

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, MAY 11, 2009

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

Absent: Ald. Gentile

Also Present: Ald. Baker

City Staff: Joyce Moss (Chairman Community Preservation Committee), Alice Ingerson (Community Preservation Program Manager), Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings Department), Josh Morse (HVAC Technician of Public Buildings Department) and Dave Turocy (Deputy Commissioner Public Works Department)

REFERRED TO CMTE ON COMM PRES. PUB. FACIL & FIN. COMMITTEES

#90-09 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE requesting to appropriate and expend \$138,244, including \$2,000 for legal costs, from the FY09 Community Preservation Fund's historic resources and general reserves, to preserve and rehabilitate the exterior of the Jackson Homestead. [03/06/09 @ 2:20 PM]

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION APPROVED 4-0 on 03-24-09

PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 7-0 on 04-22-09

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0-1 (Lennon abstaining; Freedman not voting)

NOTE: Joyce Moss, Chairman Community Preservation Committee and Alice Ingerson, Community Preservation Program Manager joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Ald. Coletti stated the original request for the rehabilitation of the Jackson Homestead was funded through the Capital Stabilization Fund. The Board of Aldermen recommended that the proposal be funded using Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. The Board felt that it was the ideal type of project to use CPA funds. Ald. Coletti indicated that the Committee on Community Preservation and Public Facilities had a discussion on the project and both Committees approved.

Ms. Moss stated she is pleased to recommend this funding for the rehabilitation (not the restoration) of the Jackson Homestead. This appropriation includes legal fees, the transporting, and storage of collections during the time repairs will be made. Ms. Moss indicated the question remains ongoing whether this is a rehabilitation and preservation project or a maintenance project. She indicated the building is deteriorating in many aspects. Ms. Moss stated it is the City's responsibility for small repairs to be made as needed and Commissioner Parnell has agreed to include this property into the maintenance budget.

Ald. Coletti asked Ms. Moss if a commitment has been received to the work needing completion exactly as it is outlined in the plans. It is Ms. Moss' understanding the property will be appropriately preserved. Ms. Ingerson indicated it is her understanding the Public Buildings

Department will oversee this project. Ald. Coletti stated this money could not be used for another project.

Committee members agreed that it is an appropriate use of CPA funds. Therefore, Ald. Schnipper made the motion to approve this item and the Committee voted in favor by a vote of 5-0-1, Ald. Lennon abstaining.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#118-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend from parking meter receipts the sum of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) for the purpose of purchasing streetlight equipment for the Farlow Hill neighborhood.
[04/14/09 @5:32 PM]

PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 7-0 on 04-22-09

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0 (Freedman not voting)

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

Mr. Turocy stated there are ninety-four gas lamps within the City of Newton. The gas lamps are very expensive to operate costing over \$90,000 per year including repair parts, maintenance and gas. These gas lamps are lit during the day as well as at night.

Mr. Turocy indicated this request for additional money is to complete this project, per the requirements of Commissioner Lojek to purchase new streetlight foundations, poles and fixtures for the Farlow Hill neighborhood. Commissioner Lojek rejected the Department of Public Works original proposal to retrofit the old gaslight poles with electric fixtures requiring the installation of new foundations and poles.

Mr. Turocy stated in 2008, the Department of Public Works resurfaced several streets in the neighborhood and wanted to replace these lamps with streetlights but it was difficult to get electricity to the lamps because there is no electricity within the streets. As part of this project, electric conduits and handholes were installed so that the existing seventeen gaslights could be converted to electricity.

Mr. Turocy stated this project is an environmentally responsible conversion that will pay for itself in less than ten years, as well as reduce maintenance costs to the department. The \$40,000.00 cost estimate is based on vendor quotes for seventeen locations. The net energy savings associated with the conversion is approximately \$700.00 per month at current gas and electricity prices with an estimated payback period of less than ten years and will likely be faster, given historic annual increases in natural gas costs.

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

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#100-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend sixty thousand five hundred twenty three dollars (\$60,527) from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the Building Department FY09 budget for fuel costs. [03/31/09 @ 6:11 PM]

PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 3-0-4 (Albright, Lappin, Lennon and Mansfield abstaining) on 04-22-09

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Josh Morse, HVAC Technician of Public Buildings Department and Nick Parnell, Commissioner of Public Buildings Department joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Morse indicated this request for additional money is to cover the increased costs of utilities that will require additional funds and the cost to provide all utilities for the remaining of the FY09 budget.

Mr. Morse reviewed with Committee members a spreadsheet outlining projected costs/funding shortage of electricity, fuel oil and natural gas from March 18, 2009 through June 30, 2009 in various department facilities and gasoline for department vehicles. This spreadsheet was attached to the agenda.

Mr. Parnell explained fuel costs at the Auburndale library cost in excess of \$12,000.00 for approximately 1,500 square feet of space. Mr. Parnell explained that the heat was supposed to be kept at a comfortable level but instead the thermostat was set tremendously high to satisfy the temperature in the basement where the Friends of the Library worked on the book sale approximately four to five days a week. Mr. Parnell stated Mr. Morse has since visited the Auburndale Library and is working on addressing the heat issue. In the summer, Mr. Morse hopes to install a locked automatic thermostat control.

Ald. Lennon made the suggestion of moving the Friends of the Library work group upstairs and perhaps the Waban library food pantry could join them in order to maximize the use of space and limit the heating costs.

Ald. Coletti 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

#99-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend thirty eight thousand two hundred sixty-one dollars (\$38,261) from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the Building Department FY09 budget for HVAC repairs. [03/31/09 @ 6:12 PM]

PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 7-0 on 04-22-09

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Josh Morse, HVAC Technician of Public Buildings Department and Nick Parnell, Commissioner of Public Buildings Department once again joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Morse indicated this request for additional money is to cover the shortfall in contractual maintenance for FY09. Mr. Morse addressed Committee members stating that extraordinary repairs, upgrades and replacements have been made on five HVAC systems. Mr. Morse stated in his opinion, it is cheaper to replace burner controls and burner replacements rather than continuing to repair them. He stated the Buildings Department typically budgets for \$45,000.00 for HVAC related items. The current cost to date is \$83,261.00.

Committee members reviewed with Mr. Morse the provided spreadsheet (attached to the agenda), outlining these repairs.

Ald. Coletti suggested to Mr. Parnell perhaps he could add HVAC repairs to his budget next year rather than the appropriation be withdrawn from Budget Reserve.

Ald. Parker asked Mr. Morse if there are new projects being considered for completion. Mr. Morse indicated there are several other projects in the plans including the Noresco project, replacement of boiler controls in five to six School Department buildings and several other City building projects. He indicated the funding has been approved on some but not all projects.

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

At approximately, 10:15 pm Ald. Coletti moved for adjournment, which was approved 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman