

CITY OF NEWTON  
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT  
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2003

Present: Ald. Coletti (Chair), Ciccone, Gerst, Bullwinkle, Parker and Schnipper

Absent: Ald. Lipof

Also Present: Ald. Lipsitt; Kathy Glick-Weil (Library Director),

**REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#484-02      HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$30,000 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the overtime account in the Library.

**PROGRAMS & SERVICES APPROVED ON 12/18/02**

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED 7-0**

**NOTE:**      Kathy Glick-Weil, Library Director, joined the Committee this evening. She presented a letter dated 11/27/02 which states that, during FY03 Budget preparations, the Executive Department (for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row) has short-funded the overtime account (which is used to provide for the library being open on Sundays). The reason why this particular budget is under-funded is that, during the year, some of the recruitment lag and salary funds that come from vacancies in the department are used to supplement the overtime account. The overtime costs were reviewed and there was a submission that shows that, from FY2000-2003, the additional overtime needs for the library department have gone from \$97,814 to \$112,000 this year (estimated). It is important to have these funds in place in order to maintain Sunday operating hours at the Library.

The Committee had a small amount of debate regarding the future of branch libraries and the future of hours of operation (based upon new funding levels in FY04. That will be looked at more closely during FY04 Committee budget deliberations.

The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this request for additional overtime funds.

#502-02      COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC WORKS requesting approval of the following mentioned sidewalk/driveway apron and/or curb betterments; said betterments to be graded and constructed and assessments to be levied under the provisions of MGL Chapter 83, Sec. 26, authorizing the assessment of betterments for sidewalk construction:

<u>PROPERTY OWNER</u>	<u>LOCATION/SBL</u>	<u>BOOK/PAGE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
I) Isenberg, Linda W., Tr.	14 Baldpate Hill Road 82-025-0002	1246/043	\$1,314.40
II) Solomon, Joseph P. & Barbara G., Trs.	5 Green Park 73-011-0003	25906/512	\$ 891.25
III) Allen, Jonathan & Chase, Ann, Trs.	10 Hampshire Road 32-041-0001	31238/193	\$3,100.00
IV) Tomaino, Maria	29 Harrington Street 21-037-0007	30163-034	\$1,299.00
V) Fogel, Marc H. & Deborah R., Trs.	51 Lake Avenue 62-008-0009	31370/019	\$2,063.75
VI) Wong, Bernice W. & Lee, Peter Y.H.	8 Owatonna St. 41-019-0019	20458/239	\$1,894.00
VII) Govini, Rosalind E. & Farina, Natalie R., Trs.	8 Park Avenue 73-008-0007	20458/239	\$2,965.50
VIII) Shapero, Beatrice	53 Park Avenue 73-007-0014	8898/57	\$ 907.00
IX) Snider, Jeffrey M. & Carolyn A.	56 Park Avenue 73-011-0002	30426/325	\$1,261.25
X) Natsis, Vivian	100 Park Avenue 73-012-0001	28749/065	\$1,300.70
XI) Nizamuddin, Kathy & Rahill	60 Pembroke Street 72-020-0010	24957/159	\$ 948.00
XII) Reading, Miles	25 Randlett Park 31-024-0015	1224/41	\$1,408.00
XIII) Norris, Charles M., Jr. & Gwen P.	10 Tamworth Road 55-050-0014	17061/412	\$1,838.00
XIV) Holman, Bertram Wolff & Randy Sue Foster	18 Tamworth Road 55-050-0013	19182/187	\$2,232.00
XV) Huoy, Charles & Margaret L., Trs.	26 Tamworth Road 55-050-0012	31711/090	\$2,553.00
XVI) Carney, Alan L. & Andrea M.C.	36 Tamworth Road 55-050-0011	28518/144	\$2,219.00

**ACTION:      APPROVED 7-0**

**NOTE:** These betterments all meet the requirement of being greater than \$500 to be placed on a betterment payment schedule. All of these were requested improvements. Without debate, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve this list of betterments.

# 30-03 GUIDO P. CETRONE, 41 West Street, Newton, Constable of the City of Newton, submitting annual Constable bond #58552404 in the surety amount of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000), pursuant to MGL Ch.41, Sec.92, 93.

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 7-0**

**NOTE:** Mr. Cetrone, a CONSTABLE for the City, has issued his annual Constable Bond in the amount of \$5,000, pursuant to the requirements of MGL Ch.41, Sec.92 and 93.

The Committee recognized the long term of service that Mr. Cetrone has had with the City and the work he does every week at the Clerk's office at City Hall. Without debate, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve this item.

**REFERRED TO PROG. & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#264-02 ALD. SALVUCCI AND LUCKY STAR GROUP requesting policy discussion regarding the feasibility of allowing taxpayers to voluntarily make donations to establish an Aid to the Elderly Taxation Fund for the purpose of defraying the real estate taxes of elderly citizens in Newton.

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 7-0**

**NOTE:** This item had been discussed before over the past 6 months, whereby the Committee has continued to review language from the state regarding these types of taxation aid funds. The Committee reviewed the draft legislation (provided by the City Solicitor's office) regarding this fund.

After discussion, a decision was made to adopt a proposal to allow for donations to be made for this purpose. With the acceptance of this item, a motion was made to approve the creation of this fund, subject to further review and policy discussion in the Programs and Services Committee. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this item.

**REFERRED TO FINANCE AND PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEES**

#420-02 ALD. PARKER, GERST, LINSKY JOHNSON, STEWART, LAPPIN, BRYSON & LENNON requesting local acceptance and ordinance to implement recent 41A revisions allowing expansion of tax deferral program.

**ACTION:** **HELD 7-0**

**NOTE:** The Committee has seen that there have been new guidelines set up by the state (a new legislation was just passed this month) allowing for increases in eligibility for the tax deferral program. A full review will be presented in the next month. Basically, since this program won't need to be implemented until next year, there is some additional time to allow this item to be taken up in association with Ald. Stewart's item (#214-02, which deals with a tax advisory task force).

Therefore, the Committee voted 7-0 to hold this item.

#380-02 ALD. YATES proposing that the City of Newton exercise the new option offered by Ch.184 and Ch.51 of the Acts of 2002 to adjust the age, income and asset requirements seniors must meet to qualify for tax exemption under Ch.59 and Ch.51 (41C) and the amount of the exemption granted to eligible seniors.

**ACTION:** **HELD 7-0**

**NOTE:** This item is similar to the previous item in that it would also change the asset requirements that senior citizens must meet in order to qualify for the tax exemption under 41C. The Committee also received information that this item had been approved by the state. We had submitted Home Rule Legislation for this and, instead, the state has adopted the change which will affect all cities and towns. We are waiting for the additional information to come back to the City. This item will also be taken up in conjunction with the senior citizen tax assistance study commission proposed by Ald. Stewart's item (#214-02).

For now, the Committee voted 7-0 to hold this item.

#303-02 MAYOR COHEN AND PRES. LIPSITT proposing an ordinance to implement a senior volunteer work for tax credit program under M.G.L. Ch.59, Sec.5K.

**ACTION:** **APPROVED @ \$750 PER YEAR 6-1 (PARKER OPPOSED)**

#220-02 ALD. LIPSITT, BULLWINKLE, COLETTI & MAYOR COHEN requesting discussion and possible implementation of M.G.L. Ch. 59, Sec 5K to reduce local property tax liability by up to \$750 per year for senior citizens in exchange for volunteer service to the City.

**ACTION:** **APPROVED AS AMENDED @ \$750 5-1-1 (STEWART OPPOSED; PARKER ABSTAINING)**

**NOTE:** These two items propose to do the same thing. The Committee had a lengthy discussion. President Lipsitt was present for this discussion.

The Committee reviewed the components of the state-adopted legislation that has increased the allowable tax credit program up to \$750 (from the original \$500 amount). This program allows senior citizens to be compensated at the rate of \$6.75 per hour for the hours for which they volunteer at the City in various departments. As they put this time in, they accrue tax reduction credits. The program is eligible for up to 100 employees on a part-time basis. There are certain requirements in terms of insurance waivers and other issues regarding workers' compensation. Basically, the program has been one that the Committee has looked positively upon since this item was filed. There was a great interest in the Committee to move forward on this issue.

In regards to item #302-02, there was an initial motion to approve an increase in the tax credit for the City for volunteer work to \$750. That carried by a vote of 6-1, with Ald. Parker opposed.

After thorough discussion about how the program would be implemented and operated, the Committee voted to accept Chapter 59, Sec. 5K and increase the amount of tax credit up to \$750. Therefore, the Committee voted 5-1-1, with Ald. Stewart opposed and Ald. Parker abstaining, to approve item #220-02.

#214-02      ALD. STEWART requesting that the Board of Aldermen and His Honor the Mayor create a "Senior Tax Assistance Study Commission."

**ACTION:**      **HELD 7-0**

**NOTE:**      Without debate, this item was held for future discussion by a vote of 7-0.

#53-02      ALD. YATES offering a RESOLUTION requesting His Honor the Mayor to take all possible steps to assist and encourage Newton property taxpayers to utilize the Circuit Breaker Program to lessen the impact of property taxes on low- and moderate-income people.

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED 7-0**

**NOTE:**      Attached to the agenda this evening was a synopsis of the senior citizen circuit breaker program (part of the state tax code). The Committee highly endorsed the adoption of the RESOLUTION and the encouragement of senior citizens to use this as a mechanism for getting back up to \$750 in tax credits from the state.

The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this RESOLUTION.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman