

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2014

Present: Ald. Gentile (Chairman), Ciccone, Norton, Brousal-Glaser, Rice, Blazar, and Fuller

Absent: Ald. Lappin

City staff present: Maureen Lemieux (Chief of Staff/Chief Financial Officer)

PROGRAMS & SERVICES REFERRED TO FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 9/17/14

#254-12(2) THE PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEE recommending an ordinance to ban single-use plastic bags at certain retail establishments in the City of Newton. [01/10/14 @ 3:36 PM]

PROGRAMS & SERVICES APPROVED 8-0 on 9/17/14

ACTION: **HELD 7-0**

NOTE: The Committee voted unanimously to hold the item for answers to the following questions regarding the proposed ban on plastic bags:

1. Could the docketors provide a list of the large supermarkets that were contacted regarding the proposed plastic bag ban?
2. If the docketors spoke to representatives from large supermarkets, what comments were made regarding the ban?
3. What cost impact would a ban on plastic bags create for the supermarkets and would it be passed on to the consumer?
4. What is the cost differential for the switch from plastic to paper?
5. Would the larger stores continue to provide recycling for plastic bags, if the plastic bags are banned?
6. How many plastic bags are used by Newton supermarkets and how many plastic bags are recycled at supermarkets by Newton shoppers? How does that compare to the national average?

#369-14 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to increase the FY 2015 School Department's operating budget by seven hundred one thousand three hundred forty-five thousand dollars (\$701,345) to reflect additional Chapter 70 Education Aid that was received from the State. [10/15/14 @ 3:01 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux explained that when the School budget was presented in April 2014, a conservative approach was taken in regards to the estimate for the State's Chapter 70 education funding for Newton. At that time, the Administration committed any additional Chapter 70 education funding received from the State to the School Department budget. The City received an additional \$701,345 in funding because of school enrollment

increases; therefore, the Administration is requesting an increase of \$701,345 in the School Department's operating budget for Fiscal Year 2015. It is important that the funds be appropriated to the School budget before the tax rate is set this year.

The City received close to a total of \$19.7 million from the State for education. There was a question about how the School Department would use the additional \$701,345. The School Committee has been aware that the City would be receiving the additional Chapter 70 funds since June; therefore, additional teachers were hired and two new pre-kindergarten classes were built at the Education Center. The Committee members asked that Deputy Superintendent Sandy Guryan provide a memo to the Committee with further details on how the funds were used or will be used. With that, Ald. Rice moved approval, which carried by a vote of seven in favor and none opposed.

#370-14 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate the sum of forty-three thousand three hundred seventeen dollars (\$43,317) from Free Cash to reimburse the School Department for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Transportation State Reimbursement grant, which was sent as a general fund unrestricted reimbursement in June 2014 from the state rather than an education grant. [10/15/14 @ 3:01 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: The City received \$43,317 from the State's Fiscal Year 2014 homeless transportation reimbursement fund, which was applied to the City's general fund instead of the School Department's budget. The funds are used to provide homeless children transportation to and from the last school they were enrolled when they first become homeless. The docket request is to shift the \$43,317 to the School budget. A motion was made to approve the docket item, which carried unanimously.

#371-14 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate the sum of ninety-eight thousand nine hundred sixty-four dollars and forty-three cents (\$98,964.43) from the premium derived from last year's Angier Elementary School bond sale and that the bond authorization be reduced by that same amount. [10/15/14 @ 3:01 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Chief of Staff Maureen Lemieux presented the request to appropriate \$98,964.43 from Free Cash to the Angier Elementary School Project. This past February, the City sold \$5 million in bonds for the Angier Elementary School Project and received \$98,964 in premium revenue from that bond sale. State statute requires any bond proceeds for a debt-excluded project must go towards that project; therefore, the \$98,964 in proceeds will be used to reduce the bond authorization by that amount. Ms. Lemieux expects to be back with the same request for the next couple of years. Ald. Blazar moved approval, which carried unanimously.

#372-14 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate the sum of two hundred thirty-six thousand four hundred twenty dollars (\$236,420) from Free Cash to the Rainy Day Stabilization fund. [10/15/14 @ 3:01 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Chief of Staff Maureen Lemieux explained that the docket item is a request to appropriate \$236,420 from the City's Free Cash Account to the Rainy Day Stabilization Fund. Once the appropriation is authorized, the City will have reached the goal of having funds equal to 5% of the operating budget in the Rainy Day Stabilization Fund. Ald. Fuller moved approval, which carried unanimously.

All other items before the Committee were held without discussion. The Committee adjourned at 7:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Leonard J. Gentile, Chairman