

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2008

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

Also Present: Ald. Linsky, Harney, Danberg and Baker; Ed Spellman (Treasurer/Collector), David Wilkinson (Comptroller), Dan Funk (City Solicitor), Susan Burstein (Chief Budget Officer), Sandy Pooler (Chief Administrative Officer), Alice Ingerson (Community Preservation Planner)

#93-06(2) ROBERT E. & ANNE M. SULLIVAN, 391 Dedham Street, applying for abatement of a street betterment assessment in the amount of \$15,880 levied by the Board of Aldermen in Board Order #93-06 which improved Countryside Road by the laying out, grading and acceptance of it as a public way.

ACTION: **HELD UNTIL 1/28/08**

NOTE: The petitioners had indicated their preference to have this item scheduled for discussion at the next regularly scheduled meeting, on January 28th, therefore, without debate, the Committee voted to hold this item.

#207-07 ALD. COLETTI (FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR) submitting City of Newton Financial Policies draft, prepared by the Comptroller, for review and adoption by the Board of Aldermen. [06-12-07 @ 5:50 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 8-0**

NOTE: The Committee was joined this evening by Susan Burstein, Chief Budget Officer, and Sandy Pooler, Chief Administrative Officer. They indicated the Executive Department's support for the red-line version of the proposed Financial Policies.

This is an item that has been the topic of discussion for several meetings, and, after very brief discussion this evening, the Committee voted 8-0 to approve the red-line version.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#381-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation of \$20,000 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of increasing the Law Department account for outside legal services to pay current and anticipated bills for services related to the negotiations and settlement of interest and penalties assessed to the City by the IRS. [11-13-07 @ 3:27 P.M.]

PROG. & SERV. APPROVED 6-0 ON 1/9/08

ACTION: APPROVED 8-0

NOTE: The Committee was joined this evening by Ed Spellman, Treasurer/Collector and City Solicitor Dan Funk. Mr. Funk explained that the total amount of fees and penalties assessed to the City as the result of this processing error was \$275,000. To date, \$175,000 of that amount has been waived (as the result of appeals made by the City). It is hoped that a total of another \$90,000 will be waived before this issue is settled. The cost of processing all of these appeals, etc. will be at a total of \$37,000 to the City (for legal services).

The Committee understood the need to support this appropriation and certainly appreciated the fact that the City has been able to get the fees waived to this point. After very brief discussion, the Committee voted 8-0 to approve this appropriation request.

REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV., CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. AND FINANCE

#360-07 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$1,400,000 be appropriated, by issuance of ten-year bonds, from the Community Preservation Fund for purposes of acquiring title to 230 Lake avenue by purchase, for public use as recreational land and open space. [10-26-07 @ 1:36 P.M.]

PROG. & SERV. APPROVED 2-1-3 (Ald. Coletti opposed; Ald. Hess-Mahan, Merrill, Sangiolo abstaining) ON 11/27/07

CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. APPROVED 1-0-6 (Ald. Parker in favor; Ald. Lappin not voting) ON 11/27/07

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE FAILS TO CARRY 2-4-2 (Ald. Coletti, Lennon, Salvucci and Gentile opposed; Ald. Johnson and Schnipper abstaining)

REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV., CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. AND FINANCE

#360-07(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$550,000 be appropriated from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of acquiring by purchase the title to 230 Lake Avenue. [10-30-07 @ 5:17 P.M.]

PROG. & SERV. APPROVED 2-1-3 (Ald. Coletti opposed, Ald. Hess-Mahan, Merrill, Sangiolo abstaining) ON 11/27/07

CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. APPROVED 1-0-6 (Ald. Parker in favor; Ald. Lappin not voting) ON 11/27/07

ACTION: **MOTION TO APPROVE FAILS TO CARRY 1-5-2 (Ald. Coletti, Lennon, Salvucci, Gentile and Freedman opposed; Ald. Johnson and Schnipper abstaining)**

NOTE: Judy Jacobsen of the Community Preservation Committee was present this evening. She gave a brief overview of this proposed acquisition project. The Committee then heard a brief report (of discussion which took place in the Committee on Community Preservation on 11/27/07). Following that, the Committee heard a brief presentation from Mayor Cohen and Public Buildings Commissioner Nick Parnell.

The Committee also reviewed the most recent documentation submitted (which was distributed as an attachment to this evening's agenda; see attached).

Although there were many members of the public present this evening, the remainder of discussion on these items was done in Committee only. After each member of the Committee had the opportunity to make statements regarding their views on these two items, votes were taken. ***DUE TO THE FACT THAT THERE ARE CONFLICTING COMMITTEE REPORTS ON BOTH OF THESE ITEMS, A DETAILED VERBAL REPORT WILL BE GIVEN BY THE CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE ON THE FLOOR OF THE BOARD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 22ND.***

On the motion to approve item #360-07, the Committee voted 2 in favor, 4 opposed (Ald. Coletti, Lennon, Salvucci and Gentile) and 2 abstaining (Ald. Johnson and Schnipper). Therefore, the motion to approve failed to carry. There was no motion to substitute denial of this item.

On the motion to approve item #360-07(2), the Committee voted 1 in favor, 5 opposed (Ald. Coletti, Lennon, Salvucci, Gentile and Freedman) and 2 abstaining (Ald. Johnson and Schnipper). There was no motion to substitute denial of this item.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 10:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chair