

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE BUDGET REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2011

Present: Ald. Fischman, Merrill, Rice, Blazar, Sangiolo, Hess-Mahan, Baker, Linsky
Also Present: Ald. Fuller, Danberg, Lappin, Shapiro, Lennon
City Staff: Bob DeRubeis (Commissioner, Parks and Recreation) Dori Zaleznik (Commissioner, Health and Human Services) Linda Walsh (Health and Human Services Director) Bob Rooney (Chief Operating Officer), David Fleishman (Superintendent, Newton Public Schools), Jayne Colino (Director of Senior Services), Donnalynn Kahn (City Solicitor), Maura O'Keefe (Assistant City Solicitor), Angela Smagula (Assistant City Solicitor), Nancy Perlow (Director, Newton Free Library), David Olson (City Clerk), Ryan Hanson (Assistant Director, Newton Free Library), Rebecca Smith (Committee Clerk).
School Committee: Reenie Murphy

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#142-11 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) from the BAA Boston Marathon Contributions Fund for the purpose of supplementing current and future fundraising from local community groups to purchase playground equipment to enhance neighborhood playgrounds. [04-20-11 @ 5:57 AM]

BUDGET AND CIP ITEMS

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

PARKS AND RECREATION

NEWTON HISTORY

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

SENIOR SERVICES

SOLICITOR

LIBRARY

CLERK

REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES

#129-11 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting in accordance with Section 5-1 of the City of Newton Charter the FY12 Municipal/School Operating Budget passage of which shall be concurrent with the FY12-FY16 Capital Improvement Program (#311-10). [04-11-11 @5:59 PM]

EFFECTIVE DATE OF SUBMISSION: 04/20/10; LAST DATE TO PASS BUDGET 06/4/10

#311-10 **REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES**
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting the FY'12-FY'16 Capital Improvement Program, totaling \$174,246,135 pursuant to section 5-3 of the Newton City Charter and the FY'11 Supplemental Capital budget which require Board of Aldermen approval to finance new capital projects over the next several years.
[10/18/10 @5:24PM]

PARKS AND RECREATION

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 6-0(Ald. Linsky, Baker not voting)

Bob DeRubeis, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation, joined the committee to address the CIP and revolving account items that were held at the DPW/Programs and Services budget meeting on April 27th. Commissioner DeRubeis was provided with a list of questions from the Committee. He drafted answers to these questions and walked through them with the Committee at this meeting. For details on the questions and answers please see the attached memo from Commissioner DeRubeis.

Questions

Ald. Fischman asked how the figures on page 4 of the attached memo were determined. Commissioner DeRubeis explained that there are field permits with specific costs. They then determine what the cost of lighting would be for the period of time the field will be used and add that amount to the permit fee. They base it on past experience and what the rates are. This has happened for the last 3+ years if not more.

Ald. Hess-Mahan shared that he was looking for a little more detail in terms of amounts for question 4. It is helpful to know where the money is coming from, how much money we're talking about. But he appreciates the added detail provided.

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked if another \$50,000 or so came in from some source what would they use it toward. Mr. DeRubeis stated that applying such funds to turf issues such as fertilization, reseeded, aeration, etc. would make a big impact.

Ald. Blazar asked the Commissioner what the \$100,000 dollar figure is for Newton Girls Soccer (NGS) and Newton Youth Soccer (NYS). The Commissioner explained that when the work was done at Newton South there was \$500,000 put into a fund for maintenance. On top of that, Parks and Recreation worked out a deal with NGS and NYS that, in lieu of their fee to use the fields for 8-10 years, they could donate \$100,000 each that will be put towards field maintenance as well, increasing that pot from \$500,000 to \$700,000. The deeded gift has been signed by them and the contracts are in place; the department is just awaiting the \$200,000.

Ald. Sangiolo asked Mr. DeRubeis about revenue from the tree ordinance; she requested a listing of who has given us money and where Mark uses that money to replace other trees. Mr. DeRubeis will provide a list to the Committee within the next couple of weeks.

CIP

Commissioner DeRubeis noted that the only CIP item left for FY11 was \$150,000 allotted for hazardous tree removal. After talking to Mark, it was determined that that will give us enough money to remove about 280 trees; they have identified close to 350 that need to be taken down, but this money will help them remove a good number of trees that should be taken down. Commissioner DeRubeis stated that the rest of the CIP, FY12-16, consists of vehicles appropriations and other standard requests.

Ald. Fischman moved approval, which carried unanimously.

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 5-0-2 (Ald. Hess-Mahan & Sangiolo abstaining; Ald.Linsky, Baker not voting)

Superintendent Fleishman and School Committee member Reenie Murphy joined the Committee for a continued discussion on the budget. Superintendent Fleishman and Ms. Murphy walked the Committee through the questions (attached). Ms. Murphy clarified the first question. It was meant to say that right now we're following the traditional relationships with interns and student teachers and the school department hasn't pursued other relationships; partnerships with Boston College is something that the school committee is going to discuss at their upcoming meeting with the Mayor.

In response to Ald. Shapiro's request for a more detailed list of possible restorations/addbacks, Superintendent Fleishman stated that it would be unwise to commit this early. It would be awkward to commit to something and then pull back. He is not sure what funding might be available and would prefer to have a better grasp of that, although he did say that increasing time for music and art is something that they will definitely consider should more funding become available. Members of the committee stressed that they would like art and music programs restored should more funds be appropriated.

Ald. Johnson submitted a question to Ald. Sangiolo regarding students who are children of school department employees who don't live in Newton. She used the figure \$14,424 per child and wanted to know if this was calculated into the employees' total compensation.

Superintendent Fleishman stated that this is not a taxable event, it is an employee benefit. There are generally 4-5 students per school that fall into this category. Having this spread out amongst 13 grades does not cause much financial impact especially because, at 4-5 students per school, it doesn't require the addition of a teacher.

Ms. Murphy also shared the perspective that the City benefits from this offer as it may draw/keep very high quality teachers because they have the option for their children to attend this school system.

Ald. Lappin submitted a question, asking how the School Department plans to use the \$1.75 million allocation from the Mayor for the capital improvement. Superintendent Fleishman and Ms. Murphy said they cannot comment on this as the capital improvement budget hasn't been discussed yet by the School Committee.

Ald. Hess-Mahan shared that he will be abstaining and that the reason for this is not that he is unhappy with the work of the School Department and School Committee; they did a wonderful

job with what they were given. What Ald. Hess-Mahan is troubled by is the allocation that the School Department was given. He is also not happy with the School Committees decision to raise bus fees, and lower the parking fees.

Ald. Sangiolo also stated that she will abstain due to the same reasons Ald. Hess-Mahan laid out.

Ald. Merrill moved approval, which carried 5-0-2

NEWTON HISTORY

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 6-0 (Ald. Linsky, Hess-Mahan not voting)

The Committee had a brief discussion to conduct a straw vote on the department's CIP items. Cynthia Stone, Director of Historic Newton, could not attend this evening but provided the Committee with a memo (attached) . After reading over this memo the Committee voted to recommend approval of the CIP items in question.

Ald. Blazar would like to know if there are any updated figures for painting as the quote of 37,500 is three years old. Ald. Fischman would also like to expedite the removal of the hemlocks as he doesn't believe that City property should have dying trees remaining on the property for 8 years without being addressed.

Ald. Merrill moved approval which carried unanimously.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 8-0

Dori Zaleznik, Commissioner of Health and Human Services, and Linda Walsh, Health and Human Services Director, joined the table for the discussion of the budget. Commissioner Zaleznik highlighted some goals and accomplishments for the different divisions of Health and Human Services Department

Accomplishments

Environmental Health

- 1) The current inspectors became certified in lead determination and began doing some housing inspections.
- 2) Conducted outreach training on food safety at farmer's markets and at PTOs

School Health

- 1) Administered 2,650 vaccines to public school students.
- 2) Established defibrillator response teams at each elementary schools.
- 3) Immunized 959 Newton residents, 1271 employees
- 4) Established a program for Newton residents to prevent falls
- 5) Increased medical reserve for membership by 10%

Human Services

- 1) Our department was instrumental in creating a citywide task force where multiple departments get together to discuss people who may need to be hooked in to regular services rather than call emergencies which create a fail mechanism for these residents.
- 2) Ana Gonzalez chaired the Newton reporting task force and they identified 17 cases.
- 3) Two part time mental health nurses paid for by CDBG money; they carry the caseload.

Goals

Environmental Health

- 1) Increase inspections by 4 percent
- 2) Looking to ensure that all food establishments abide by food allergen program to be more proactive about food allergies
- 3) Be in complete compliance with FDA Standard 5

School Health

- 1) Create online access for all school health documents
- 2) Establish impact testing for concussion management at the middle and high school levels.
- 3) Establish an interdisciplinary team at Newton Wellesley Hospital to deal with post-concussion management as South Shore Hospital does.

Public Health and Education

- 1) Planning a city-wide meeting to discuss the results of the youth risk survey; have a discussion following the presentation to determine action steps
- 2) Undertaking a campaign for personal protection against food borne illness.
- 3) Provide education about protection from food borne illness during travel.
- 4) Would like to strengthen partnership with Newton Wellesley Hospital
- 5) Wellness programing
- 6) Employee health
- 7) Has applied for an anti-tobacco grant with other surrounding communities to implement policies to reduce tobacco use including reintroducing some compliance checks

Human Services

- 1) Trying to establish a Debt-to-Assets program in the city, which is partnering with a bank to teach budgeting skills; at the end of the program the bank provides each participant with a \$500 account to manage. In turn the bank gets new customers. This has been done in some larger cities and has been very successful
- 2) Implementing a new intake and referral system for Newton food pantries
- 3) Presuming CDBG funding is still available we'd like to continue to provide in home mental health counseling.

Budget

Commissioner Zaleznik explained that in determining the budget, she and the department looked at the range of services offered and determined if there was a good balance or whether things were under supported or over supported.

The Commissioner shared that the department would like to do more in inspections; the department is currently budgeted for 4 inspectors but has 3 due to a long term leave for the fourth inspector. To cover him, David Naparstek was hired as a consultant. Commissioner Zaleznik shared that there's been an effort to cross train the inspectors so that everyone is qualified in a variety of inspections. She is hoping to get back the 4th person back at some point.

Increases

Commissioner Zaleznik walked the committee through the increases that are outlined in the budget:

- 1) Line item 5301: This pertains to consultants, which is budgeted in order to assist in ongoing training for inspectors until the 4th inspector returns
- 2) Line Item 54320: cellular phones. One inspector didn't have a cell phone, this is the minimal plan allowed.
- 3) Line Item 5382: pest control services. This amount is the actual quote for mosquito control for the year. There should be no return for supplemental money. This amount is only about \$300 more than what it cost for FY11.
- 4) Line Item 53404: internet access charge. Allows the inspectors to input reports from laptops from the field instead of filling out paper reports.
- 5) Line Item 58509: PC hardware. This is the laptop for the 4th inspector; the other three have laptops.
- 6) Line item 5499: vaccines costs. The Commissioner intends to provide the flu vaccine again next year, and possibly a vaccine for shingles.

Decreases

- 1) There is a decrease in the appropriation for the Newton Child Care Commission Their assistance fell from went from \$39,000 to \$1,000. The budget book says their appropriation is 0 but this is incorrect; Maureen is aware of the oversight. The NCCC was told a year ago that there wouldn't be money to support child care assistance. There is a fundraising arm to the NCCC and Commissioner Zaleznik felt it was appropriate that fundraising be done to provide actual assistance.
- 2) There is a decrease in communicable diseases and therefore the staff of public health nurses has been decreased from 2 to 1.
- 3) The health maintenance clinics will be shorter in terms of the hours they are open during the day. This saves time and money as before the clinics were open for an extended amount of time and the staff was not busy enough to warrant.
- 4) The HHS department has downsized from having 3 clerks to 2 clerks. There is less paperwork and filing and therefore the third clerk position was unnecessary.
- 5) The school physician job description has been revised - we do need a pediatrician but don't need someone to sign off on vaccines since Commissioner Zaleznik is a physician and can sign off on such things.

CIP

The CIP book, there is \$45,000 for Health and Human Services; we have not put in any projects to be done on the building because we know it's going to be looked at as a more comprehensive study.

Revolving Accounts

Newton Serves money is listed under Health and Human Services, but it's actually used by Parks and Recreation; the NCCC would have \$1,000; Human Rights would have \$1,000; Youth Commission has slightly more, \$2,500 budgeted, though the document says \$3,200.

Questions

Ald. Baker is interested in increasing the health and well-being of the employees in the City; Commissioner Zaleznik explained that we are working with Human Resources about looking at health of the workforce by implementing wellness programs in the City.

There is a grant that the Newton Partnership is spearheading that would improve the YMC and the Newton Boys and Girls Club to improve nutrition for wellness and exercise outside of the school day. The First Ladies Program targets kids but also their families, so both for school programming and outside of school those are great.

Ald. Linsky asked about how someone is chosen for the Debt to Assets Program. Commissioner Zaleznik stated that participation in this program would be subject to certain criteria and the participants would be identified by Ana Gonzalez. She has done some programming in concert with the library, but instead of just offering programming they'd like to try this other approach for eligible people. Ald. Linsky asked if any sort of financial programming like that for employees of the City. Commissioner Zaleznik responded that there isn't, but added that this is an interesting tactic that they could look at. Ms. Walsh added that they are trying to hook people into our programming and agreed that the idea of providing financial and budgeting programs for employees is a great idea that will be considered.

Ald. Fischman asked Commissioner Zaleznik if bullying is part of the youth behavior risk survey. Commissioner Zaleznik shared that it may come out of that. She stated that there is an anti-bullying policy. The City tries to be on top of it but one can always do more on this front. There are all sorts of new ways to torment someone with the influx of cyber bullying and that is a difficult medium to monitor. Commissioner Zaleznik stated that anonymous surveys may help to identify victims.

Ald. Fischman asked how many Public Health Nurses have been retained. Commissioner Zaleznik shared that there is now only 1 public health nurse.

Ald. Baker moved approval of the budget which carried unanimously.

SENIOR SERVICES

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 7-0 (Merrill not voting)

Jayne Colino, Senior Services Director, joined the Committee at the table to present and discuss her budget.

Accomplishments

- 1) Raised awareness of the Department of Senior Services by having more of a presence in the community and having more collaborative programming at Coleman House, Newton Wellesley Hospital, and other locations.
- 2) Realized an increase of 20% of caseload due to increased programming
- 3) Built a new relationship with the library to do some programs there.
- 4) Instituted a home safety check program- members of the police, fire, senior services and rotary club go into homes with a checklist to
- 5) Created programming with houses of worship. Having this connection targets seniors and provides the benefit of introducing them to the senior center without being at the senior center as some people have a hard time taking that step and seeing themselves in the senior population.
- 6) The tax work-off program: volunteers are just less than 60 participants.
- 7) Parks and Recreation Department participated with Senior Center in "Fun After 50 Fair"

- 8) Planned a bike program for seniors
- 9) Increased involvement of interns, total of 5 this year.
- 10) Completed the survey for the department's transportation system. They had a 40% response rate which gave great insight into how the system is successful and what could be adjusted to better serve the residents.

Goals

- 1) Want to continue to make partnerships with other establishments and increase programming located outside of the Senior Center.
- 2) Increase seniors benefiting from programs and services and connect them to services offered with other establishments
- 3) Planning to install a swipe kiosk at front door.
- 4) Looking at implementing changes to the facility, goal is to attract and retain connections to new seniors; they're giving us feedback that they are looking for different things.
- 5) Continue to be approachable and provide comfortable avenues into the department to allow them to continue to address needs and interests

Numbers

- 1) CDBG is slated to be cut by 23% which would equate to a loss of \$11,300 for Senior Services, though Ms. Colino received a note from CDBG just recently stating that the funds may come through; because of this there is a budget reserve line item added in the amount of \$11,300.
- 2) Ms. Colino's second concern is about the decrease in state funding which comes by way of a formula grant. Currently the state contributes \$7 per elder. That amount just dropped to \$6.25 which equates to a \$12,000 total decrease in the formula grant. Two positions are at risk due to these cuts, these positions are the Aging in Place budget manager and the office's administrative assistant. These positions are both crucial to the Senior Center fulfilling their goals.
- 3) The budget changes: they took all of their funds and combined them to show that no single line item relies solely on City dollars. They eliminated a rental fee for water cooler; decreased travel reimbursement; decreased printing; decreased transportation because their revolving account can support that decrease. They have \$140,000 in the transportation revolving account. \$34,000 is the amount of the cut, and \$35,000 is the revenue accrued each year, so the Center will replenish that cut by the next fiscal year. Ms. Colino stressed that this shift will not affect services.

Questions

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked whether in terms of doing outreach to younger seniors or new seniors, if they can use reverse 911 to call households where there are seniors to poll them about programs they are interested in. This could be an automated service.

Ald. Linsky suggested that instead of bringing food services in house, as Ms. Colino suggested earlier when discussing opening a small café in the Senior Center, that the center commission food establishments around the area. Ms. Colino shared that this proposed café, which would offer an alternative to the congregate lunch, would provide small snacks. Ms. Colino is currently looking into an organization that trains developmentally disabled people, supervised by a staff

person. She believes this would be a wonderful stretching of collaborative resources that would not incur any great cost to the Center. Ms. Colino is in the process of talking with the building inspectors about making sure the building is up to code for such things.

Revolving Accounts

Everything in this section is accurate, except the Senior Center revolving account. This account is actually at \$50,000. The spreadsheet that states that it is at \$20,000 is incorrect.

Ald. Baker moved approval of the budget, which carried unanimously.

SOLICITOR

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 6-0-1 (Baker abstaining, Merrill not voting)

Donnalynn Kahn, City Solicitor, presented her budget to the Committee. For details of her budget presentation, including her accomplishments, goals, and department structure, please see the attached presentation.

Atty. Kahn shared with the Committee that she wants to get her outside labor costs down to zero and getting an in house telecommunications attorney is a huge part of this as telecommunications and energy are growing areas. The Assistant City Solicitor position is going to be funded 50% by the telecommunications fund. The .6 position that was originally through the Planning Department will be funded by the telecommunications budget that will be transferred to the Law Department.

Questions

Ald. Blazar asked Atty. Kahn why the School Department doesn't use the City's counsel, and asked what that department spends on outside counsel. Attorney Kahn shared that the school committee has the ability to hire their own counsel. She has been discussing, with Sandy Guryan, the law department's ability to do certain work for the schools and they've begun to do some of that work. Atty. Kahn stated that she cannot speak to the amount that the schools spend on outside counsel.

Ald. Sangiolo shared that she has always been of the opinion that the Board should have its own attorney residing within the Law Department because there are times when the Executive wants to do something different than the Board wants to do which causes a conflict. She believes the Board would be better served should they be represented by an individual solely assigned to them. Ald. Hess-Mahan agreed with this thinking.

Ald. Baker suggested that the .6 position be made a .4 position and the benefit funding that would be given to the .6 position be put into a consultant's budget. Ald. Baker then noted he would abstain, but moved to recommend approval of the budget as is. This straw vote carried 6-0-1.

LIBRARY

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 7-0

Nancy Perlow, Director of the Newton Free Library, presented her budget to the Committee. She presented a very thorough Powerpoint presentation. For the details on the Libraries accomplishments and goals, please refer to Ms. Perlow's presentation which is attached to the end of this report.

Questions

Ald. Hess Mahan asked if the Library is going to make an application for smartphones. Ms. Perlow stated that that is on their radar as something to develop in the near future.

Ald. Blazar asked what it is that the library needs that it doesn't have right now. If it wasn't an issue she'd like an RFID system or an automated check in system which costs about \$200,000. It would be incredible to have an automated check in, but to have the complete RFID system would be her preference if the City had the ability to provide it.

Ald. Fischman asked Ms. Perlow if we pay our employees a higher or lower amount compared to other libraries in the area. Ms. Perlow said we are in between; we pay well enough to attract good people and to keep them, though she shared that what we pay part-time people is surprisingly low.

Ald. Linsky asked if Ms. Perlow has discussed with the School Department the potential to fill in some of the gaps that will be made by the budget cuts. Ms. Perlow said there has not been any discussion with the School Department about supplementing hours at the elementary school level.

Ald. Sangiolo asked if there were any changes to the revolving accounts, which Ms. Perlow confirmed there weren't.

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked if anything needs to be fixed in the building. Ms. Perlow said the HVAC needs to be fixed (that is currently under repair), the carpets need to be replaced and the walls need to be painted.

Ald. Rice moved to recommend approval of the budget which carried unanimously.

CITY CLERK

STRAW VOTE APPROVED 7-0

David Olson, City Clerk, joined the table to discuss his budget. He provided the Committee with a hand-out of his department's accomplishments, goals, and statistics (attached).

Mr. Olson shared that there is a big push this year on dog licensing. Last year the department issued 3,751 dog licenses; as of today the count is 3,705 and the office is only in the first 2 months of licensing. In addition to standard licenses, 586 off leash dog park permits have been issued.

Numbers

The FY12 budget is a little higher than FY11. The budget is located on page 7 of the General Government tab. There are two major changes that contribute to the increase. The first is that the advertising and publication appropriation went up by \$5,000 due to the fact that we lost the Waltham News Tribune as our daily paper and must use the Boston Globe instead, which costs twice as much.

The other big component of the increase is \$4k for inaugural expenses. This figure goes in and out of the budget depending on whether or not it is an election year.

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked who pays for special permit notices. Mr. Olson explained that the applicant pays a fee, but that goes into an income account and the department then has money budgeted for advertising.

Ald. Linsky asked when the special permit fee was last adjusted. Mr. Olson stated that it hasn't been adjusted since he has worked here.

Ald. Sangiolo asked about revolving funds and CIP. Mr. Olson explained that there are revolving accounts for the dog parks-his office takes 5% of the off-leash fee for administrative costs. Regarding the CIP, there is \$10,000 under free cash for committee room upgrades. Mr. Olson is looking into getting wall mounted projectors installed which would come with a mobile tablet that can control the projector and be passed around the table.

Ald. Baker moved to recommend approval of the budget. This motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Sangiolo, Chairman