

CITY OF NEWTON
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN
FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2003

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

Absent: Ald. Ciccone

Also Present: Catherine Farrell (Assistant City Solicitor), David Wilkinson (Comptroller), Sandy Pooler (Chief Budget Officer), Mike Rourke (Chief Administrative Officer), Bob Rooney (DPW Commissioner), Chief Joe Cordero (Police), Superintendent Bob McDonald (Police Dept.)

#68-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting establishment of the Mabel Louise Riley Trust Fund.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (PARKER NOT VOTING)**

NOTE: A letter dated January 10, 2003 was submitted to the Committee requesting that this fund be established. This trust has been around for quite a few years. There was originally a gift of \$5,000 that was made to the City to be used for the purchase of books and other materials for use by people who stayed at the old City infirmary (located on Winchester Street). The Committee reviewed a copy of the original trust document (which was provided by Assistant City Solicitor Catherine Farrell). This document specifies how these funds were intended to be used.

Since this gift was received many years ago, the fund has generated approximately \$35,000 in interest. To date, none of these funds have been distributed. In order to disperse these funds to those in need, it is required that this Mabel Louise Riley Trust Fund be established officially.

Catherine Farrell reviewed the terms of the ordinance that will create and lay out administration guidelines for this trust fund.

The Committee supported the establishment of this fund and voted 6-0, with Ald. Parker not voting, to approve this item.

#70-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$10,953 be appropriated from the Building Insurance Fund to be expended for the purpose of purchasing terrorism coverage under the City's property insurance policies.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (PARKER NOT VOTING)**

NOTE: David Wilkinson, Comptroller, explained that in 2002, the property insurance industry had begun to exclude terrorism coverage from peril coverage offered. On July 1, 2002, insurance policy renewals came through without any coverage for losses resulting from terrorism.

As a result of the vote by Congress to pass the federal terrorism risk insurance act in 2002, terrorism coverage is once again available for municipalities, but at an additional premium. Mr. Wilkinson recommended that the City purchase this coverage at this time. Since we now only have to purchase said coverage for the remaining 6 months of this fiscal year, the premium is \$10,953 (the full year coverage for FY04 will be included in the Mayor's proposed budget).

The Committee supported the purchase of terrorism coverage at this time. This item was approved by a vote of 6-0, with Ald. Parker not voting.

#71-03 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) Kulp, Edoardo M. & Susan Leah	185 Hobart Road 61-021-0013	31464/409	\$1,427.00
II) Castellanos, Manuel R.& Bernadette M.	37 Glenwood Ave. 65-017-0014	11147/327	\$2,339.00
III) Frasca, Robert O. & Susan L.	27 Sargent St. 72-027-0010	29065/548	\$4,047.00
IV) Coyne, David	32 Taft Ave. 34-013-0006	28600/037	\$2,403.00
V) Bianchi, Deborah	9 Sharon Ave. 43-002-0013	15204/579	\$1,629.00

#71-03 CONTINUED

<u>PROPERTY OWNER</u>	<u>LOCATION/SBL</u>	<u>BOOK/PAGE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
VI) Verga, Michael G. & Deborah U.	11 Royce Rd. 24-045-0001	27432/334	\$4,576.00
VII) Lee-Paritz, David & Aviva	1036 Walnut St. 52-018-0017	24718/291	\$ 841.00
VIII) Dunphy, Scott & Lynn R.	4 Blithedale St. 24-016-0001	31982/249	\$ 948.00
IX) Bieber, James L. & Judi K.	6 Ferncroft Rd. 53-008-0011	13286/289	\$2,095.00
X) Travis, Robert	64 Eliot Ave. 31-020-0005	31304/389	\$1,061.00
XI) Smith, Janet L.	39 Vaughn Ave. 54-016-0010	1208/185	\$ 904.00
XII) Samuels, Ivan R. & Eleanor E.	169 Park St. 72-008-0002	11088/366	\$1,340.75
XIII) Kozinn, Beth E.	8 Baldpate Hill Rd. 82-025-0003	1202/051	\$2,706.00
XIV) Mead-Fox, David G. & Merrill F.	5 Pine Crest Rd. 62-002-0007	22078/523	\$1,328.00
XV) Doherty, Edward G. & Velta Ann	68 Harvard St. 22-007-0007	551-189	\$2,276.75

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0-1 (PARKER ABSTAINING)

NOTE: The Committee had a brief discussion on this item. Year after year the Committee continues to be unsure about exactly how the process works. In many of these cases, it was believed that this work had already completed and in others it has not yet been completed. In the process of filing tax liens on these properties, we begin the process of completing the sidewalk/curb/driveway apron installation, for which the City funds 50% of the cost (the homeowners will pay the other 50% of installation over a period of 20 years at a modest interest rate). All of these particular locations meet the betterment requirement that the charged amount is greater than \$500. This work will be performed using the city's revolving fund that was established for this purpose.

After discussions with Associate City Solicitor Gayle Smalley, Bob Rooney (DPW Commissioner) and the Chairman, it was determined that many of these installations have not yet been performed. They will be scheduled for work during the spring and summer of this year. The City is getting a jump on preparing to file these liens. Once the homeowners and the City have agreed on these estimates and they are deemed to be as accurate as possible, then the liens will be recorded.

The Committee voted 6-0-1, with Ald. Parker abstaining, to approve the assessment of these betterments.

**REFERRED TO PUB. SAFETY/TRANSPORTATION AND FINANCE
COMMITTEES**

#72-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of
(31-02) \$126,000 from Water Surplus for the purpose of providing continued
 security at the City reservoir for the remainder of FY03.

PS&T APPROVED 5-0 (BRYSON NOT VOTING) ON 2/5/03

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0-1 (PARKER ABSTAINING)

NOTE: A brief explanation will be provided in this report, since the Chair expects that this item will be placed on Second Call on the floor of the Board for discussion.

Chief Cordero was present this evening to discuss with the Committee that the monies available for this 24-hour security provided at the Waban Hill Reservoir has run out.

In September 2002, a study group was put together to determine the most effective way of providing 24-hour security at this facility. There was a decision to retain a security consultant to solicit proposals for security upgrades at this location, including closed circuit TV, intrusion alarms and motion detectors. Proposals will be received this month and the anticipated consultant contract will be awarded in March. The design and installation costs for this system are estimated at \$300,000. Installation of this system should be completed by October of this year.

In the interim, it is estimated that the cost to continue to provide this surveillance will be \$126,000 for the remainder of this fiscal year. It is anticipated that there will be a later request for additional funds to cover the months of FY04 until the system installation is completed.

The Committee had some discussions on this item and the need for it. The Police Chief assured the Committee that the information that he has received from intelligence agencies throughout the country indicates a significant threat of contamination of water supplies or terrorist acts affecting the provision of services like water (and sewer) to various communities. According to the Chief, Newton is a high risk territory and, therefore, these security measures are justified at this time.

Committee members agreed that, with the safety threat, the City should continue to monitor this situation closely to protect the public interest. Therefore, the Committee voted 6-0-1, with Ald. Parker abstaining, to approve this appropriation.

**REFERRED TO PUB. SAFETY/TRANSPORTATION AND FINANCE
COMMITTEES**

#73-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting acceptance of and authorization to expend the sum of \$66,500, received as a grant from the Executive Office of Public Safety, Local Law Enforcement Public Safety Equipment Grant Program. Said funds are to be used to purchase a van or similar vehicle to serve as an incident command vehicle.

PS&T APPROVED 5-0 (BRYSON NOT VOTING) ON 2/5/03

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Chief Cordero provided a letter dated January 30, 2003 from the Mayor which indicated that the City has received this grant specifically to purchase a vehicle to be used as an incident command vehicle. The Chief's letter to the Mayor, dated January 29, 2003, indicates that he believes that the Police Department must respond to different types of security risks and problems associated with terrorism alerts. It is absolutely imperative that there be an incident command vehicle specifically equipped and designed to serve as an emergency operations center at the scene of any critical incident. The Police Department is forced to prepare for critical incidents and it is difficult to anticipate every contingency in every situation, therefore, having this command vehicle available will assist in providing access to technology at the scene when making command emergency decisions. This vehicle will be ready at all times, equipped with technology and communications supplies needed to make decisions intended to protect the general public.

The Committee supported this item, but wanted to gain an understanding of exactly what type of equipment was to be purchased. Since this item was discussed in detail in the Public Safety/Transportation Committee on February 5th (and the Chair was present at that meeting), the Committee voted 7-0 to approve this request.

**REFERRED TO PUB. SAFETY/TRANSPORTATION AND FINANCE
COMMITTEES**

#74-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$56,272 from Free Cash for the purpose of purchasing a replacement IBM RISC server for the Police and Fire Departments' dispatch center. This item is part of the FY03 Supplemental Capital Budget.

PS&T APPROVED 5-0 (BRYSON NOT VOTING) ON 2/5/03

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Chief Cordero presented a letter dated January 10, 2003 from the Mayor. It explains that the RISC server (RS6000 made by IBM) that runs the Police and Fire dispatch communication system is near capacity. This is partially due to the fact that there is now much more information retained through the two technological systems used for recording and tracking incidents. The response time for this data retrieval system is being reduced because of the increase in queries and storage. In some cases, it takes

longer than two minutes to record a response from dispatch. There have been instances when the system was so slow that it took several minutes to log a fire call. The IBM RS6000 server was installed in 1995 and is now at 92% capacity.

Basically, this request for funding does not include the cost of the three-year maintenance contract. It seems like, since this particular server is a 66mhz computer (the equivalent capacity of less than a Pentium I computer), it is 5 times slower than the proposed replacement (updated) server.

The Committee felt that, due to the need for public safety rapid response and data storage, it was appropriate at this time to expend these funds from Free Cash to purchase the replacement server. There was no debate about the need for this equipment. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this request.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chair