

CITY OF NEWTON
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN
FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT
MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2001

Present: Ald. Coletti, Chairman; Ald. Gerst, Ciccone, Bullwinkle, Parker, Schnipper and R. Lipof

Absent: Ald. Bryson

Also Present: Dan Funk (City Solicitor), Bob DeRubeis (Deputy Cmsnr. of Parks and Recreation), Carol Stapleton (Recreation Supervisor), Nick Parnell (Public Buildings Commissioner), Mike Trotta (Deputy Commissioner of DPW)

ITEM RECOMMENDED BY FULL BOARD ON 3/19/01:

#518-00 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting adoption of an ordinance providing for the acceptance of gifts of tangible personal property by the mayor, a department, board, agency, or commission. (SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTED: GERST, PARKER, R. LIPOF, ON 12/11/00.)

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Once again the Committee had a re-discussion of this item, insomuch as the Solicitor's office had done some further checking and, in preparation of the final draft ordinance, had made the interpretation that one of the sentences that was added by the Finance Committee relating to the naming of gifts given to certain departments was not necessary (in terms of final language) because the city already has prohibitions against gift naming in various departments that would have been affected by that item. Therefore, the final draft of the tangible gift ordinance adoption is complete with that one sentence removed. The Committee reviewed the final draft, which is attached to this report. The Committee recommended that the item be approved by the Full Board on Monday evening. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve this ordinance, as amended.

94-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR, requesting a transfer of funds in the amount of \$5,618 in the FY01 Health Department operating budget to cover the cost of paying a placement fee to an employment agency after the department hired a temporary clerical worker as a full-time employee:

FROM:	Environmental Health; Full-Time Admin. Salaries (0150102-511001).....	\$5,618
TO:	Administration; Clerical Services (0150101-5313).....	\$5,618

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: David Naparstek joined the Committee this evening and presented a letter dated March 2nd. This letter to the Mayor indicated that the Health Department had been employing a temporary secretary through an agency to fill an important clerical position that has been vacant. The temporary secretary had proven well-qualified for the position and the City was seeking to hire this person permanently. The request has been pending before Human Resources, Law and Executive Departments for four weeks and they finally gave David the authority to hire the individual. The City must pay a buyout fee to the employment agency when any temp is hired on a permanent basis. The fee in this instance is \$5,618. The request has been made by the Executive Department to pay this amount.

The Committee reviewed the bill submitted by Kennison Associates showing that there was a slight discount in the fee (a savings of a couple thousand dollars in negotiations with Kennison) on the buy out of this person’s contract with them. The Committee agreed that it was acceptable to make this payment in order to hire this employee and the motion to approve this item carried 7 in favor, none opposed.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

95-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$217,651 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing both the snow and ice and tree emergency accounts in the Parks and Recreation Department FY01 operating budget as follows:

FROM:	Budget Reserve.....	\$217,651
TO:	Snow – Equipment Rental (0160242-5273).....	\$147,531
	Snow – Overtime (0160242-5130).....	\$ 8,051
	Tree Emergencies – Equipment Rental (0160243-5273).....	\$ 52,162
	Tree Emergencies – Overtime (0160243-5130).....	\$ 9,907
	TOTAL.....	\$217,651

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Bob DeRuebis and Carol Stapleton were present this evening for the Committee’s discussion of this request. The focus of the discussion this evening was on the tree emergency money in the amount of \$52,162.

The Chairman had indicated, during the Programs and Services Committee review of this item, that there was some inconsistency. He was concerned that, for the period of time that the City had the snow emergencies both during February 5th to February 10th and then once again from March 5th to March 12th, there seem to be excessive purchases of services regarding prentice loaders, brush chippers and trucks. In some instances, four crews that were brought into the city and paid over twenty-four hour shifts for work which was not required (specifically on the 5th of February. He was also concerned that the prentice loader basically was held (at over \$216 an hour) for many more days than it was actually used in the city.

The Parks and Recreation Department continues to indicate that this equipment is necessary in the performance of their emergency duties during storms. This is an area of disagreement between the Chairman and the Parks and Recreation Department personnel, but there will be continuous monitoring of these expenses in order to ensure that they are not excessive.

Three pages of time logs were submitted to the Committee and Bob DeRubeis went through them and explained the use of the equipment. Although the Chairman may disagree with the application of the funds in those areas, once again in deference to the Committee and in deference to the department, the Chairman indicated his willingness to support the appropriateness of the expenditure.

With that, a motion to approve this appropriation carried 7-0.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

97-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$303,764 from Free Cash for the purpose of funding the environmental cleanup and compliance projects as follows:

PROJECT	COST
Burr School Environmental Compliance.....	\$ 40,595
Cabot School Environmental Compliance.....	\$ 44,016
Elliot St. Garage Environmental Compliance.....	\$ 72,263
Emerson Community Center Environmental Compliance.....	\$ 26,250
Health Department Fuel Tank Removal.....	\$ 15,750
Horace Mann School Environmental Compliance.....	\$ 39,528
Waban Library Fuel Tank Removal.....	\$ 15,750
SUBTOTAL.....	\$254,152
<u>PUBFAC APPROVED 7-0 ON 3-21-01</u>	
Municipal UST Leak Detection System.....	\$ 33,075
Municipal UST Testing and Repairs.....	\$ 16,537
<u>PUBFAC HELD 7-0 ON 3-21-01</u>	
TOTAL.....	\$303,764
<u>ACTION:</u>	<u>\$254,152 APPROVED 7-0; REMAINING \$49,612 HELD 7-0</u>

NOTE: There is a series of seven projects underway throughout the city. These include work at the Burr School, Cabot School, the Elliot Street Garage, the Emerson Community Center, the Health Department building, the Horace Mann School and the Waban Library. All of these sites have ongoing site remediation, which comes under the control of the Building Department. It is also being overseen by the City Hazardous Waste subcommittee, which Catherine Farrell (from the Law Department), Nick Parnell, Dave Naparstek and Chair Coletti serve on. The Hazardous Waste subcommittee reviews the work which is being proposed on these items.

This evening, the Committee had the opportunity to get a quick overview by Chairman Coletti regarding the scope of work involving specifically the Burr School and Elliot Street and the Horace Mann underground remediation. The other locations basically are the removal and replacement of oil tanks. In the process of reviewing the original estimates and work which was submitted by a previous Licensed Site Professional, it was determined that there were substantial savings that could be made in some of these accounts due to excessive pricing. During the process of reviewing these items, the original CIP proposed amount was over \$310,000 and, through review by the Hazardous Waste Environmental Committee, the actual price has been reduced by over \$56,000 and now is down to the \$254,152. The Chairman believes this continues to have built into it enough funds to allow for the final cleanup and remediation and documentation in order to get these sites approved by the Department of Environmental Protection.

With the recommendation of Chairman Coletti that this item be approved, the only items that are not being included in this approval is the section directly below the School total, it's the Municipal Underground Storage Tank Leak Protection System and the Municipal UST testing and repair item which totals \$49,612. That component is being held both in Public Facilities and Finance at this time. Therefore, the amount of \$254,152 (to cover the first 7 projects on the list) was approved 7-0. The remainder of the funds in the amount of \$49,612 was held 7-0.

CLERK'S NOTE: For record keeping purposes, the first seven projects under this item will be reported as #97-01(A), and the remaining projects, totalling \$49,612 will be carried forward on both the Public Facilities and Finance Committee agendas as item #97-01(B) until such time as it is appropriate to vote on those projects.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

98-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$578,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of supplementing the snow and ice accounts within the FY01 Department of Public Works operating budget as follows:

FROM:	Free Cash.....	\$578,000
TO:	Overtime	
	(0140110-5130).....	\$200,000
	Special Compensation	
	(0140110-5143).....	\$ 30,000
	Rental of Vehicles and Equipment	
	(0140110-5273).....	\$223,000
	Salt and Sand	
	(0140110-5532).....	\$125,000
	TOTAL.....	\$578,000

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Bob Rooney, DPW Commissioner, and Mike Trotta, Deputy Commissioner, were present this evening. They reviewed the detailed backup (which was attached to the Committee agenda) and gave a very thorough review of these numbers. There is a request for \$200,000 to replenish the overtime account; the original appropriation for overtime was for \$128,727. There was an additional \$50,000 transfer into the account and a \$210,000 appropriation. There is an additional \$230,000 being added in at this time, which will place the overtime account at about over \$600,000.

This request includes an additional \$223,000 to replenish the rental of vehicles and equipment account; the original appropriation was \$152,000 with \$256,000 of additional appropriation since the beginning of this fiscal year. Commissioner Rooney explained that, so far this year, \$575,287 has been spent for contract vehicles, and that this account is now in the red. This appropriation of \$223,000 would provide for approximately \$60,000 to cover any future storms before the end of the year.

The other item discussed was \$125,000 in salt and sand. Once again \$200,000 was originally appropriated, there was an additional \$100,000 appropriation. So far to date \$419,100 has been spent. This account is also now in the red by \$119,000. The \$125,000 appropriation will bring the fund back up to a positive balance.

There was one last item, for which there was no backup, special compensation, which was \$30,000 which was also approved by the Committee. After some discussion with Mike Trotta about the status of the snow plowing efforts, a motion was made to approve this item. That motion carried 7-0.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

96-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$879,190 from Budget Reserve for the purpose of supplementing the FY01 School Department operating budget.

PROG. & SERV. APPROVED 8-0 ON 3-21-01

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE: THIS ITEM WILL BE SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION AFTER ALL REQUESTED BACKUP INFORMATION IS SUBMITTED BY THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

ACTION: HELD

NOTE: This item was not scheduled for discussion this evening. Since the item was listed under new business, the Committee held a very brief, informal discussion regarding the appropriateness of the information request made by Chairman Coletti on 3/23. There was also some discussion regarding the substance of the item, although it was clear that there would be no action taken this evening on this item.

The Committee, understanding that there were more details to be reviewed as soon as they are made available, entertained a motion to hold this item for two weeks and to take this up when the documentation is submitted by the School Administration. The motion to hold carried by a vote of 6-1, with Ald. Schnipper opposed.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul E. Coletti, Chairman