

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2005

Present: Ald. Coletti (Chair), Gerst, Linsky, Parker, Schnipper and Lipof

Absent: Ald. Gentile and Stewart

CPC Members Present: Ald. Linsky (Chair), Lennon, Hess-Mahan, Parker and Lappin;
Absent: Ald. Sangiolo, Yates and Vance

Also Present: Ald. Merrill and Danberg; Kathy Glick-Weil (Library Director), David Naparstek (Public Health Commissioner), Sandy Pooler (Chief Budget Officer); Charlie McMillen (Community Preservation Committee)

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

#305-05 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$55,700 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund for purposes of funding the additional work of a replacement slate roof for the Newton Corner Library historic preservation project at 124 Vernon Street.

CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. APPROVED 5-0

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: The Committee began this evening's meeting in joint review of this item with the Committee on Community Preservation. For details of this discussion, please refer to the September 12th Committee on Community Preservation Report (under separate cover). Ultimately, the Finance Committee voted 5-0 to approve this item.

#302-05 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting establishment of a revolving gift account for the ActivateNewton! Campaign to promote healthy eating and active living. Said account will be administered by the Health and Human Services Department and it is requested that there be a \$10,000 annual expenditure limit.

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0

NOTE: David Naparstek, Public Health Commissioner, was present this evening. He indicated that the City has been offered donations for which there was no practical mechanism to accept and expend these funds. He also informed that Committee that the grant monies received under docket item #303-05 (see below) were contingent upon the City's ability to accept donations towards this health-based program.

Therefore, it is requested that this revolving gift fund, with an annual expenditure limit of \$10,000 for this purpose.

The Committee was happy to support this incentive, and voted 6-0 to approve this request.

#303-05 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend the sum of \$4,608, received as grant funds from *Springwell* to the Health and Human Services Department for providing counseling, information and materials to senior residents of Newton about the safe use of medications.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Naparstek also presented this item to the Committee. He indicated that the City is the recipient of a Title 3 grant which will enable the public health nurses to provide counseling, information and materials to our seniors about the safe use of medications. *Springwell* has awarded the department the sum of \$4,608 for this purpose.

The Committee was in full support of this issue and voted 6-0 to approve this request.

#304-05 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$1,691 be appropriated from the Cable Franchise Receipts Fund for the purpose of funding the attendance of Theresa Park (Planning Department Telecommunications Specialist) at the National Associations of Telecommunications Officers Advisors conference in Washington D.C. from 9/22-9/25.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: A letter from the Mayor dated August 30th was submitted to the Committee. These funds are requested so that Ms. Park may attend this conference, which is intended for telecommunications regulators and other government officials to be informed and educated on upcoming trends and policy issues in telecommunications. It also offers opportunities for members to network and learn of successes and failures. Sessions will cover regulations, technical and multimedia issues, and programming. According to the Planning Department, this year's conference is critical, as Newton will be undertaking a new Cable Franchise Agreement this year with Verizon (which is a telephone-based company that provides cable service). This negotiation process could be complex.

The Committee reviewed the appropriateness of this request and it is hoped that a trip report will be provided by Ms. Park upon her return. The Committee voted 6-0 to approve this item.

#232-05(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$8,153 from the Wage Reserve account for the purpose of providing sufficient funds to implement the City Clerk/Clerk of the Board salary adjustment (as approved on 8/8/05).

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: Attached to the agenda this evening was a letter from the Mayor dated August 30th, along with a copy of the recently approved Ordinance (X-154). This item seeks to provide the funding necessary to make a retroactive payment to the City Clerk/Clerk of the Board and to cover the balance of this fiscal year at the newly adjusted salary rate.

Without debate, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve this item.

REFERRED TO PS&T, FINANCE, & PROG. & SERVICES COMMITTEES

#281-05 ALD. PARKER on behalf of NEAL FLEISHER et al requesting that the Board of Aldermen place a question on the November 8, 2005 municipal election ballot to override proposition 2 ½ for the purpose of restoring firefighter positions to the City of Newton operating budget such that fire engine 6 can be made operational for a total of 7 engine companies.

PROG. & SERV. MOTION TO APPROVE FAILS TO CARRY 2-4 (Baker, Hess-Mahan, Fischman, Merrill opposed; Coletti, Sangiolo not voting)

PS&T MOTION TO APPROVE FAILS TO CARRY 3-4 (Lennon, Gentile, Lipof, Samuelson opposed)

ACTION: **FINANCE MOTION TO APPROVE FAILS TO CARRY 2-4 (Coletti, Schnipper, Lipof, Gerst opposed)**

NOTE: This item was the subject of discussion at the joint meeting of the Programs and Services and Public Safety/Transportation Committees on September 7th. In both of those Committees, a motion to approve this item failed to carry, as indicated in the action note above.

The Finance Committee did not hold a lengthy discussion on this item this evening, therefore, a detailed written report will not be provided on this item. It is expected that this item will be placed on Second Call at the September 19th Full Board meeting.

Basically, this request seeks to place a question on the ballot for the November election for a Prop 2 ½ override in order to generate \$481,000 in additional taxes in order to provide funding to put Engine 6 and the required number of staff for that engine back on line (since it was eliminated as part of the current fiscal year operating budget).

It was very clear that, back in May of this year (as part of the Budget Review process), the Board of Aldermen agreed with the action of the Executive Department regarding the removal of Engine 6 from service. Some of the firefighters were reassigned to other positions, while other positions were not filled (vacancies created by retirements).

Members of the Board indicated that, as much as they would like to see Engine 6 reinstated, the proposed override question would better be saved until the spring, as part of the FY07 budget formation process, when we can better assess the City's financial situation.

A motion to approve this item failed to carry by a vote of 2 in favor (Ald. Parker and Linsky) and 4 opposed (Ald. Coletti, Schnipper, Lipof and Gerst).

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

#112-05 ALD. LAPPIN requesting discussion of policy guidelines/conditions for the approval of CPA projects involving matching grants in the event that the grants are not obtained.

CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. NAN 8-0 ON 3/29/05

ACTION: FINANCE NO ACTION NECESSARY 5-0-1 (Parker abstaining)

NOTE: On March 29th, the Committee on Community Preservation voted NO ACTION NECESSARY on this item. It was understood that Ald. Lappin was supportive of that vote. Therefore, the Finance Committee voted 5-0-1 on the motion for NAN this evening.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman