

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2007

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

Absent: Ald. Parker and Schnipper

Also Present: Susan Burstein (Chief Budget Officer), Nick Parnell (Public Buildings Commissioner), Arthur Cabral (Budget and Project Specialist, Public Buildings), Kathy Glick-Weil (Library Director)

#305-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$15,000 from Free Cash to the Purchasing Department in order to provide funding to purchase a replacement van for the Newton Free Library. [10-09-07 @ 6:03 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: Kathy Glick-Weil, Library Director, was present this evening. She indicated that the Main Library is in need of a new van to be used to carry equipment, books and supplies between the Main Library to other locations throughout the city. She explained that the van which the Department was using for this purpose in the past ceased to operate last year; since that time, members of the library staff have been using a small department vehicle. The proposed replacement van would be acquired through the auction process (as is done with other city-owned vehicles).

The Committee understood the department's need for this replacement van, and had no problem supporting this request for funding at this time. Therefore, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve this item.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#307-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$1,600,000 from bonded indebtedness to fund the first half of the window and door replacement project at Brown Middle School. [10-12-07 @3:06 PM]

PUB. FACILITIES APPROVED 4-0-3 (Ald. Yates, Mansfield and Lappin abstaining) ON 10/17/07

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: On October 17th, the Public Facilities Committee reviewed and approved this request. It was understood that the Public Facilities Committee vote was not unanimous because detailed backup information was not available in advance of that meeting.

Chair Coletti explained that, subsequent to the Public Facilities Committee discussion, he met at the site with the architect, principal of Brown Middle School, Commissioner Parnell and Arthur Cabral to discuss the current conditions and the plans for this project. At that time, the architect provided information regarding the four possible types of replacement windows that could be used. The most important series of windows are the windows that surround the classrooms. The existing windows are steel-framed windows known as “curtain rod” windows. The problem associated with replacing this type of window is that the entire façade surrounding the windows needs to be removed, which makes this a complex project. Therefore, since it will be required to have specialized equipment on site (i.e. cranes, etc.) for the removal of the façade of the building, it makes great sense to replace all of the windows contained in that area (in an effort to realize overall cost savings for this project). Accordingly, Chair Coletti made the request that the original proposed scope for this project be expanded (resulting in an overall cost of \$2.2 million, which will be covered by bond authorization) to include the larger number of windows to be replaced.

Nick Parnell, Public Buildings Commissioner, was present this evening. He reviewed the provided backup information (which was attached to this evening’s agenda) with the Committee. He explained that, in order to have the actual installation of the new windows done over the summer months (during 2008), and because the windows (in order to have them match the original design of the building) will be custom-manufactured, the design portion of this project will need to be completed as soon as possible.

Since the contract for the window installation will be awarded through the public bidding process, it is advantageous to support this bond authorization at this point in time (as opposed to holding this discussion for a later meeting). It would be necessary to cordon off the school building due to the fact that the entire façade would be required to be removed, therefore, this project would absolutely need to be done during the summer months.

The Finance Committee understood the timing and need for this project to move forward, and, therefore, voted unanimously, by a vote of 6-0, to approve this request. It was expected that the Mayor would make a subsequent request to increase this bond authorization. It was understood that, if said request was received prior to Board vote on this item, then there would be a need for both Committees to re-vote the item by substituting the new amount of \$2.2 million for bond authorization.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE: *Please see the attached memo received on October 30, 2007 from the Mayor, which requests that this item be amended by adding \$600,000 to the original request, which will bring the total bond authorization to \$2.2 million dollars. Because this final amount has been changed since the Committees reviewed this item, the item will be SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL on the Floor of the Board on Monday, November 5th. Commissioner Parnell will provide additional details to Board members in advance of the November 5th vote on this item.*

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

#308-07 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE requesting that its spending authority for fiscal 2008 be increased by \$422,974 over its originally approved budget. Funds to come from property tax surcharge; state matching funds; and investment income. [09-26-07 @1:01 PM]
COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY PRESERVATON APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Parker not voting) ON 10/23/07

ACTION: **FINANCE APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: A request dated September 26, 2007 was provided regarding this item (attached to this evening's agenda). This request is being made in order to make adjustments to the CPA budget for FY08 that reflect funds received after the original FY08 budget was approved by the Board of Aldermen (in May of this year). Please refer to the attached draft board order. These funds will be allocated to the CPA fund as indicated in the draft board order.

The Committee supported this request, as it was understood that, in order for these funds to be expended (as is usual practice), future requests will be submitted to the Board of Aldermen for approval. Therefore, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve this adjustment to the FY08 CPA fund.

#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: **HELD 6-0**

NOTE: This is an item that has been pending on the Committee agenda since June of this year. When this item was previously (briefly discussed) in Committee, the Chief Budget Officer agreed to work with members of this Committee to come up with a final draft for implementation. It is hoped that, for the November 26th Finance Committee meeting, the Executive Department will be prepared to review and vote on a compromise (between the original proposal and that which the Mayor would support) Financial Policies document, as it is understood that the City's bond counsel is interested to see this item move forward for implementation. If the Executive Department is not prepared to do so, then it is expected that the Finance Committee will take a vote (on 11/26) on the draft as it was proposed by the Comptroller.

With that understanding, the Committee voted 6-0 to hold this item until its next regularly scheduled meeting on November 26th.

#208-07 ALD. COLETTI respectfully requesting that Mayor Cohen initiate a Tax Payment agreement with the Woodland T. Station developer prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for that project. [06-12-07 @ 5:50 PM]
NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0

NOTE: The Committee (and all members of the Board) received notification from the Director of Assessment Administration indicating that Arbor Point has, in fact, paid its first assessed property tax bill, and it is expected that the second tax bill (due on November 1st) will also be paid in full, as agreed and required. The assessed value for this property is currently \$6 million; it is expected that the assessed value for the property for FY09 will be approximately \$17 million and in 2010, the assessed value will be adjusted accordingly (as that is when it is expected that the project will be completed and a full certificate of occupancy will be issued).

Chair Coletti indicated that he was satisfied with the information provided by both the Director of Assessment Administration and the Commissioner of Inspectional Services regarding his inquiry on this project. Therefore, he indicated that he would support a motion for NO ACTION NECESSARY on this discussion item.

With that understanding, the Committee unanimously voted NO ACTION NECESSARY on this item.

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

#276-06 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$2,253,000 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund for purposes of funding the *Newton South High School Synthetic Turf* recreation project.

CMTE. ON COMM. PRESERVATION NAN 5-0 ON 6/26/07

ACTION: FINANCE NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0

NOTE: In light of the recent law suit that was lost by the City regarding the use of Community Preservation funds for this type of purpose, it has been determined that this item is no longer appropriate. The item was voted NO ACTION NECESSARY by the Committee on Community Preservation back on June 26th of this year. Therefore, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to support the recommendation for NO ACTION NECESSARY on this original request that was made by the Community Preservation Committee.

REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV., PUB.FAC. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#276-06(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$1,800,000 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of funding the construction of a new synthetic turf recreation complex at Newton South High School (these funds will supplement the requested CPA funds for this project under item #276-06).

**PROG. AND SERV. REFERRED TO 2008-2009 BOARD ON
10/17/07**

PUBLIC FACILITIES TO MEET

**ACTION: FINANCE NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 SUBJECT TO SECOND
CALL**

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#86-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$2,300,000 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of funding the construction of a new synthetic turf recreation complex at Newton South High School.

[03-13-07 @ 7:04 PM]

**PROG. AND SERV. REFERRED TO 2008-2009 BOARD ON
10/17/07**

**ACTION: FINANCE NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 SUBJECT TO SECOND
CALL**

NOTE: The Programs and Services Committee voted, on October 17, 2007, to refer these items to the 2008-2009 Board. Finance Committee members were concerned that, since neither of these above listed items will be ready for discussion until after the (recently approved) Engineering Study has been completed, and it is more than likely that the cost of the overall project will change significantly. It is also possible that a portion of the \$2.4 million in SBAB reimbursement funds for the Newton South project could be used to defray the cost of this project, which would reduce the amount of the requested bond authorization. Therefore, Committee members agreed that the appropriate action to take at this time on these two items would be NO ACTION NECESSARY, with the understanding that a new request will be filed after the report on the Engineering Study has been received, and once it has been determined what the actual amount of SBAB reimbursement funds earmarked for this improvement will be, and, subsequently, what the new amount for requested bond authorization will be.

With that intention, the Committee voted NO ACTION NECESSARY on each of the above listed items 6-0. Because there are conflicting Committee reports on these items, these items will be SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman