

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2006

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

Also Present: Nick Parnell (Public Buildings Commissioner), Susan Burstein (Chief Budget Officer), Bob Rooney (DPW Commissioner), Mike Kruse (Director of Planning and Development)

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#382-06 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$190,165 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of replacing the roof at Fire Station #4.

PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Gentile and Weisbuch not voting) on 11/8/06

ACTION: APPROVED AS AMENDED 8-0 (SEE DRAFT BOARD ORDER)

NOTE: Nick Parnell, Public Buildings Commissioner, was present this evening. He presented a letter dated October 31, 2006 indicating that the Public Buildings Department is requesting \$166,170 for roof replacement; \$14,940 for design and project administration, and \$9,055 for contingency for this project. This is part of the ongoing fire station improvement plan that the Executive Department has agreed to pursue in order to keep these important buildings from deteriorating any further.

The Committee was concerned about the piecemeal way that the Executive Department is attempting to accomplish the fire station improvements. The Committee discussed with Commissioner Parnell what is expected in terms of future plans for repairs as well as the specific details (i.e. type of materials to be used, whether HVAC units will be cut into the roof at a later time when they are available and ready).

When the Committee was satisfied with the information provided by Commissioner Parnell, there was a motion to approve the proposed board order as amended to include the requirement that the term for the bond issuance is not to exceed 15 years (see attached draft board order). That motion carried by a vote of 8-0

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#289-03(5) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$25,000 from the Bradford Development Traffic Mitigation Fund for the purpose of installing curb-line geometry changes at the intersection of Daniel and Jackson Streets in Newton Centre.

PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 7-0 (Ald. Yates not voting) on 11/8/06

ACTION: APPROVED 8-0

NOTE: Mike Kruse, Director of Planning and Development, was present this evening; he was joined by DPW Commissioner Bob Rooney. They presented a letter dated October 10, 2006, which indicates that access to the funds in the Bradford Development Traffic Mitigation fund will expire on March 28, 2007; any remaining funds at that time will be returned to the developer. The letter also indicates that the intersection of Daniel/Jackson Streets (which is located off between Parker Street and Langley Road) has long been discussed by its residents and the Traffic Council as well as the Public Safety/Transportation Committee regarding safety concerns.

The Planning and Public Works Departments have worked together with Board committees and the community, as well as a previously hired traffic consultant (Traffic Solutions, Inc.), to come up with a plan that will improve safety in this area. The final recommendation for re-design of this intersection has been approved. Therefore, it is requested that these funds be appropriated in order to defray the cost of construction to move forward with this project.

The Committee was in full support of this item and voted 8-0 to approve this request.

#378-06 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend a total of \$98,044 received as grant funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to support continuing efforts within the West Metro HOME Consortium, the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium and the Metro West Homelessness Consortium to create more diverse, local communities.

ACTION: APPROVED 8-0

NOTE: Mike Kruse presented a letter dated October 30th which indicated that these funds were received through an annual competitive HUD grant process; there was a national application submitted, in order to continue the City's work in reducing the barriers to affordable housing and to preserve diversity. The geographic area to be served by this combined agency effort spans over 14 local communities, including Newton. The City will partner with the Fair Housing Center in Boston (a non-profit organization with extensive experience in Civil Rights and Fair Housing advocacy).

This is an 18-month project which began on November 1, 2006 and will consist of 21 training sessions and the development of educational material (including 3 brochures) that will be translated in three languages (Spanish, Chinese and Russian). There will also be a component for a housing discrimination complaint system. The Fair Housing Initiative Program will be administered by the Housing Authority with direct oversight by the Associate Director of Housing and Community Development. The scope of the work was attached to this evening's agenda.

The Committee was in support of this program and grant acceptance, and voted 8-0 to approve this item.

#377-06 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend a total of \$40,00, received as grant funds from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development to support the efforts of the Newton Centre Task Force.

ACTION: **APPROVED AS AMENDED 7-0-1**

NOTE: Mike Kruse presented this item to the Committee. The Committee reviewed the backup information that was attached to this evening's agenda. There was a letter indicating that the City is in receipt of this 2007 to support the work of the Newton Centre Task Force. These funds will be used by Planning and Development staff to prepare a smart growth plan that reflects the City's priorities; said plan will include recommendations supported by the Newton Centre business community and property owners. This state reimbursement grant will be applied to planning consultants, technical studies, report printing, and other associated costs. Because these funds came from a state grant, the Commonwealth will perform an audit of the use of the funds.

It was clearly understood that, among these \$40,000 grant funds, there would be a reimbursement to the City for the \$18,000 which was previously appropriated (for visioning and consulting services) in anticipation of this reimbursement. It is expected that this item will most likely be placed on Second Call on the floor of the Board on November 20th due to concerns related to focus of this magnitude being placed on only one of the village centers (in the event that a substantial growth plan is created for just one center) and its impact on the other 12 remaining village centers.

The proposed draft Board order language was amended. The Committee added a specific reference to the reimbursement to the City of the \$18,000 that was previously appropriated. After careful review of all backup information provided, the Committee voted 7-0-1, with Ald. Salvucci abstaining, to approve this item with the amended language to be included in the final draft board order (see attached).

#206-00(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to expend \$35,000 from Hebrew College pursuant to provisions of Special Permit #66-98(3) and a Traffic Mitigation Agreement between the City and Hebrew College, to be used toward the cost of traffic improvements, studies or transportation programs selected by the City for the purpose of mitigating potential impacts of the Hebrew College project on Herrick and Langley Roads or improving traffic and flow in the Herrick Road area. Note: #206-00, approved 6/5/00, authorized acceptance of these funds; #206-00(3), approved 6/19/00, requested implementation of accounting measures to track future expenditures; #206-00(2), the actual expenditure, was held in Committee on 6/19/00 to allow Board review of proposed mitigation measures and costs on a case-by-case basis.

ACTION: **HELD 8-0**

NOTE: Due to the fact that it was unclear that a motion of No Action Necessary on this item at this time was the proper action, the Committee voted 8-0 to hold this item until the next meeting.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman