, they have spent \$100,00 on this project. The design budget is usually 10% to 15% of the full project budget. The full project is estimated at \$3.5 million. The state has done a traffic study as part of an agreement related to the 128/Add-a-lane project. Commissioner McGonagle clarified that the City has no record that the State committed to provide any remediation or mitigation funding due to the 128/Add-a-lane project.

Councilor Lappin motioned to approve the item which passed unanimously.

### **Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#445-19** **Appropriate \$500,000 for removing and disposing of sediment**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) from the Stormwater Management Fund Surplus-available for appropriation account for the purpose for removing and disposing of an estimated 3,720 cubic yards of sediment from the three City Hall Ponds and the influent culverts of Cold Spring and Hammond Brook.

**Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

**Action:** **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request for \$500,000 to remove and dispose of the sediment in the three City Hall ponds and the influent of culverts of Cold Spring and Hammond Brook. This was done in 2013. The City is on a 5 to 10-year schedule to do this. In

2013, the removal amount was around 2800 yards. The project will take place in early spring to get out in front of the smell that mucking the pond can cause. This will also help with the flooding at the library.

Councilor Cote motioned to approve the item which passed unanimously.

### **Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

#### **#446-19      Appropriate \$1,500,000 for the purchase of individual parking meter heads**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000) and authorize a general obligation borrowing of an equal amount for the purchase, delivery and installation of individual parking meter heads for on-street metered parking, and where appropriate, kiosks in city-owned parking lots and on-street locations and authorization to apply any premium received upon the sale of the bonds or notes, less the cost of preparing, issuing, and marketing them, and any accrued interest received upon the delivery of the bonds or notes to the costs of the project and to reduce the amount authorized to be borrowed for the project by like amount.

**Public Facilities Approved 7-0 (Councilor Laredo not voting)**

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:**      Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request for \$1.5 million for individual parking meters. Commissioner McGonagle explained that this request is to replace approximately 1100 meters around the City. The new meters will be smart meters with credit card capability, will accept coins and the phone app. This is through a MAPC contract. The department will be coming back to Public Facilities with the pros and cons of using kiosks instead of individual parking meters. A parking meter can cost up to \$1200 where a kiosk will cost \$10,000 which can replace 50 to 60 parking meters. Commissioner McGonagle explained that \$3,000 of the \$10,000 is used for the foundation so the actual kiosk costs \$7,000.

Committee members expressed concern about the functionality of the kiosk. It was asked how long it will be until parking fees will be only be paid through the app and is it appropriate to expend \$1.5 million dollars now knowing that additional updates are forthcoming? Commissioner McGonagle explained that they could do it now if everyone used the app and that the new meters life span is about 7 to 10 years. The department is not concerned that spending this money will compete with these meters becoming obsolete in the near future. Currently the Passport app is used in communities around Newton including Boston, Somerville and Brookline. The Chair noted that the committee should vote with the same condition that Public Facilities had which was to approve the \$1.5 million with the condition that the \$110,000 for kiosks is not spent until after an update for the Public Facilities and Finance Committee relative to the parking kiosk is given. Councilor Noel motioned to approve the item which passed unanimously.

**Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**

**#447-19**

**Appropriate \$5,750,000 for the Walnut St. and Austin St Newtonville Project**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to provide construction project funds in the amount of five million seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$5,750,000) for the Walnut Street and Austin Street Newtonville Rehabilitation Project as follows. Authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of four million and fifty thousand dollars (\$4,050,000) and to authorize a general obligation borrowing of an equal amount for the costs of the Walnut Street and Austin Street Rehabilitation Project to apply any premium received upon the sale of the bonds or notes, less the cost of preparing, issuing,

and marketing them, and any accrued interest received upon the delivery of the bonds or notes to the costs of the project and to reduce the amount authorized to be borrowed for the project by like amount, and; authorization to appropriate and expend the remaining one million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$1,700,000) from the Austin Street mitigation funds provided for as a condition of the Special Permit Board Order #119-15.

**Public Facilities Approved 7-0 (Councilor Laredo not voting)**

**Action:**

**Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:**

Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle explained the bid for this project came in significantly higher than the construction estimate. Over the last 14 months this has been true for most of the bids in the department. There were only two bidders for this project. A.R Belli won the bid at \$5,039,3330 which was \$500,000 less than the other bidder (IW Harding). Councilor Norton motioned to approve the item which passed unanimously.

**#442-19**

**Transfer funds for an agreement with the Teamsters Union**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the following amounts from Current Year Reserve to the appropriate departments to fund a two-year agreement (FY19 and FY20) that has been reached with the Teamsters' Union:

<b>Department</b>	<b>From Acct #</b>	<b>To Acct #</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Public Buildings	0110498-519700	0111501-511001	\$50,000
Public Works	0110498-519700	0140101-511001	\$250,000
Parks & Recreation	0110498-519700	0160201-511001	\$75,000
Stormwater	62A40101-519700	62A40101-51101	\$75,000
Water	60A10498-579000	62A40101-51101	\$55,000
Sewer	60A10498-579000	62A40101-51101	\$90,000

**Action:**

**Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:**

Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux explained that the City has reached a two-year agreement with the Teamsters Union (June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to June 20<sup>th</sup>,2020). The City intends to start

working with the union right away on the next contract for the next 3 years. The union used to be Newton Municipal Employees Association and has now joined the Teamsters Union in the last couple of years. There are several things that are very old and are not followed to the letter of what the contract reads but because they are a part of the Teamsters Union that language needs to be corrected. The key part is that within the agreement the heat days have been eliminated. The contract also includes employees that are working in air-conditioned buildings. For this to be removed from the contract, the Teamsters Union have agreed to a 4 day, 10-hour week. Half of the employees will work Monday-Thursday and the other half will work Tuesday-Friday. The contract will also include all of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations. There are 175 budgeted positions that these regulations would affect. Councilor Lappin motioned to approve the item which passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Leonard J. Gentile, Chair**



## Project Sources of Funding

Project FUNDING	A. CPA funds requested:	B. Other funds to be used:	C. Total project cost (A+B):
	\$50,000	\$162,000	\$212,000

- **CPA funds** will bring the Pigeon Hill Trail Design from 25% to a **full 100% design**, making it eligible for construction funding through the Mass DOT, when Mass DOT replaces the Recreation Road Bridge at the Lasell Boathouse in 2021
- **CPA Funds** will provide the required **20% match** for our MassTrails and DCR Recreational Trails grants



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## Significance of CPA Funding

- CPA Funds will move the Pigeon Hill Design from 25% to 100%.
- CPA Funds provide the match for the RGWG's DCR-RTP and Mass Trails grants.
- CPA funds help leverage \$1M in construction funding.



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# Project location

