

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2003

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

Absent: Ald. Ciccone

Ad Hoc. Comm. Pres. Members Present: Ald. Sangiolo (Chair), Merrill, Yates, Baker and Lappin

Absent: Ald. Linsky and Basham (1 vacancy)

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE: The Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in order to discuss three items that were referred to the Ad Hoc Community Preservation and Finance Committees:

REFERRED TO AD HOC COMM. PRES. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#505-03 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that:

- A) the sum of \$359,176 (10% of anticipated FY04 Community Preservation Fund revenue) be appropriated to the CPA Fund Open Space Reserve for future FY04 expenditures, and
- B) the sum of \$359,176 (10% of anticipated FY04 Community Preservation Fund revenue) be appropriated to the CPA Fund Historic Resources Reserve for future FY04 expenditures, and
- C) the sum of \$359,176 (10% of anticipated FY04 Community Preservation Fund revenue) be appropriated to the CPA Fund Community Housing Reserve for future FY04 expenditures, and
- D) the sum of \$2,457,330 of anticipated FY04 Community Preservation Fund revenue be appropriated to the CPA Fund Current Year Budget Reserve.

AD HOC COMM. PRES. APPROVED

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0 (Coletti, Gerst, Gentile not voting)

NOTE: These were four transfers that needed to be executed before the setting of the FY04 tax rate in order to move community preservation monies into various reserve accounts. The Committee took this item up jointly with the Ad Hoc Community Preservation Committee and understood that this was a routine transfer of monies. It was also understood that these funds will be expended in the future by the docketing of requests by the Community Preservation Committee for various projects throughout FY04.

Without debate, the Finance Committee voted 4-0, with Ald. Coletti, Gerst and Gentile not voting, to approve this request.

REFERRED TO AD HOC COMM. PRES. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#506-03 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$35,000 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Unreserved fund for purposes of funding debt issuance costs for the Kessler Woods property.

AD HOC COMM. PRES. APPROVED

ACTION: **FINANCE APPROVED 4-0 (Coletti, Gerst, Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: The City will require some additional legal funds in order to qualify the debt that will be sold for the acquisition of the Kessler Woods property. A draft Board Order was submitted to the Committees this evening. The backup submitted contained a short-term note and a ten-year bond that includes fees for the financial advisor, legal work, rating agency fee, printing fees and the paying agent fee. According to the Treasurer/Collector, the cost for the note will be approximately \$6,300 and the cost for the bond will be approximately \$25,500. The total required will be \$31,800, but the Treasurer has asked for a small contingency amount in case some of the estimates are slightly inaccurate.

The Committee reviewed the draft Board Order dated October 16, which indicates that the sum of \$35,000 is to be appropriated from the Community Preservation Reserve fund to be expended by the Treasurer/Collector for the purpose of issuing the debt for this purpose. The Committee voted 4-0, with Ald. Coletti, Gerst and Gentile not voting, to approve this request.

REFERRED TO AD HOC COMM. PRES. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#507-03 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$18,500 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Unreserved fund for the purposes of funding legal expenses for the Kessler Woods property.

AD HOC COMM. PRES. APPROVED 5-0

ACTION: **APPROVED 4-0 (Coletti, Gerst, Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: A letter dated October 28th was presented as backup information for this item. The letter indicates that \$10,000 of this request is for outside counsel, \$6,000 is for title insurance on the property and \$2,500 is for recording fees, title run-downs and other miscellaneous legal expenses related to the land purchase of the Kessler Woods property.

The Committee had no problem with this item. After reviewing the draft Board Order, the Committee voted 4-0, with Ald. Coletti, Gerst and Gentile not voting, to approve this item.

#500-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$6,585 be transferred within the FY04 Purchasing Department budget in order to allow the department to cover the costs of hiring a temporary agency employee to cover City Hall mailroom duties.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: The Committee discussed this item with Sandy Pooler, Chief Budget Officer. He provided a letter dated September 22nd from Re Cappoli, Purchasing Agent. This letter explained that the Department has required temporary mailroom coverage from July through December of this year. The reason that a temporary agency has been used for this purpose is that the position holds a split shift (from 8:30-10:30 a.m. and from 2-4 p.m.), which has made this a difficult position to fill. This job covers the distribution and processing of all of the city's incoming and outgoing mail, as well as the deliveries of UPS and FEDEX packages to various departments.

This position is important in order to continue to provide this necessary service. Therefore, this part-time position is currently being staffed by temps through December, at which time it is hoped that they will have a permanent employee to fill the position.

Without debate, the Committee voted 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting, to approve this request.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#502-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$67,867.51 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of replenishing the tree emergency accounts in the Parks and Recreation Department. This appropriation will cover the department's year-to-date costs and restore the tree emergency accounts to their original appropriation levels.

PROG & SERV APPROVED 5-0 on 11/05/03

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: A letter dated October 29th was presented to the Committee. This letter explained that, since July of this year, we have had some severe (high wind) storms which have required the expenditure of \$63,281.83 for equipment rentals, \$3,842.63 in Department overtime, and \$743.05 in other Department overtime to cover tree emergencies. Lewis Tree Service is the company that provides services to the City. A list of actual trees that were affected by these weather conditions. In the October 15th storm alone, the City needed (for a period of 12 days) up to 4 tree crews and two log

trucks taking care of downed trees and hazardous branches. The cost to the City for providing these services was \$45,636.17.

The Committee had no problem with appropriating these funds for future expenditure during winter storms. The Programs and Services Committee had approved this item on November 5th. Without further debate, the Committee voted to support the recommendation of the Programs and Services Committee and approved this request 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY/TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#504-03 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$35,575 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of adding seven Traffic Supervisor positions to the Police Department.

***NOTE:** In accordance with Section 2-9 of the City Charter, the Mayor has declared this item to be an emergency measure, as it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the people and property of the City of Newton.*

PS&T APPROVED 4-0-1 (Lennon abstaining) on 11/05/03

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0-1 (Stewart abstaining)

NOTE: A letter dated October 28th was submitted to the Committee requesting that these funds be appropriated in order to allow the Police Chief to add up to 7 new Traffic Supervisor positions to the Department. As part of the Police Department's ongoing commitment to protect the interest of public safety and the safety of school children, this is being done in response to concerns raised by parents of school children throughout the City. The Police Department has studied school walking patterns and is recommending that 7 posts be added to the official school crossing list. At this time, the Department does, in fact, have some candidates qualified to fill these positions as soon as is possible.

A letter dated October 22nd was submitted by Chief Cordero, indicating that there had been a shortage of up to 10 crossing guards last year. Since that time, the Police Department has initiated a recruiting campaign and had received several current applications.

The Mayor felt that it is important to provide for these additional posts for the safety of pedestrians and motorists alike. Therefore, he was recommending that these funds be appropriated at this time.

The Committee agreed with this item, and voted 6-0-1, with Ald. Stewart abstaining, to approve this request.

REFERRED TO ZONING & PLANNING AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#501-03 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting that the sum of \$32,832 be appropriated from funds paid to the City by cable franchisees in order to supplement the FY04 Planning Department budget for salaries and benefits. This will allow the Planning Department to convert the part-time transportation planner position to a full-time position.

ZAP APPROVED 7-0 ON 11/10/03

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0-1 (Gerst abstaining; Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: A letter dated October 29th was submitted to the Committee this evening indicating that the funds are available from cable franchisees to be used by the Planning Department to cover work performed by the Economic Development Telecommunications Specialist (Theresa Park).

Mike Kruse, Director of Planning and Development, also presented a letter dated October 28th which indicates that 50% of Ms. Park's time is being re-captured with these funds. The appropriation will allow the City's Transportation Planner position (which has been vacant since the departure of Evelyn Addante over the summer months) to become a full-time position. This position is currently is funded for FY04 to cover 3 days per week. According to Mr. Kruse, it is important for the City to have a full-time Transportation and Traffic Planning Coordinator.

The Committee reviewed the information regarding how much time Ms. Park has spent in different functions in the Department as well as the amount of time spent on projects by the Traffic and Transportation Coordinator position.

The Committee agreed with this change in staffing for the Planning Department and supported this request. The Committee voted 5-0-1, with Ald. Gerst abstaining and Ald. Gentile not voting, to approve this request.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#426-03 **DAVID DONAHUE, GINNY GARDNER, ROBERT ANTONELLIS** requesting His Honor the Mayor, appropriate 1.2 million dollars from free cash to the School Department for the purpose of eliminating all user fees, i.e. sports, bus, parking.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES REFERRED TO 2004-2005 BOARD on 10/22/03;

ACTION: **REFERRED TO 2004-2005 BOARD 5-1 (Stewart opposed; Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: The Committee agreed with the recommendation of the Programs and Services Committee to refer this item to the next Board. It is hoped that Free Cash will

be certified over the next couple of months, after which time this potential for appropriation of funds to the School Department can be discussed.

With that understanding, the Committee voted 5-1, with Ald. Stewart opposed and Ald. Gentile not voting, to refer this item to the 2004-2005 Board.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

33-03 ALD. COLETTI requesting discussion with representatives of the School Department and Superintendent of Schools regarding lease vs. purchase options for technology equipment to develop a policy for acquisition of computers and technology for schools.

PROG. & SERV. NAN'D 7-0 ON 3/5/03

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: At the request of the Chairman, the Committee voted NO ACTION NECESSARY on this item by a vote of 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#199-03 ALD. STEWART recommending a change in water and sewer billing policy that will result in individual rental units being billed on a par with single family homes.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#94-03 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting Board of Aldermen support of a RESOLUTION affirming a change in water and sewer billing policy that will result in individual condominium units being billed on par with single family homes.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#66-03 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting discussion on a different water rate structure for condominium owners.

PUBFAC NAN'D 7-0 ON 4/23/03

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: These items have been on the agenda for some time now. There is a new item that has been submitted to replace these items. The item was submitted by the Mayor to deal with these issues and will involve Home Rule legislation.

Since it is expected that these issues will be covered in the context of discussion of the new item docketed by the Mayor, the Committee voted 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting, for NO ACTION NECESSARY on each of these three items.

REFERRED TO PUB. FACILITIES, PS&T AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

34-03 ALD. COLETTI requesting discussion with Executive Department and Fire Department relative to street light maintenance contract with Wellesley Power and Light with the possibility transferring this function to of the Fire Department's Wire Group.

PUB. FACILITIES HELD 7-0 ON 2/5/03

ACTION: **REFERRED TO 2004-2005 BOARD 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: At the request of the Chairman, the Committee voted 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting, to refer this item to the 2004-2005 Board. This was done since it is assumed that, in February of 2004, the City will begin securing a new contract for street light maintenance for FY05.

REFERRED TO FINANCE & PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEES

#157-02 ALD. BULLWINKLE requesting approval of Home Rule Petition that would waive the annual earned income limitations under M.G.L. chapter 32, the public employees retirement law, as applied to retired police officer Allan L. Ciccone of 105 Fair Oaks Avenue.

PROG. & SERV. NAN'D 5-0 (Coletti not voting) on 4/23/03

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

#248-02 ALD. SALVUCCI asking the Board of Aldermen request that His Honor the Mayor consider accepting Chapter 116 of the Acts of 2002, the "Early Retirement Incentive Bill."

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

#233-01(2) ALD. COLETTI respectfully requesting investigation, under Sec. 2-11 of the Newton City Charter, of the circumstances surrounding acceptance of gift and subsequent naming of the proposed Millennium Park and other matters pertaining to Mr. Salvatore Balsamo.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: Since all of these items are past relevance, the Committee voted, without debate, NO ACTION NECESSARY on each item by a vote of 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting.

#158-00 ALD. COLETTI requesting review and discussion of the fifteen items identified in the Powers & Sullivan management letter of December, 1999, including actions taken thus far and the city's status as it prepares for the next financial audit.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: Since the Committee has newer docket items under which to discuss these issues, Chair Coletti requested that this item be voted NO ACTION NECESSARY.

Without debate, the Committee voted NO ACTION NECESSARY on this item by a vote of 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting.

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

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: Since the Senior Tax Assistance Committee has already been established and is up and running, this item is no longer needed. Without debate, the Committee voted NO ACTION NECESSARY on this item by a vote of 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting.

#350-98 ALD. CICCONE requesting discussion regarding the demand for (vs. the current number of) Constables in Newton, and the possibility of creating an ordinance to require Police background checks on each Constable candidate prior to his/her appointment/reappointment.
NOTE: #350-98(2) RESOL. TO MAYOR REQUESTING POLICY FOR APPOINTMENTS APPROVED BY COMMITTEE ON 9/28/98 AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN ON 10/5/98.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: There is, in fact, a query system being used on all Constables as part of the appointment process. Therefore, this item was voted NO ACTION NECESSARY by a vote of 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting.

#135-01 ALD. M. LIPOF offering a resolution urging His Honor the Mayor to hire an independent auditor to oversee and report monthly through the Mayor to the Board of Aldermen for the duration of the construction and renovations to the high schools.

ACTION: **REFERRED TO 2004-2005 BOARD 6-0 (Gentile not voting)**

NOTE: The Committee recommended that this item be referred to the 2004-2005 Board, since it is important to continue to monitor these projects. Therefore, the Committee voted 6-0, with Ald. Gentile not voting, to refer this item.

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman