



# Finance Committee Report

## City of Newton In City Council

**Monday, May 13, 2024**

Present: Councilors Gentile (Chair), Grossman, Lipof, Bixby, Malakie, Greenberg, Micley and Humphrey

Also Present: Councilor Block

City staff present: Manager of Financial Planning & Analysis Perry Rosenfield, Senior Financial Analyst Connor Roach, Comptroller Stephen Curley, Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux, Chief Operating Officer Jonathan Yeo, Director of Assessing Jim Shaughnessy, Fire Chief Greg Gentile, Deputy Fire Michael Bianchi, Health and Human Services Director Linda Walsh, Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Culture Nicole Banks, Energy Coach Liora Silkes, Co-Director of Sustainability Ann Berwick, Co-Director of Sustainability Bill Ferguson, Deputy City Clerk Cassidy Flynn and Assistant Superintendent Liam Hurley

All Finance agendas and reports, both past and present, can be found at the following link: <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/city-clerk/city-council/council-standing-committees/finance-committee>

For more information regarding this meeting, a video recording can be found at the following link: [Finance Meeting- May 13](#)

**#204-24**

### **Submittal of the ACFR, and external audit reports**

COMPTROLLER transmitting the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and external audit reports for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 for City Council review/acceptance.

[Audit Back-up](#)

**Action:**

**Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Matt Hunt, CLA representative joined the committee to discuss the FY23 audit. The Chair noted that they have recently entered into a new five-year contract with CLA where there will be new principals on the audit for the next fiscal year. Mr. Hunt introduced Jim Piotrowski and Stephanie Jackson as the new principals.

Mr. Hunt explained that there are three reports that come out of the audit which are the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), the Single Audit Report and the Management Letter. The ACFR had an unmodified opinion which is the best opinion. The general fund balance was at \$116 million at the end of the year. The unassigned fund balance which are funds without any restrictions or commitments was at \$82 million, which includes \$25 million in the Rainy-Day Stabilization Fund. That number is compared to the City's annual expenses. The ratio is at 15.1% which is the best ratio that the

city has had in the past 6 years. The enterprise funds and the internal service funds are also at healthy positive net positions. The pension trust fund is reported as of 12/31/22 and 2022 was not a good year for the investment markets so that is reflected in the financial statements. There was a \$53 million decrease in net position for that year which impacts the net pension liability. The liability did increase from \$250 million to \$320 million and the primary cause of that is because of the investment markets.

Mr. Hunt explained that as apart of the Single Audit Report they looked at several federal grants. There were four findings which are shown in the report. These included documentation and process issues. Mr. Hunt noted that these findings are common, benign and easy to fix.

This year for the Management Letter there were two special projects; one was the Early Childhood Program, where they looked at policies, procedures and record retention.

Councilor Malakie motioned to accept the FY23 audit reports which passed unanimously.

**#190-24      Authorization to accept and expend a Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism FY24 State budget earmark grant**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to accept and expend a Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism FY24 State budget earmark grant in the amount of fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000) for improvements at the Pellegrini Field House.

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:**      Nicole Banks, Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Culture presented the request to accept a \$50,000 grant for improvements at the Pellegrini Field House. Commissioner Banks explained that the funds would be going to new windows and doors, painting inside the gym, brick repointing and renovations to the roof. The Commissioner of Public Buildings has hired a contractor, put together a scope of work and prices are being collected.

A councilor questioned if solar panels have been considered for this project. Later in the meeting, Bill Ferguson, Co-Director of Sustainability noted that this can be something they investigate.

Councilor Greenberg motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

**Referred to Programs & Services and Finance Committees**

**#192-24      Authorization to transfer \$85,000 for HHS nursing staffing**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of eighty-five thousand dollars (\$85,000) from Account # 0150103-511001 Health & Human Services Clinical Health, Full Time Salaries to Account # 0150103-531300 Temporary Staffing for nursing staff.

**Programs & Services Approved 6-0 05/08/24**

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Linda Walsh, Director of Health and Human Services presented the request to transfer \$85,000 for Health & Human services nursing staff. Ms. Walsh explained that they still have openings for school nurses, so they have been using an agency for staffing. The goal is to still recruit and maintain qualified nurses.

Councilor Malakie motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

### **Referred to Programs & Services and Finance Committees**

**#197-24 Requesting authorization to transfer \$125,000 for Law Department legal services**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of \$125,000 from Account # 0110851-511001 Law Department, Full Time Salaries to Account # 0110851-530900 Legal Services.

**Programs & Services Approved 6-0 05/08/24**

**Action: Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Ali Guliana, City Solicitor presented the request to transfer \$125,000 for Law Department legal services. Atty. Guliana explained that due to the unfortunate passing of Jeffery Honig who handled all of the labor relations negotiating as well as the day to day, the Law Department has had to hire outside counsel to help with the workload. The Law Department is continuing to look for a qualified candidate. They hope to have 2 attorneys helping with the day to day and labor relations.

A councilor questioned if in the past if outside counsel has helped with labor relations. Atty. Guliana explained that this was primarily dealt with by Atty. Honig. The department was looking for an additional attorney to help during the time of his passing.

Councilor Humphrey motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

### **Referred to Public Safety & Transportation and Finance Committees**

**#215-24 Appropriation of \$1,350,000 for Fire Rescue Overtime**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of one million three hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$1,350,000) from June 30, 2023 Certified Free Cash to Acct # 0121022-513010 Fire Rescue - Regular Overtime.

**Public Safety & Transportation Approved 5-0 (Councilor Downs not voting) on 05/08/24**

**Action: Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Greg Gentile, Fire Chief and Michael Bianchi, Deputy Fire Chief presented the request to appropriate \$1,350,000 for Fire Rescue Overtime. Chief Gentile explained that they have occurred overtime costs from callbacks to emergencies and their minimum staffing requirements. There are currently 10 staff on leave which adds to the overtime costs. Deputy Chief Bianchi explained that they are in the process of hiring five new candidates and are hoping to get them into the academy as soon as possible to help with overtime costs.

Councilor Grossman motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

### **Referred to Public Safety & Transportation and Finance Committees**

**#219-24 Appropriation of \$450,000 for Police Department Overtime**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of four hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$450,000) from Comptroller's Snow and Ice budgeted reserves to Acct# 0120103-513010 Police Patrol- Regular Overtime

**Public Safety & Transportation Approved 6-0 05/08/24**

**Action:** **Finance Held 8-0**

**Note:** The Chair noted that there was no member of the Police Department present for the discussion and asked for a motion to hold.

Councilor Humphrey motioned to hold which passes unanimously.

**#222-24 Authorization to enter into a five year contract**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to enter into a five year contract with a substitute staffing vendor for Newton Public Schools.

**Action:** **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent for Newton Public Schools, presented the request to enter into a five-year contract for a substitute staffing vendor for the elementary and middle schools. The vendor usually provides 60 to 70 staff members on a day-to-day basis. The staff is not on the city's pay roll it's a contracted rate that they charge per day. It was noted that the council just approved a five-year contract for a food vendor. The back-up shows the details of the type of contract.

Councilor Bixby motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

**#223-24 Appropriation of \$13,597.21 to Newton Public Schools**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of thirteen thousand five hundred ninety-seven dollars and twenty-one cents (\$13,597.21) from June 30, 2023 Certified Free Cash (0001-3240) to Newton Public Schools for funds collected from the FY23 Helpsy textile collection and recycling.

**Action:** **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:** Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent of Newton Public Schools presented the request to appropriate \$13,597.21 to Newton Public Schools. Mr. Hurley explained that there are large bins at a number of school locations that are meant to collect unwanted textiles. The purpose is to help fund any kind of environmental/sustainability initiatives that the schools want to do. As a part of the most recent teacher contract, a green team stipend was added and these funds will help with that.

Councilor Malakie motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

**#217-24      Transfer \$5,000 for additional salary expenses for the Presidential Primary**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) from Acct # 01C10104-513010 Special Election, Regular Overtime to Acct # 0110162-512001 Elections, Seasonal Wages for the purpose of funding additional salaries required for the Presidential Primary held on March 5, 2024.

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 8-0**

**Note:**            Cassidy Flynn, Deputy City Clerk presented the request to transfer \$5,000 for additional salary expenses for the Presidential Primary. Ms. Flynn explained that vote by mail has increased the need for election workers outside of election day. In the last election, approximately half of the ballots that were cast were done through the mail. This work is done by the election workers and the need will only increase going into the September and November elections.

Councilor Malakie motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

The Committee adjourned at 9:03 pm after the conclusion of the budget discussions.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Leonard Gentile, Chair**

CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Committee through its Chair Leonard Gentile, the authorization to accept and expend grant funds a Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism FY24 State budget earmark grant in the amount of fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000) for improvements at the Pellegrini Field House is hereby approved.

Under Suspension of Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Programs & Services Committee through its Chair Joshua Krintzman and the Finance Committee through its Chair Leonard Gentile, authorization transfer the sum of eighty-five thousand dollars (\$85,000) from Account # 0150103-511001 Health & Human Services Clinical Health, Full Time Salaries to Account # 0150103-531300 Temporary Staffing for nursing staff is hereby approved as follows:

FROM:	HHS Clinical Health Full Time Salaries (0150103-511001).....	\$85,000
TO:	HHS Clinical Health Temporary Staffing (0150103-531300).....	\$85,000

Under Suspension of Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Programs & Services through its Chair Joshua Krintzman and the Finance Committee through its Chair Leonard Gentile, authorization to transfer the sum of \$125,000 from Account # 0110851-511001 Law Department, Full Time Salaries to Account # 0110851-530900 Legal Services is hereby approved as follows:

FROM:	Law Dept. Full Time Salaries (0110851-511001).....	\$125,000
TO:	Law Dept Legal Services (0110851-530900).....	\$125,000

Under Suspension of Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Committee through its Chair Leonard Gentile and the Public Safety & Transportation Committee through its Chair Rebecca Walker Grossman, authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of one million three hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$1,350,000) from June 30, 2023 Certified Free Cash to Acct # 0121022-513010 Fire Rescue - Regular Overtime be and is hereby approved as follows:

FROM:	Free Cash (0001-3240).....	\$1,350,000
TO:	Fire Rescue Overtime (0121022-513010).....	\$1,350,000

Under Suspension of Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Committee through its Chair Leonard Gentile and the Public Safety & Transportation Committee through its Chair Rebecca Walker Grossman, authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of four hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$450,000) from Comptroller’s Snow and Ice budgeted reserves to Acct# 0120103-513010 Police Patrol- Regular Overtime be and is hereby approved as follows:

FROM:	Comptroller’s Snow and Ice Budgeted Reserves (0110498-579400)..... \$450,000
TO:	Police Patrol Overtime (0120103-513010)..... \$450,000

Under Suspension of Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Committee through its Chair Leonard Gentile and the Public Safety & Transportation Committee through its Chair Rebecca Walker Grossman, authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of thirteen thousand five hundred ninety-seven dollars and twenty-one cents (\$13,597.21) from June 30, 2023 Certified Free Cash (0001-3240) to Newton Public Schools for funds collected from the FY23 Helpsy textile collection and recycling be and is hereby approved as follows:

FROM:	Free Cash (0001-3240).....	\$13,597.21
TO:	School Sustainability Initiatives (01C30109-579500) .....	\$13,597.21

Under Suspension of Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Committee through its Chair Leonard Gentile authorization to transfer the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) from Acct # 01C10104-513010 Special Election, Regular Overtime to Acct # 0110162-512001 Elections, Seasonal Wages for the purpose of funding additional salaries required for the Presidential Primary held on March 5, 2024 be and is hereby approved as follows:

FROM:	March 2023 Special Election (01C10104-513010) .....	\$5,000.00
TO:	Elections- Seasonal Wages (0110162-512001).....	\$5,000.00

Under Suspension of Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts  
Office of the Mayor

**222-24**  
Telephone  
(617) 796-1100  
Fax  
(617) 796-1113  
TDD/TTY  
(617) 796-1089  
Email  
rfuller@newtonma.gov

April 29, 2024

Honorable City Council  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Councilors:

I respectfully submit a docket item to your Honorable Council requesting authorization to enter into a 5-year contract, with a substitute staffing vendor for the Newton Public Schools. Due to the complexity of this particular RFP process, we request a five-year contract to ensure we complete a thorough review of all potential vendors. This contract will be comprised of one initial term of one-year, followed by four optional one-year extensions.

A memo from the Newton Public Schools is attached, explaining the process in more detail.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor



Office of Business, Finance and Planning  
100 Walnut Street  
Newtonville, MA 02460  
617-559-9025

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**TO:** Maureen Lemeiux, Chief Financial Officer

**FROM:** Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent / Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

**DATE:** 3/25/24

**RE:** Request for Five Year Substitute Staffing

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A vote of the City Council is requested to authorize the School Department to issue an RFP for a substitute staffing contract with a five-year term that is comprised of a one year initial term and four renewable one year terms.

The memo requesting this vote to the School Committee as well as the vote from school committee is attached.

Thank you.



Office of Business, Finance and Planning  
100 Walnut Street  
Newtonville, MA 02460  
617-559-9025

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**TO:** School Committee

**FROM:** Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent / Chief Financial and Administrative Officer

**DATE:** March 20, 2024

**RE:** Request for Five Year Substitute Staffing

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Newton's current Substitute Staffing contract with Precision Human Resources Solutions, expires on 6/30/24, which requires that we follow the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit a successor vendor and contract. I am requesting School Committee approval for a five-year contract duration as we prepare to publish our bid document.

MGL, Part I, Title III, Chapter 30B, Section 12 states that "(b) Unless authorized by majority vote, a procurement officer shall not award a contract for a term exceeding three years, including any renewal, extension or option. Such authorization may apply to a single contract or to any number or type of contracts, and may specify a uniform limit or different limits on the duration of any such contract. "

Given the complexity of the RFP process for Substitute Staffing and the ongoing operational complexity, I am requesting a five-year contract with an initial award year with the option of four additional years that will be awarded as amendments upon satisfactory performance of the vendor that is awarded the successor contract.

Should the School Committee vote to approve this five-year contract duration, we will then request the same approval through Newton City Council.





**NEWTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

WARD	
I	Rajeev Parlikar
II	Christopher Brezski, Chair
III	Anping Shen
IV	Tamika Olszewski
V	Emily Prenner, Vice-Chair
VI	Paul Levy
VII	Amy Davenport
VIII	Barry Greenstein

MAYOR RUTHANNE FULLER– EX OFFICIO

**MEMO**

To: Liam, Director of Business Operations  
From: Lisa Mazzola  
Re: School Committee Approval  
Date: March 28, 2024

On March 20, 2024 the School Committee voted to approve the following items:

1. McKinney-Vento State Reimbursement for Homeless Students and Foster Care Transportation
2. Transfer Textile Recycling Funds
3. Request to solicit Five-Year Substitute Staffing Vendor bids

Motion to approve was made by Levy and seconded by Olszewski

The motion passed 9-0.

*Lisa Mazzola*

Secretary, School Committee



CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

DRAFT

ORDERED:

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Committee through its Chair Lenoard Gentile the City Council hereby authorizes Her Honor the Mayor to enter into a five-year contract with a substitute staffing vendor for Newton Public Schools.

Under Suspension Rules  
Readings Waived and Approved  
DRAFT

(SGD) CAROL MOORE  
City Clerk

(SGD) RUTHANNE FULLER  
Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_