

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2011

Present: Ald. Sangiolo (Chairman), Rice, Linsky, Hess-Mahan, Blazar, Baker, Merrill
Absent: Ald. Fischman

#95-09(2) PROGRAMS & SERVICE COMMITTEE requesting establishment of an Advisory Committee to review processes of the Board of Aldermen and report recommended efficiency improvements to the Board of Aldermen. Members of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Programs & Services Committee and the President of the Board. [11/16/09 @ 3:59 PM]

ACTION: **HELD 7-0**

NOTE: Ald. Rice began the discussion by reading aloud the email that Tom Sheff sent to the Committee (*attached to the end of this report*) which spoke in support of this current item. Mr. Sheff is the docketer of the #95-09, which was the original item requesting the establishment of an advisory committee to review the process and progress of the Board of Aldermen. The Committee voted to hold this item until President Lennon, Vice-President Lappin, and Ald. Fuller can join us in the discussion. They were unable to join this meeting as they were in the joint Public Safety and Transportation/Public Facilities meeting that was running over the scheduled time. Ald. Sangiolo moved to hold this item, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#307-10 PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE proposing a RESOLUTION to the Interim Director of Health and Human Services to increase the tobacco seller's license fee. [10/25/210 @ 4:34pm]

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

NOTE: Ald. Sangiolo began the brief discussion by sharing with the Committee the email that Linda Walsh, Interim Director of Health and Human Services, had sent her (*email attached at the end of this report*) regarding the proposed increase in the tobacco seller's license fees and which included the opinion of David Naparstek, whom is a consultant for the Health and Human Services Department. The crux of Mr. Naparstek's comments was that the City can look into increasing the compliance fee now that it doesn't receive funding from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for compliance activities, as it did when the tobacco seller's license fee was put into place. Mr. Naparstek suggested that the Committee first look into consultants who conduct compliance checks and also look into setting up a revolving fund for this. She shared with

the Committee that she believes it would be best to NAN this item and re-docket a new one after more research is done. It would also be beneficial to wait to pursue this until after a replacement Commissioner is hired. Ald. Sangiolo moved a vote of No Action Necessary, which carried unanimously.

#357-10(2) ALD. YATES proposing a change in the proposed rule to eliminate the Committee on Community Preservation: community preservation items relating to housing and recreation shall be referred to the Programs and Services Committee; items relating to historic preservation and open space shall be referred to the Zoning and Planning Committee; all items shall then be referred to the Finance Committee. [12/6/2010 @ 10:57PM]

ACTION: **REFERRED TO RULES SUBCOMMITTEE**

NOTE: The Committee voted in favor of Ald. Baker's motion to refer this item to the Rules Subcommittee where the future of the Committee on Community Preservation will be discussed on March 23rd. A full discussion on the above item will take place at that meeting and will be reviewed and voted upon by the Programs and Services Committee at a date to be determined.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEES AND PROG AND SERV

#8-09 ALD. HESS-MAHAN, LINSKY, ALBRIGHT, FREEDMAN, MANSFIELD, JOHNSON, HARNEY & VANCE proposing an ordinance requiring that the installation of synthetic in-filled turf athletic fields on city-owned property shall use sustainable, recyclable, lead-free, non-toxic products to the maximum extent feasible. [12/30/08 @ 9:55 AM]

ACTION: **HELD 7-0**

NOTE: Ald. Hess-Mahan moved to hold this item so that it can be taken up after the Parks and Recreation Commission have a formal discussion on the item this Monday January 24th. Bob DeRubeis, who was also in the joint snow meeting at the time, had previously spoken to Rebecca and shared that he, and members of the Commission, are not opposed to this proposed ordinance and is happy to take it to a formal meeting and get the opinions of all the Commission members. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of Ald. Hess-Mahan's motion.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Sangiolo, Chairman

Rebecca Smith

Date sent: Fri, 21 Jan 2011 11:34:01 -0500
 Subject: Fwd: 95-09
 From: amy sangiolo <aldermansangiolo@gmail.com>
 To: Rebecca Smith <rsmith@newtonma.gov>

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 CITY CLERK
 NEWTON, MA. 02159

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **tom sheff** <ahhinc@hotmail.com>
 Date: Tue, Jan 18, 2011 at 7:28 PM
 Subject: 95-09
 To: asangiolo@newtonma.gov

Dear Programs and Service members,

I hope all is going well with you and your families. On Wednesday, January 19th, you will be discussing 95-09. I am sorry that I will not be able to attend the meeting myself, but my schedule doesn't permit it. I hope you understand. I have been in past meetings, but unfortunately not this one.

95-09 is a proposal for the Board to set up a committee selecting citizens utilizing the most talented individuals in the city. The committee should consist of one or two current aldermen, several ex-aldermen and the rest of the committee made up of citizens with particular skill sets, ie IT professionals, city managers of another city, etc. The purpose of the committee is to draft a memo (for the lack of a better word) of exactly what individuals on the Board of Alderman actually do as part of their responsibilities on the Board. Once they have developed this "memo" they are charged with proposing efficiencies the BOA may (or may not) implement.

95-09 is important in many levels. I believe the Mayor has made it a huge priority to get more citizen involvement (which this clearly does). This shows objectivity, whereas, an in-house study of more efficiencies does not. It can be very difficult to be involved in a time consuming job like being on the BOA and being able to analyze the job objectively. I think one of the weaknesses the Board has as a whole is the lack of PR from the Board. People don't trust politicians and whos fault is that?....Politicians. If you take care of these efficiencies inhouse, people wont have the respect or trust for your accomplishments as they would if objective outsiders proposed the efficiencies. For example, when Mayor Cohen went in front of people and said we are running a deficit, I heard many people say, just go into some of those mysterious bank accounts that seem to pop up in the last second and get the money from that (lack of trust). But, once the CAG analyzed our finances and said close to the something our finances became a serious matter. Having objective third party people involved in the project brings more legitimacy to the project.

In my opinion, this is the type of project that should be done periodically to make sure we stay current with the times and the technology. We are extremely behind in the times with our technology and I feel if you let this committee play out, you will find that your own jobs will get infinitely easier. The point is the faster you work, the faster the city can get things accomplished. The Mayor has worked extremely hard changing people's mindset at city hall, it's now up to you to change the mindset within the BOA. Clearly we have much more difficult decisions to be made now then 20 years ago, but we are still stuck in the 1990's.

I invite any friendly amendments that dont change the goals of the committee. I hope you take this proposal seriously as I believe it's an important topic for the future of the city. Thank you.

Sincerely, Tom Sheff

Linda Walsh <Linda_Walsh@newton.k12.ma.us>
To: amy sangiolo <aldermansangiolo@gmail.com>

Fri, Oct 22, 2010 at 10:18 AM

Ald. Sangiolo, I spoke with David Naprstek about your question. He is here 2 days a week as a consultant to help-out while our housing inspector, Bob DeLuca, is out on family medical leave. I would be very interested in persuing this avenue. We should be doing compliance checks in Newton but do not have any funding to do so. Linda

Here is his reply to your question.

"The tobacco sales permit fee was set at a time when the Mass. Department of Public Health (MDPH) was funding the on-going tobacco compliance activities that communities such as Newton were conducting. That funding ended last year.

Ald. Baker's suggestion that we cannot exceed the estimated actual cost of the service associated with a permit fee. Hence, we were advised by the MDPH that we could not factor retailer compliance check costs into our fee while they were providing funding.

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Now that we no longer receive this funding, the City might consider increasing the fee to cover the cost of compliance checks. I have spoken to Sara McGonigle, the Tobacco Control Consultant for the Massachusetts Health Officers Association, and she indicated that there are consultants available that conduct these checks for municipalities. In order to pay for this service, it would be advisable to establish a revolving fund into which increased fees could be deposited and from which consultants could be paid.

David

amy sangiolo <aldermansangiolo@gmail.com>
To: Linda Walsh <Linda_Walsh@newton.k12.ma.us>

Fri, Oct 22, 2010 at 10:45 AM

most excellent! thanks so much for the info!!

[Quoted text hidden]