

**#9**

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING TRAINING TO IMPROVE SKILLS THAT BUILD STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE CITY AND RESIDENTS**

**Councilor Oliver, as Chair of the Community Dialog Working Group supports the following Resolution.**

As witnessed during the NTA strike earlier in the year, there is a strong divide between the city and many of our residents; this divide is based on a lack of trust, little perceived transparency and a general lack of information sharing. Regardless of your assessment of that statement, the City Council and designated public-facing city officials should be trained to engage the community using more productive, transparent methods. The training would enable participants to shift from being strong advocates of community feedback to being skilled at facilitating community engagement, building stronger relationships with residents and, in general, creating trust in Newton.

THEREFORE, as the Community Dialogue Working Group, we request that the City fund the same training that NPS has already executed with their extended leadership team and principals; the cost is \$25,000 (for 30 people).

AND THEREFORE, we further suggest that possible funding sources for this could be:

Known vacancies (or currently unfilled new hires) in staffing across multiple departments (eg. DPW, Legal, ISD) until these roles are replaced or hired.

Unallocated Free Cash (FY24) or ARPA funds