

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, MAY 14, 2007

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

Absent: Ald. Lipof

Also Present: Ald. Danberg; David Wilkinson (Comptroller), Susan Burstein (Chief Budget Officer), Ann Cornaro (Director, Information Technology), Elizabeth Dromey (Director, Assessment Administration), Nunzio Piselli (Retirement Board), Chief Joe LaCroix (Fire Dept.), Bob DeRubeis (Deputy Commissioner, Parks & Recreation), Arthur Cabral (Budget and Project Specialist, Public Buildings), Bob Rooney (DPW Commissioner)

The Committee reviewed the following department budgets:

- *Information Technology*
- *Retirement Board/Comptroller*
- *Assessment Administration*
- *Treasurer/Collector*

The Department Heads for each department were all present for this discussion and, with the exception of one RESOLUTION proposed by Ald. Parker for the Information Technology Department, all were approved by a vote of 7-0.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE: *The Committee reviewed the First Call Item Report that was prepared by David Wilkinson, Comptroller (attached to this evening's agenda). After reviewing all relevant backup documents, the Committee voted unanimously (7-0) to approve each of the following items:*

#135-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend the sum of \$3,000, received as grant funds from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (through the Cambridge Public Health Commission) to be expended to purchase supplies and materials for the development of the Newton Medical Reserve Corps. [05-01-07 @ 6:14 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

#136-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend the sum of \$10,000, received as grant funds from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). Said funds to be used to hire an intern who will assist in the development of a plan to be used by the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). [05-01-07 @ 5:15 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

#137-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend the sum of \$15,800, received as grant funds from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety for the purchase of infrared cameras. [05-01-07 @ 6:13 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

#138-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$5,744.80 be transferred from the Municipal State Grant Fund to the General Fund, DPW Capital Equipment Account. Said funds are to be expended to purchase an interactive speed limit sign. [05-01-07 @ 6:13 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

#139-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend the sum of \$2,173, received as additional grant funds (in addition to the \$3,000 approved as part of the FY07 Budget) from the DEP as the annual Sewer Rate Relief Grant. [05-01-07 @ 6:14 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY/TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#142-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend a total of \$35,300, received as grant funds from the Massachusetts Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Board (\$25,300) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (\$10,000), to be used by the Police Department for support for training of dispatchers at SETB courses and for software development to create a better interface between the existing dispatch systems. [05-01-07 @ 6:15 PM]

PUB. SAFETY/TRANS. APPROVED 5-0 ON 5/9/07

ACTION: **APPROVED AS AMENDED 7-0**

NOTE: A memorandum was prepared by David Wilkinson, Comptroller indicating that docket items #135-07, #136-07, #137-07, #138-07, #139-07 and #142-07 all met the requirements for first call, review and vote by the Committee. **Please see attachment #1** prepared by David Wilkinson that explains these items are recommended for approval and Board Orders were prepared. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve the listed docket items.

AFTER FIRST CALL ITEMS, THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THE FOLLOWING REMAINING ITEMS:

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#140-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$30,000 from BAA Marathon Receipts for the purpose of funding park improvements and repairs throughout the city. [05-01-07 @ 6:20 PM]
PROG. & SERV. APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Sangiolo not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Bob DeRubeis was present and explained this item is the annual request for monies for the replacement of fibar material throughout the City. Fibar is the soft material which is placed all around the playground equipment and apparatus in the City. It is between 10 and 15 inches thick and it protects the children from being injured if they should, by accident, fall off the equipment. None of these funds from this appropriation are being used for any improvements under the current allocation that is made annually to various parks throughout the city. This entire appropriation is to make all of the equipment in the city safe and replace the ground cover which protects this equipment and the children who play in it. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this request.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#141-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$41,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of renovating the basketball court at the Lower Falls Community Center. [05-01-07@ 6:20 PM]
PROG. & SERV. APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Sangiolo not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Bob DeRubeis indicated that the basketball court in Newton Lower Falls was in dire need of repair. The city will not do this in-house and will go out to bid. The renovation will involve the total replacement of the basketball court and there were some questions regarding whether some of the other basketball courts, Auburndale specifically, and some others have been completed. In response it was noted that they have not but in order to get these funds approved so the work can be scheduled for completion in the near future, the item was approved. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this request.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY/TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#160-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$35,850 from Free Cash for the purpose of repairing aerial ladder two for damage sustained at a fire on March 29, 2007. [05-01-07 @ 6:15 PM]
PUB. SAFETY/TRANS. APPROVED 5-0 ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Fire Chief Joseph LaCroix was present and displayed pictures of the serious fire which took place on Commonwealth Avenue on March 29th. The photographs showed the massive fire in the attic of this house breaking through the roof. There were three men on the ladder at that time and it was impossible for the operator to move the equipment safely from where the fire broke through the roof. The men were actually physically moving down the ladder at the time the fire broke and as a result the operator of the equipment had to leave the fire ladder exposed to the flames and the ladder was damaged. The ladder has been put in for repair and should be completed by the end of this week. At this time there are two ladders out of service and it is important that this ladder be repaired expeditiously. In the meantime Newton is borrowing a ladder from the town of Natick and it is hoped the ladder will be back in operation as soon as possible. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this item.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#143-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$58,275 from Free Cash for the purpose of funding continued environmental clean-up of various 21E sites throughout the City. [05-01-07 @ 6:11 PM]

PUB. FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Weisbuch not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Arthur Cabral presented this item and explained that there are four sites where remediation is currently taking place. The Cabot and Horace Mann Schools have a combination of recovery and purification of the ground water under the buildings and the discharge of water. The Elliot Street Yard had a spill some years ago and there is continuous monitoring and clean up of diesel fuel on the site. Newton South Athletic Field has some contaminated soil that was used to compact the site and the City is continuing to remediate the effects of the contaminated soil on the ground at the football field at Newton South High School. This money requested should be enough for the next year and a half. This work is required under DEP cleanup which the City is required to follow and our licensed site professional continues to inform the state of the actions being taken by Newton. At the recommendation of the Chairman this item was approved 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#144-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$225,000 (\$15,000 from Free Cash and \$210,000 from bonded indebtedness) for the design and replacement costs of replacing the boiler at the Carr School building. [05-01-07 @ 6:19 PM]

PUB. FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Weisbuch not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: The Carr School, built in 1933, has a boiler that is not functioning at this time. The second boiler has been used primarily to heat the entire building and is seriously in jeopardy of failing. The City has informed the occupants of the Carr School of the School Department's intent to recover that building in FY2009 in order to convert the school back to active use. It is appropriate at this time that the City spends some funds to both remove the boiler and repair the existing one and replace the removed boiler with a brand new oil-fired steam replacement boiler. A breakdown of the costs was given to the Committee by Nick Parnell. Approximately \$35,000 will also be required for asbestos removal and the actual replacement of the boiler will cost around \$170,000. The balance of the money is for design and for other costs associated with the pumps and piping in the floor of the building.

The Committee had some questions on the replacement system and the oil tank which is stored under the building. It was noted that the tank has been cleaned and is functioning properly. The Committee moved to approve and the vote was 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#145-07 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$67,880 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the FY07 Building Department contracted maintenance accounts for unanticipated HVAC repair costs. [05-01-07 @ 6:18 PM]
PUB. FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Weisbuch not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Arthur Cabral indicated that HVAC repairs were required at the Crafts Street Garage, Police Station as well as several other buildings. These repairs depleted the account. During the season, the Building Department had to move forward to correct these problems. These funds are being solicited from Budget Reserve in order to pay the maintenance account. There were no questions and the Committee voted 7-0 to approve.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#146-07 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$43,385 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the FY07 Building Department utility accounts. [05-01-07 @ 6:17 PM]
PUB. FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Weisbuch not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: The backup information on this item explained that these accounts have been depleted and the account is in deficit. The Committee, without debate, voted to approve this item 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#147-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$25,200 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of replacing a portion of the roof at the Crafts Street Garage. [05-01-07 @ 6:20 PM]
PUB. FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Weisbuch not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: This item was presented by Arthur Cabral and he explained that the membrane roof over the Traffic Division of the Craft Street Garage has been compromised. This roof is currently leaking and must be repaired. The roofing contractor has submitted a bid. This is an emergency service performed by our emergency roofing contractor. The Committee had no questions about the proposed replacement and a motion to approve this item, which carried 7-0 in favor.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#148-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$115,205 (\$52,843 to be transferred from previously appropriated Parks and Recreation snow/ice funds not expended, and \$62,362 from Free Cash) to cover snow and ice expenses to date for the Department of Public Works. [05-01-07 @ 6:13 PM]
PUB. FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Weisbuch not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Bob Rooney, Commissioner of Public Works, was present and he indicated that the city had approximately 16 inches of snow this year and the city has spent a little over one million dollars in snow and ice control. There was concern expressed by the Committee that the amount of money spent was excessive for the types and quantity of snow fall. It is not atypical that the city spends up to three million dollars for a 60 to 80 inch snowfall season. The Commissioner indicated that some of these funds had to be spent for mostly ice control during two of the five plus inch snowstorms which we had that included a significant amount of frozen snow and ice and, therefore, there was additional overtime money that needed to be appropriated to have the manpower on hand in the event that the rain and ice storms turned into snow events.

There was over \$375,000 dollars spent for salt and Mr. Rooney indicated that by the end of snow season in 2006, the sand and salt sheds were depleted and at this time the city is over 85% capacity and materials have been purchased to replenish stock. The Committee reviewed a list of snow events and money spent and cautioned the Commissioner about the fact so much money had been spent for 16 inches of snow. The Commissioner will keep the Committee apprised of the actions being taken to monitor the use of overtime. Only \$230,000 was paid out to private contractors who actually plowed almost three quarters of the City. It was explained that on many events the City plowed the entire city

and did not use hired contractors and the Committee took that under consideration regarding overtime. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this item.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#149-07 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting that the sum of \$3,572,000 be appropriated (\$1,964,600 from bonded indebtedness and \$1,607,400 in MWRA interest-free loans) for the purpose of funding inflow in infiltration projects in the City sewer system over the next few years. [05-01-07 @6:12 PM]

PUB. FACILITIES NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Ald. Weisbuch not voting) ON 5/9/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: A new Board Order was put on the desks for review. (Please see Attachment 2.) Mr. Rooney explained that we are at the end of the City's inflow in infiltration contract which was awarded to Weston-Sampson (a very large water consulting company) and it involves the study, testing, design, construction and reconstruction of sewers and sewer systems in order to implement portions of the City's waste water facilities plant. The City is continuing to identify areas where water, especially rain water, is entering the City sewer system and costing the City additional funds by being transported to the MWRA treatment facility where the city pays on a gallon by gallon basis for treatment and disposal. Some of the money will be used for a complete camera identification and study of the Cochituate Aqueduct System which is a major aqueduct which travels from Waban through the middle of the city down into Chestnut Hill and consultants have continued to monitor and make necessary repairs in these systems as well as a significant amount of work which has been done in the Quinobequin, Newton Lower Falls and Auburndale areas. These bonds are sold and paid for from the monies that are generated from the water/sewer bills and also a 0 interest grant from the MWRA to assist in the completion of this work. Over the last 7 years, the cost has been in the vicinity of 17 million dollars which also includes cleaning of the city's water pipes.

The Committee had no significant questions about this item and it has been ongoing for quite few years and is now reaching the completion stage. The Board Order properly states that we are looking for borrowing authority for \$1,964,600 in 10 year indebtedness and there is also an authorization which allows the Public Works Department of the City to expend a matching inflow/infiltration grant, not to exceed \$1,607,400. With the corrected Board Order, a motion was made to approve and these carried 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 1 absent.

REFERRED TO CMTE. ON COMM. PRESERV. AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

#88-07(3) **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE** recommending that the sum of \$34,500 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund FY 2007 General Reserve, including legal fees in the amount of \$30,000 and bond issuance costs in the amount of \$4,500, in connection with the acquisition of 20 Rogers Street, whether by purchase or eminent domain, for recreational use. [04-10-07 @ 4:40PM]

CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. APPROVED 7-0 (Ald. Sangiolo not voting) ON 4/24/07

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: The back-up information indicated that the Law Department, which has an understanding with the City, that 50% of one of the attorney's time is dedicated to work on Community Preservation Fund and other legal aspects on the implementation of the CPA. A charge back process is thereby created whereby when items are dealt with by the City related to Community Preservation that charge is made for legal services and other associated charges. Since the acquisition of Rogers Street was moved on quickly, the Law Department had not prepared its legal expenses for the eminent domain taking. Since there is a potential deficit in the Legal Department's salary account, there is a request to replenish funds before the end of the fiscal year.

The Committee understands that this is an ongoing process and there was no further discussion on the item. The Committee voted to 7-0 to approve this request.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman