

CITY OF NEWTON  
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT  
MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2003

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

Absent: Ald. Gerst and Ciccone

Also Present: Ann Cornaro (IT Director), Sandy Pooler (Chief Budget Officer), Mike Rourke (Chief Administrative Officer), David Wilkinson (Comptroller), Kathy Glick-Weil (Library Director), Fran Towle (Commissioner of Parks and Recreation), Carol Stapleton (Recreation Supervisor), Lou Taverna (Utilities Director, DPW), Bob DeRubeis (Deputy Commissioner of Parks and Recreation),

**REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES**

#168-03        HIS HONOR THE MAYOR, in accordance with Section 5-1 of the City (#124-02(11)) of Newton Charter, submitting the FY04 Municipal/School Operating Budget totaling \$256,208,165, passage of which shall be concurrent with the FY04-FY08 Capital Improvement Program, submitted in October, 2002. EFFECTIVE DATE OF SUBMISSION 4/22/03.

*7:45 p.m. – Information Technology Department*

*8:15 p.m. – Executive Department*

*8:45 p.m. – Comptroller/Retirement Board*

***CHAIRMAN'S NOTE: The Committee began the meeting this evening in review of the Information Technology, Executive Department and Comptroller/Retirement Board. The Committee discussed each of the three budgets and voted to 6-0 hold them and is prepared to vote to approve each of them, without modifications, at the next meeting (on May 14<sup>th</sup>). The Committee then discussed the following items:***

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#182-03        ANN CORNARO appointed to the position of Information Technology Director pursuant to Section 3-3 of the Newton Charter (30-day action date 5/22/03).

**ACTION:        APPROVED 6-0**

**NOTE:**        Mike Rourke, Chief Administrative Officer and Ann Cornaro joined the Committee this evening. Mr. Rourke explained the selection process for filling this position. There were over 160 applicants for this job. The special search committee of 12 narrowed the selection down to 15 finalists. 3 of those were then sent to the Mayor for a final decision. The Mayor interviewed all of the finalists and ultimately selected

Ann Cornaro, who has served the City as the Assistant Director of IT. She has been employed by the City for 37 years and has done a significant and substantial job of overseeing the day to day operation of the department under the direction of the recently retired Dick Walsh.

The Committee was pleased that Ms. Cornaro has been given this opportunity. Without debate, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve this appointment.

Re-appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#178-03 WILLIAM FIGLER re-appointed to the Board of Assessors for a term of office expiring February 1, 2006.

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 6-0**

**NOTE:** Bill Figler has worked in the Assessing Department for 28 years. He has been part of the assessing process all the way back to the changes that occurred in 1981 when proposition 2 ½ was enacted. He has worked very closely with the Finance Chairman in creating what is a model assessing department. More specifically, Mr. Figler oversees the commercial assessment program.

There was a brief discussion about the current status of the commercial property revaluation process and values throughout the city. Mr. Figler is an able assessor who has kept this area under control over his tenure with the Board of Assessors. The Committee was proud to support his reappointment.

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

#484-02(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$10,000 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the Newton Free Library overtime account for Sunday operations.

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 6-0**

**NOTE:** Kathy Glick-Weil, Library Director, was present this evening. The Committee was expecting this final request for additional funds for Sunday operations. Without debate, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve this appropriation so that Sunday operations can continue.

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

#180-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$92,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of replacing the docks at Crystal Lake.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES APPROVED 5-0 (Coletti not voting)  
ON 4/23/03

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 6-0**

**NOTE:** Fran Towle, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation, and Carol Stapleton, Recreation Supervisor, were present this evening. They reviewed the current status of the metal docks with wood tops that are located in the bath house area of Crystal Lake. Over the last two months, a private engineer was hired by the Department to come in and take a look at some of the wear that has occurred over the past 20 years that these docks have been in use at Crystal Lake. Unfortunately, in the corners where each of the units are hooked together, the materials have deteriorated to the point where they can no longer be welded back together. The surface of the docks (pressure treated, 1.25 inch stock) has deteriorated over the years and is now splintering and causing injury to people as they walk along the dock.

The proposed replacement docks will be constructed out of a combination of aluminum and galvanized steel. They will be put together with stainless hardware. They will also have a new material that is a lifetime deck on the surface. Originally, the request for funding was much larger, but the amount was reduced to cover what is necessary for replacement of these docks so that this year's swimming season can begin as scheduled with no hazard to people using this facility.

The Chairman, along with Dick Corbett of the Public Buildings Department, went out on 2 occasions and looked at these docks. They are, in fact, in need of repair or replacement. They made a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Department that the existing docks may still be able to be used either at the canoe launch at Nahanton Park or on the other side of the boat launch at Crystal Lake. They requested that, due to the substantial amount of aluminum and recyclable metals on these docks, as well as their condition, they should not be disposed of or "disappear". They should be made available for other uses throughout the city.

With that understanding, a motion was made to approve this appropriation. The Committee voted 6-0 to approve this item.

**REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#181-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$75,000 from Water Surplus for the purpose of employing the engineering firm Weston and Sampson to design the security infrastructure at the Waban Hill reservoir.  
PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0-1 (Salvucci abstaining)  
ON 4/23/03

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 5-0 (Lipof not voting)**

**NOTE:** Lou Taverna, Director of Utilities, joined the Committee this evening. Many of the Committee members had already heard the detailed presentation given at the Public Facilities Committee meeting on 4/23. Mr. Taverna explained the proposed design and ultimate construction that is estimated at somewhere in the vicinity of \$300,000 to install a security system. This system will involve intrusion alarms, infrared detectors, surveillance cameras and other security measures to completely protect this water supply. There will be a later appropriation for equipment that will replace the ongoing appropriations needed for police overtime.

Weston and Sampson has done similar work for the MWRA as well as other operations throughout the state and was one of four companies that had submitted bids for this project. Their proposal was most appropriate to the needs of the city. The Committee had a brief discussion on the costs of this project and what the company will do in terms of final installation of the system.

The Committee was satisfied with the information provided. Without further debate, the Committee voted 5-0, with Ald. Lipof not voting, to approve this request.

**REFERRED TO ZONING AND PLANNING & FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#151-03 ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT requesting Board of Aldermen authorization to submit to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) the FY2004 Annual Action Plan for the City of Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium. This Plan must be submitted to HUD by May 15, 2003.

**ZONING & PLANNING APPROVED 5-0 (Johnson not voting) ON 4/28/03**

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 5-0 (Lipof not voting)**

**NOTE:** Steve Gartrell was present this evening with the Associate Director. They presented this item before the Zoning and Planning Committee this evening. It is expected that a detailed summary of the presentation will be provided in the Zoning & Planning report. The HOME Consortium plan has an additional 3 communities added into the plan, for which the City of Newton oversees these funds as a pass through. The total amount of the plan is close to \$2.9 million.

The Committee reviewed the proposal and the various expenditures. There are some charts and backup information that Steve Gartrell has agreed to provide for the Committee to be distributed in the Friday packet for all Aldermen on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. After reviewing the Action Plan, and in accordance with the recommendation of the Zoning and Planning Committee, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve this item.

**REFERRED TO AD HOC COMMUNITY PRESERVATION AND FINANCE  
COMMITTEES**

#121-03      COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$56,805 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund for the purposes of funding costs for installing a drilled well and pump irrigation system at the Bowen Elementary School Field (not at the Memorial-Spaulding or Solomon Schechter fields)

**AD HOC APPROVED 4-0-1 (Sangiolo abstaining; Merrill not voting)  
ON 4/3/03**

**ACTION:      APPROVED 5-1 (Schnipper opposed)**

**NOTE:**      The Committee had a presentation by Doug Dickson, members of Newton Youth Soccer and Bob DeRubeis, Deputy Commissioner of Parks and Recreation. The proposal is that, after this field is dug up for drain connections associated with work being done at the Newton-Andover Theological School, there will be a plan to irrigate, turn soil, and re-loom and re-seed the upper field at the Bowen Elementary School. It was important that the City install an irrigation system and well in order to be able to provide the water necessary to maintain this playing field area.

The Committee had problems with the item because they felt that it was an improper use of the Community Preservation fund to drill and install the well.

Doug Dickson presented the original documents from the state act, along with some letters from people who have been responsible for the passage of the Community Preservation Act. These documents show that any item required in order to improve or prevent deterioration of a recreation facility in the City can, in fact, be funded under this act. Mr. Dickson has agreed to supply a copy of the state act and the provision that allows for such an installation.

The Committee held a 25-30 minute discussion of the necessity for installing this well and the requirements to maintain the field, along with the soccer and little league's commitments to also maintain this playing field as part of its most frequently used facilities in the City. This is a shared responsibility for the maintenance.

Ald. Schnipper felt that this expense should have been paid for by the City and Community Preservation funds should not be used for this purpose.

Other members of the Committee felt that it would not be appropriate for a large number of projects of this nature to be funded with CPC funds, but, this project does meet the warrants of the CPA. This is certainly an important item to include on the list of CPA projects at this time.

The Committee voted 5-1, with Ald. Schnipper opposed, to approve this item.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman