

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT  
**SPECIAL MEETING**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2007

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

Public Facilities Committee Members Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chairman), Albright, Salvucci, Gentile, Yates and Mansfield; Absent: Ald. Lappin and Weisbuch

Other Aldermen Present: Ald. Merrill, Hess-Mahan, Harney, Sangiolo, Samuelson, Baker and Vance

Also Present: Dolores Hamilton (Director, Human Resources), Lori Burke (Workers Compensation Manager, Human Resources), Lt. Hugh Downing (Police Dept.), Mike Kruse (Director, Planning & Development), Arthur Cabral (Budget & Project Specialist, Public Buildings Dept.), Susan Burstein (Chief Budget Officer) Joyce Moss (CPC)

#289-07      HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to expend the sum of \$13,012 from the Workers' Compensation Lump Sum Account for the purpose of making full and final settlement of a section 36 Workers' Compensation claim filed by Stephen O'Brien, III, relevant to injuries sustained while working as a school custodian on 7/10/06. [09-25-07 @ 3:57 PM]

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED 6-0 (Parker, Lipof not voting)**

**NOTE:**      The Committee was joined by Dolores Hamilton, Director of Human Resources, and Lori Burke, Workers' Compensation Manager. They presented information regarding injuries sustained by Mr. O'Brien while he was working as a School Custodian; he was attempting to close a window at one of the elementary schools when his arm went through the window. He suffered severe damages to his arm which required surgery. Mr. O'Brien was out of work for 2 months, but has since returned.

The Committee reviewed the backup information provided (attached to this evening's agenda), which shows where this settlement figure was derived from (loss of function/scarring, attorney's fees, etc.). It was understood that this settlement amount would cover all costs relative to this claim.

The Committee understood the need for this settlement to be made and, therefore, voted 6-0, with Ald. Parker and Lipof not voting, to approve this item.

#290-07      HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend the sum of \$10,576, received as grant funds from the US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. These funds will be used to offset costs associated with police personnel conducting comprehensive security threat assessment in the Newton Public Schools. [09-25-07 @3:57 PM]

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED 6-0 (Parker, Lipof not voting)**

**NOTE:**      Lt. Hugh Downing was present this evening. He explained that these grant funds will be utilized to pay overtime costs for three (3) officers and one Clerk from the Police Department to conduct comprehensive security assessments in each of the public school buildings throughout the city.

Lt. Downing explained that the City received a letter from the Department of Justice, dated August 27, 2007 which indicated that these funds would be made available for this purpose. He also presented (attached) a Budget Narrative which showed the breakdown for the distribution of these funds. These security assessments will be conducted in consultation with appropriate School Department personnel.

The Committee understood the need for this program to ensure the safety of those in school buildings, and, therefore, voted 6-0, with Ald. Parker and Lipof not voting, to approve this request for acceptance of and authorization to expend these grant funds.

**REFERRED TO CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

#257-07      COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$358,600 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund for the purchase and associated legal costs of acquiring 30 Wabasso Street (assessors parcel id number 41031 0053), as an addition to the Flowed Meadow Conservation Area in Auburndale. [08-03-07 @4:55PM]

**CMTE. ON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION APPROVED 6-0-2 (Linsky, Lennon abstaining) on 9/25/07**

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED 6-0 (Parker, Lipof not voting)**

**REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#257-07(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$41,700 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of clearing structures and debris from the property at 30 Wabasso Street (the property for which acquisition funds are requested from CPA funds under docket item #257-07).

[09-11-07 @4:10 PM]

**PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE APPROVED 4-1 (Ald. Yates opposed; Ald. Albright not voting) SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL on 10/3/07**

**ACTION: APPROVED 6-0 (Parker, Lipof not voting)**

**NOTE:** Joyce Moss, the member of the Community Preservation Committee who has worked most closely on the acquisition of this property, was present this evening. She presented the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee for this item. Basically, the city has had litigation over the years with the owners of the property over contaminated wells. The City acquired an adjacent property years ago, and now this opportunity to acquire this property has come up. There were two appraisals done on this property. The first was \$300,000, the second was \$360,000.

The Committee reviewed the appropriateness of the value placed on this property (currently assessed at \$245,000 and taxes are current). It is clear that, because of the proximity of this site to the former Rumford Avenue Landfill, it is important that the City acquire this property to protect the public interest. It has also been made very clear to the neighborhood groups that were present this evening that there are no short-term or long-term plans to build on or utilize this land for anything other than adding this land to the Flowed Meadow Conservation Area.

With that in mind, the second item calls for an appropriation for the purpose of clearing structures and debris from this property. This work would involve the removal and disposal of the existing structure, a fuel storage tank, as well as providing light landscaping to the area. Some of that information was, in fact, included in the original proposal for the acquisition of the property.

The Committee informed Arthur Cabral, Budget and Project Specialist for the Public Buildings Department, of the expectation that, because the bidding process will most likely come in below the requested estimate, funds not used will be returned to Capital Stabilization Fund. It was requested that a final statement of the costs be provided for Board review after this site is cleared.

With that understanding, the Committee voted 6-0, with Ald. Parker and Lipof not voting, to approve items #257-07 and #257-07(2).

***CHAIRMAN'S NOTE:*** *The Committee then adjourned (at 7:55 p.m.) to room 209 in order to hold Joint Committee discussion with the Public Facilities Committee on the following items (Ald. Parker and Lipof were both present for this portion of the meeting):*

**REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#291-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to enter into a multi-year contract for collection of municipal solid waste. [09-25-07 @ 3:57 PM]

**ACTION:** **HELD 8-0**

**REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#291-07(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to enter into a multi-year contract for disposal of municipal solid waste. [09-25-07 @ 3:57 PM]

**ACTION:** **HELD 8-0**

**NOTE:** Please refer to Public Facilities Committee Report (under separate cover) for details of the Joint Committee Discussion that took place relative to these two items.

The final votes taken by the Finance Committee on these items was to HOLD them 8-0. The disposal contract will be a 20-year contract. Elaine Gentile and Nunzio Piselli of the Public Works Department will work on the final details for that proposed contract, as well as an interim (extension) 1-year contract (which would indicate that the City would have a contract utilizing current technology until such time as the new 20-year contract is implemented). The Finance and Public Facilities Committees anticipate being able to discuss this issue further at another special Joint Committee meeting on Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 p.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman