

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2009

Present: Ald. Coletti (Chair), Lennon, Johnson, Salvucci, Gentile, Parker, Schnipper

Absent: Ald. Freedman

Also Present: Ald. Yates, Baker and Danberg

City Staff: Dave Wilkinson (Comptroller), Nunzio Piselli (Public Works Department), Sandy Pooler (Chief Admin. Officer), Paul Deschenes (Benefits Manager Human Resources Department), Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings), Tom Daley (Commissioner of Department of Public Works), Dave Turocy (Deputy Commissioner Department of Public Works), Josh Morse (HVAC Technologist Public Buildings Department), Dave Tannozzini (Energy Engineer Public Buildings Department), Eileen McGettigan (Assistant City Solicitor) and Elaine Gentile (Director of Environmental Affairs Public Works Department)

#299-08 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the Board of Aldermen accept the provisions of §18 of Chapter 32B of the General Laws which requires all eligible municipal retirees to enroll in Medicare, the acceptance of which will allow the City to enroll them in health insurance plans that supplement Medicare coverage for cost savings to both retirees and the City. [08-04-08 @ 12:35 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0-1 (Ald. Gentile abstaining)**

NOTE: Paul Deschenes, Benefits Manager Human Resources and Sandy Pooler, Chief Admin. Officer joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Deschenes stated this provision requires all eligible municipal retirees to enroll in Medicare. The benefit of their enrollment in this program would be that the City could enroll them in a health insurance plan that supplements the coverage provided by Medicare, resulting in cost savings to both the City and the retirees. The vast majority of the City retirees are already enrolled in Medicare. A small number of retirees are not eligible for Medicare and they will continue to be enrolled in regular insurance plans. There are a very small number of employees who are eligible for Medicare, but who did not enroll; acceptance of this section will require them to enroll in Medicare.

Mr. Deschenes indicated there are approximately one hundred eighty five retirees over the age of sixty-five who are affected. Retirees who do not have the forty required quarters (ten years) paid into social security are not eligible to receive Medicare benefits. Prior to 1986, City employees did not have Medicare deductions withdrawn, it was not a requirement for cities, towns, state and federal government employees. Since 1986, all employees have Medicare deductions withdrawn.

Ald. Coletti made the motion to approve this item and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 6-0, Ald. Gentile abstaining.

FIRST CALL ITEMS (ATTACHED REPORT FROM COMPTROLLER):

#69-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend seven thousand one hundred dollars (\$7,100) from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the Senior Center utility accounts. [02-24-09 @ 5:35 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Johnson not voting)**

#68-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend sixteen thousand dollars (\$16,000) from Free Cash for the purpose of supplementing the Newton Library Overtime accounts. [02-24-09 @ 5:35 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Johnson not voting)**

NOTE: The above two listed items were contained in the attached First Call Report, prepared by the Comptroller, David Wilkinson dated March 6, 2009.

David Wilkinson, Comptroller joined the Committee for discussion on these items. The Committee, after reviewing said report along with submitted backup information voted without debate to approve the above two items by a vote of 6-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#59-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend eighty two thousand dollars (\$82,000) from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of entering into a contract with NORESKO to perform energy audits of the following locations: Bigelow Middle School, Brown Middle School, Oak Hill Middle School, Education Center, City Hall and Police Headquarters. [02/10/09 @ 4:41 PM]

**PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Gentile not voting)
on 03-04-09**

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Nick Parnell, Commissioner of Public Buildings, Josh Morse, HVAC Technologist Public Buildings Department and Dave Tannozzini Energy Engineer Public Buildings Department joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Parnell presented to the Committee this item and explained that this request for funds is to perform energy audits at six City buildings by entering a contract with NORESKO. Mr. Parnell stated these six buildings have been identified through the work of Mr. Tannozzini and Mr. Morse's analysis and these sites identified are the largest users of energy in the City.

The energy audits at the next six buildings would identify projects to be completed. After the energy audits are completed, recommendations would be made to the City who will determine the scope of construction and whether to proceed with NORESKO as the contractor. If the City

opts to work with NORESKO as the contractor, the City will not pay the fees for the audits, as they are paid for through the energy savings. Therefore, the appropriation requested will only be necessary if the City does not move forward with a contract with NORESKO. If the projects were completed, they would generate energy and substantial cost savings to the City saving money over the next several years.

Ald. Parker made the motion to approve this item and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#58-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to enter into a contract for solid waste and recycling collection with Waste Management, Inc. for a term of five years. [02/10/09 @ 4:42 PM]

PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 3-0-4 (Ald. Lappin, Mansfield, Gentile and Lennon abstaining) on 03-04-09

ACTION: HELD 7-0

NOTE: Tom Daley, Commissioner of Department of Public Works and Dave Turocy, Deputy Commissioner Department of Public Works joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Daley provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee and explained that the pilot program began on November 3, 2008. On January 30, 2009 pilot surveys were mailed to residents asking for their response. Thus far, results have cited the following results:

- 91% residents are overall satisfied with the automated trash collection pilot.
- 95% residents are overall satisfied with the single stream collection pilot.
- 85% pleased with wheeled cart.
- 83% pleased with cart holding weekly household trash.
- 56% residents would prefer to additional bags and 44% would prefer to use additional carts if more trash was picked up.

Mr. Daley explained to the Committee that the plan in this contract is to implement automated trash and automated single stream recycling Citywide by using 64-gallon carts for trash and recycling. Smaller carts will be supplied if requested by residents. There would be no additional charge for extra carts, bulky waste, and cleanouts. Thus far, there has been 38% reduction in trash volume and 23% increase in recycling, \$1.1 million in budget savings next year.

Mr. Daley stated that currently FY09 budget is \$6,761,773 and FY10 budget status quo; stay with current contract will cost \$6,941,399. Difference of FY10 costing an additional \$179,626.

Committee members expressed the following concerns to Mr. Daley. Members suggested perhaps this contract should go out to bid in order to negotiate the best possible price. Members asked Mr. Daley will the collectors be able to run the same pace as they are doing in the trial period? Will trash pickup remain less than 10% for manual pick-up? Will the collectors be able to complete trash collection by 4 PM on weekdays? Will they have to work on Saturdays?

Ald. Coletti asked the Committee to hold this item in order to compare the previous contract with the new contract and the recycling contract. He would like to determine if there would be significant cost savings for the City and if so, how will these savings be spread out over the next five years.

Tonight, Chairman Coletti received a docket item from the Executive Department asking for consideration to request to appropriate \$2,560,000 from Bonded Indebtedness for the purpose of purchasing trash and recycling carts for this contract. Ald. Coletti stated Committee members have received all the necessary material and will be discussing this item at their March 23, 2009 meeting.

Ald. Coletti made the motion to hold this item and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#57-09 ALD. LINSKY AND DANBERG requesting an amendment to Chapter 19, §19-9, **Penalty for parking violations**, to impose a fine of \$100.00 per violation for vehicles parked in bus stops in accordance with Chapter 465 of the Acts of 2008 as of April 7, 2009. [02-10-09 @7:07 PM]

**PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION APPROVED AS AMENDED
5-0 on 02-18-09**

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Ald. Coletti informed the Committee that a new state law passed raising the fine in a posted bus stop to \$100.00. The MBTA, however, may enforce vehicles only in posted MBTA bus stops in cities and towns. If MBTA officials ticket an illegally parked vehicle, the revenue is split with the cities and towns where the violation occurred. Prior to this act, the MBTA did not have the authority to ticket vehicles in City streets even if parked in an MBTA bus stop.

This act does not apply to school bus stops because there is a separate definition in Chapter 90 that defines school buses.

Committee members expressed their concerns stating the current posted signs are unclear and need clarification in violation areas. Members suggested painting the street on bus routes.

Ald. Parker made the motion to approve this item and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#57-09(2) **PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE** requesting an amendment to the City of Newton's Ordinance Chapter 19, §19-9(4), **Penalty for parking violations**, to increase the fine per violation for vehicles parked in non-MBTA bus stops to \$25.00.

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0 (Ald. Ciccone not voting) on 03-04-09

ACTION: NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0-1 (Ald. Gentile abstaining)

NOTE: Ald. Johnson made the motion No Action Necessary and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 6-0-1, Ald. Gentile abstaining.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#56-09 **SGT. NORCROSS AND CHIEF CUMMINGS** requesting that Chapter 19, §19-200, **Resident sticker and visitor permit; municipal parking lot program**, be amended by implementing a fee for a municipal lot sticker and that §19-201, **Resident sticker and visitor parking permit**, be amended by increasing the fees for a resident parking sticker and replacement sticker. [02-04-09 @4:01 PM]

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Ald. Ciccone and Fischman not voting) on 03-04-09

ACTION: NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0

NOTE: Ald. Coletti made the motion to No Action Necessary and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#56-09(2) **PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE** requesting that Chapter 19, §19-201, **Resident sticker and visitor parking permit**, be amended by increasing the fees to \$25.00 for each resident parking sticker. [02-18-09 @ 9:30 PM]

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Ciccone and Fischman not voting) on 03-04-09

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Committee members were comfortable in supporting an annual fee increase from \$10.00 to \$25.00 for each resident sticker permit issued. Annually there are approximately two hundred thirty Resident Parking Permits issued. There is a maximum of two stickers allowed by the City Ordinance per dwelling. Included with the current \$10.00 fee a qualifying resident is also issued two visitor placards.

Ald. Coletti made the motion to approve this item and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#250-01(7) **PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE** proposing the sum of fifteen thousand four hundred seventy one dollars eighty five cents (\$15,471.85) be appropriated from the fund established through a special permit granted pursuant to the Board's approval #250-01 for the purpose of installing certain pedestrian access improvements in the Langley Road corridor at or near the Langley Path intersection. [02-18-09 @ 9:00 PM]
PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Ald. Ciccone and Fischman not voting) on 03-04-09

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0**

NOTE: Ald. Coletti stated that Public Safety & Transportation Committee members created this item on February 18, 2009 in the event the proposed amendment to the main item #250-01(6) was not allowable to reflect its intent to make certain pedestrian access improvements in the Langley Road corridor at or near the Langley Path intersection within the allotted budget. In the interlude, the Law Department determined the amendment made to the main item was permissible and the item had been approved by the full Board, thereby rendering this item moot.

Ald. Salvucci made the motion No Action Necessary and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 7-0.

At approximately, 10:20 pm Ald. Parker moved for adjournment, which was approved 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman