

CITY OF NEWTON
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUDGET
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEES REPORT

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2009

Present: Ald. Johnson, Baker, Brandel, Hess-Mahan, Merrill, Parker and Sangiolo;
Absent: Ald. Freedman

Also Present: Ald. Linsky and Lennon

Others Present: Susan Burstein (Chief Budget Officer), Fred Guzzi (Veterans Agent), Mitch Baker (Inspector, Weights and Measures), Craig Manseau (Executive Secretary, Elections), David Olson (City Clerk/Clerk of the Board), Anne Larner and Marietta Marchitelli, (Representing the Newton History Museum), Karyn Dean (Committee Clerk)

REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES

#70-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting the FY10-14 Capital Improvement Program, totaling \$192,908,572, and the FY09 Supplemental Capital budget, which require Board of Aldermen approval to finance new capital projects over the next five years.

REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES

#70-09(3) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting in accordance with Section 5-1 of the City of Newton Charter the FY10 Budget totaling \$333,411,747, passage of which shall be concurrent with the FY10-FY14 Capital Improvement Program.
Effective date of submission: 4/21/09; last day to pass budget: 6/5/09)

VETERANS DEPT. BUDGET AND CIP

ACTION: **APPROVED 2-0-3 (Ald. Brandel, Johnson and Sangiolo abstaining; Ald. Parker and Merrill not voting)**

NOTE: Fred Guzzi, Director of Veterans Services, presented his departmental budget. Mr. Guzzi announced that he will be retiring in June of 2009. The Committee offered their congratulations. A search committee has started looking for his replacement. He felt that he did not have much to offer in terms of planning the next budget since he will not be here.

Veterans

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked if there was anything coming up that would require more expenditures than this past year. Mr. Guzzi said there was an item going before the Finance Committee for an extra \$13K in veteran's benefits. They started off with \$25K

and went to \$30K last year in that account. The \$13K that they are looking for now may not be quite enough, however. This is an account that is payable to veterans in need and there is a qualifying process. It is monitored by the state and the state reimburses the City 75% of the benefits. The City contributes 25%. The payments can vary from \$700 to \$2,000 a month per veteran or spouse of a veteran. This is the biggest cost to the Veterans' budget. Mr. Guzzi reported that no flagpoles had been painted this year.

Ald. Brandel asked if the scaling back of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan would have any impact on Newton's Veteran's budget. Mr. Guzzi said he did not feel there would be any significant impact. The graduation rate from the Newton High Schools is very high which generally indicates a smaller number in the armed forces.

Licensing

Mr. Guzzi said they may increase some of the smaller licensing fees from \$100 to \$200 as soon as the Commissioners can vote on it. These fees have brought in about \$285K a year. Ald. Sangiolo asked if Newton's fees were comparable to nearby communities and he said they were. The Common Victualler fee went up last year to \$100 from \$50. It had not gone up in about 15 years.

Weights and Measures

Mitch Baker, Inspector of Weights and Measures, explained that not much has changed in his budget. Taxicab fares have dropped a bit because gas prices have dropped. He reported that there are more consumer complaints because people are becoming more aware of what they are spending. He seals all the devices once a year and deals with complaints and problems as they come to his attention.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the Veterans Budget.

ELECTIONS COMMISSION BUDGET AND CIP

ACTION: APPROVED 3-0-3 (Ald. Brandel and Johnson abstaining; Ald. Parker not voting)

NOTE: Craig Manseau, Executive Secretary of Elections, presented his departmental budget. He explained that the primary responsibilities of his office were to conduct elections in the City of Newton; provide the annual census; and to oversee the financials of candidates and PACs. Mr. Manseau praised his staff for their hard work. They received over 6,000 absentee ballots which was an impressive amount. He noted that there was a state primary this year with a 14% turnout and a state election with a record breaking turnout of 82%.

Nomination Papers

They are currently certifying signatures on nomination papers and made the nomination papers available earlier this year to make it easier for the candidates. Once the signature requirement is met, a candidates name will appear on the ballot.

City Census

The City Census is now being conducted. In the state election, there were a fairly high number of inactive voters. (Voters who did not fill out their census are categorized as inactive. This does not mean they are not registered. Inactive voters are allowed to vote, they just need to fill out a card at the poll to verify their residency). The inactivity level has been addressed and 91% of registered voters are now active. The second mailing of the census has just gone out so they expect to add a few percentage points. He reported that the inactive and active voters have been merged onto one master list as discussed last year.

Poll Workers/Election Costs

Poll worker training went well. Mr. Manseau worked with the League of Women Voters and had 7 high school students helping as well. Boston College worked with Mr. Manseau and provided the City with 33 students. He will continue working with Boston College and the high schools to get students involved in the next election. A checkbox was added to the City Census to indicate interest in becoming a poll worker. They received 311 responses. Ald. Hess-Mahan asked how much the election will cost and Mr. Manseau anticipates about \$92,000. He changed the cost for the poll workers from an hourly rate to a flat rate because he felt it would help him know his costs more accurately (about \$25,000). The cost of the police will vary and he can not predict that exactly but estimates a little under \$25,000. With the programming costs and rentals it should come to \$92,000.

Ballot Boxes

Mr. Manseau has changed the markings on the ballot boxes to larger and brighter labels and the collection bags will match. All of this makes it easier to identify the bags and heightens the level of professionalism as well.

Preliminary Election

There will be a preliminary election for Mayor, School Committee in Ward 8, and an Alderman-at-Large in Ward 6, so far. There are 47 individuals who have pulled papers: 4 mayoral; 21 alderman-at-large; 8 ward aldermen; and 14 School Committee candidates. There is also a Charter revision petition that will require a minimum of 7,758 voters. So far, about 1,000 signatures have come in. A couple of people have pulled papers for Charter Committee candidates but that would not take place until all the signatures are collected and certified.

Goals

- Reviewing municipal candidate finance reports.
- Maintaining statistics on new voter registration on the change of enrollment, the change of addresses, and purge voters. This will give a better picture of what happens in their office on a daily basis.
- Improvement of their website and include more information including instructional and informational videos. Mr. Manseau has been meeting with the City of Boston to get more ideas about how best to do this. He welcomed any suggestions from the Board or from any constituent they may hear from.

- Resolution of the one modem that wasn't working during the election. Mr. Manseau has been working with Verizon.
- Training all the wardens and clerks again this year.
- Processing the City Census and publishing the directory by June 1st.
- Reviewing polling sites and welcoming any recommendations. Sites would have to be handicapped accessible and no alcohol can be served on the day or night of the election. Mr. Manseau is an advocate for the use of public buildings. He realizes there have been some concerns about strangers in the schools while children are there but there has never been a negative incident. Ald. Sangiolo asked that a conversation happen with the School Department/School Committee to think about canceling school on election day. Tuesdays are early days already, so it seems to make sense. The traffic around the schools is very heavy with students and teachers as well as voters showing up all at the same time.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the Elections Commission budget.

CITY CLERK/CLERK OF THE BOARD BUDGET AND CIP

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0-3 (Ald. Brandel, Johnson and Sangiolo abstaining)

NOTE: David Olson, City Clerk and Clerk of the Board, presented his departmental budget. **He provided a handout with details of the accomplishments and goals. It is attached to this report.**

Committee Questions

Sound System

Mr. Olson explained that they new sound system in the Aldermanic Chamber extended into the conference rooms. There were speakers and controls in each of the rooms.

New Software/Hardware

TermTracker software allows tracking of appointments to Commissions and Boards. Mr. Olson provides expiring term information to the Mayor's office so the appointments can be re-filled more efficiently and without gaps.

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked about the *Granicus* program. Mr. Olson explained that it was a hardware/software archiving program. It will allow material that is on the website to be more coordinated and organized. It can connect docket items to their reports, the video from the meeting, and the audio from the meeting without having to search endlessly for it. Markers are set in the audio, video and text to easily find the items of interest. This can all be accessed through the website. Ald. Hess-Mahan was grateful to Mr. Olson, Bob Kelly of NewTV and the IT department for working on this. He has also been talking to Reenie Murphy of the School Committee and they will be using this service as well. NewTV will pay the monthly subscriber fees for this service.

Electronic Packets/Website/Email

Ald. Brandel asked if the Aldermen could receive their packets electronically. Mr. Olson explained that, currently, not all aldermen have access to a computer and internet. The

packet is the only way that all members can receive all the same information at the same time. Also, some materials come in very late on a Friday and getting that information out electronically might not be possible. He would like to have that happen at some point in the future and he is working on that. Ald. Johnson pointed out that not all aldermen have printers that can accommodate printing out all that material at home.

Ald. Hess-Mahan was impressed by the use of the Calcium calendar. He finds it extremely useful and current. He was also happy to now have remote access to city email that sits on the city server's instead of on his own computer. The emails all need to be saved due to public meeting laws so the volume is heavy for a personal computer. Mr. Olson said this was available to any alderman who would like it.

Budget Changes

The budget for the office is pretty much flat. The budget book shows elimination of a position but it has been recast as a clerk/archivist. This position was held by Rosalie Myers as a part-time Committee Clerk. Her duties as Traffic Council clerk will be transferred to Danielle Delaney, and Ms. Myers will be available to do research and basic care of the archival collections. This will also keep the archivist position alive until more funding is found to restore that to more than a part-time position.

Members of the Committee expressed their gratitude to Mr. Olson for the fine work he has done and his responsiveness.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the City Clerk/Clerk of the Board budget.

HISTORY MUSEUM BUDGET AND CIP

ACTION: APPROVED 3-0-2 (Ald. Johnson and Sangiolo abstaining; Ald. Baker and Brandel not voting)

NOTE: Anne Larner of the Newton Historical Society presented the departmental budget. Cindy Stone, Director of the Museum, was unable to attend due to a commitment with the capital campaign.

Capital Campaign

Ms. Larner explained that one of their goals for the year was to launch a capital campaign. They are now in the middle of that campaign and in the "quiet phase". The quiet phase includes the solicitation of their own Board and they exceeded their own expectations with pledges of \$300,000. They also have pledges for an additional \$300,000 from the Avery family who are Durant descendants. The Avery's have access to a number of different foundations through their family and business connections. The last \$300,000 will come from the Library's near friends and traditional donors. They are hopeful they will reach the \$900,000 trigger by the end of the summer which will then allow them to access the CPA funds. They expect to be into the public part of the campaign by the fall.

Programs

The Library is also expanding their programs. In particular they are expanding the programs they run with the Library; doubling their walking tours to accommodate the number of participants; turning over their exhibits; upgrading their website with exhibits and paying and registering for programs online.

The one area that has dropped off a little bit is the attendance of children from school and camp programs. They did not have an educator on staff in the summer due to turnover, so they missed the camp programs. The economy turned and the fees for buses impacted the schools and so the student trips have declined. The Museum is working on bringing some programs into the schools to ease that burden.

Goals

- They will continue work on the capital campaign which will probably go for an additional year beyond FY10. Their goal is \$2M with \$1.4M going to Durant Kenrick and \$600K for the Jackson Homestead.
- They are also still working on the plans for the archiving project at the Homestead. This was a CPA approved project. When the plans for the project are done, they will go back to the Board for more money to do the work. The exterior work on the Homestead needs to go the Finance Committee. It was already approved in Committee on Community Preservation and the Public Facilities Committee.

Committee Questions

Ald. Parker asked if all the Historic Tours are being videotaped and available on NewTV. Ms. Larner said NewTV has been excellent in taping both the tours and the lectures for broadcast.

Attendance

Ald. Parker asked how the paid attendance fared this past year. Ms. Larner said it was about even. A letter detailing attendance is attached to this report. Ald. Parker said that when Mr. Olson was Director of the Museum, he had many ideas for expanding programs to bring more visitors to the Museum. Ald. Parker hoped some of those ideas could be implemented. Ms. Larner said it was difficult to have too many programs at the Museum due to its size limitations, but they are trying to do more outside of the building. When students visit, it is extremely tight. They find the larger crowds come at the opening of exhibits and for programs around exhibits. This the 200th anniversary of the Jackson Homestead and events are planned throughout the year.

Revolving Accounts

The Jackson Homestead account and the Museum for America Grant account are the two revolving accounts. Ms. Larner said she would have to speak with Cindy Stone about these.

CIP

Ms. Larner thought there was some painting to be done to the interior of the Jackson Homestead.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the History Museum budget.

All other items held without discussion.

Motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marcia Johnson, Chairman

City Clerk/Clerk of the Board of Aldermen

Year at a Glance FY09

Accomplishments in FY2009

Completion of Phase 2 of CPA Funded Clerk's Vault Project

- Conservation and repair of 32 volumes of indexes, 2 oath books, 3 engineering books and 6 historic atlases to complete the project.
- Installation of Fireproof Cabinetry in the Clerk's Office.
- Birth, Death and Marriage indexes scanned and available in the office through 1971. All Birth, Death and Marriage Indexes through 1899, and historic atlases, available on-line.



Restored Atlases and placed on-line

Website Enhancements

- Video Clips of Aldermen available through webpages.
- On-line registration for the Lottery for the New Commercial Parking program has been implemented.
- More back-up material available on-line.

Customer Service Enhancements/Workflow Improvements

- Purchased high speed scanners to quickly scan Board of Aldermen material for backup to the originals and for presentation on the website.
- Continued refinement of Dog Licensing program and procedures including advertising through sandwich boards in village squares, local newspapers, and the web.
- New Sound system in Chamber.
- Installation of Open wireless in the Chamber and Committee Rooms.
- Internet based city e-mail for the Aldermen.



Dog License Awareness Promotion

Implementation of TermTracker Software

- Purchase of TermTracker Software and development of a Commission and Committee Handbook to better support citizen volunteers.

Staffing

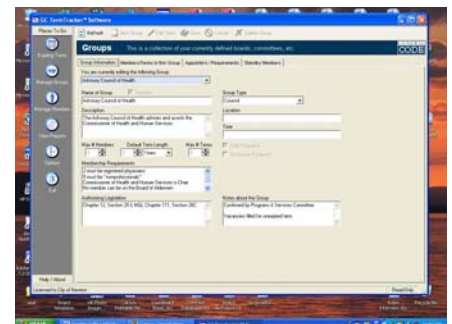
- Lost the Archivist position due to budget cuts. Services have been curtailed to only providing searches for formal records requests. Daily oversight and care, reorganization of material, and providing in person research services have been eliminated.
- Restructuring of the office staff has been completed to provide for an Assistant Clerk of the Board and Assistant City Clerk, the Secretary position has been replaced with a Bookkeeper, and the Receipts Clerk position has been recast as a Customer Service Clerk.
- City Clerk completed 3-year certification program and has been designated as a Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks.



New Sound System & wireless internet in Chamber

Goals for FY2010

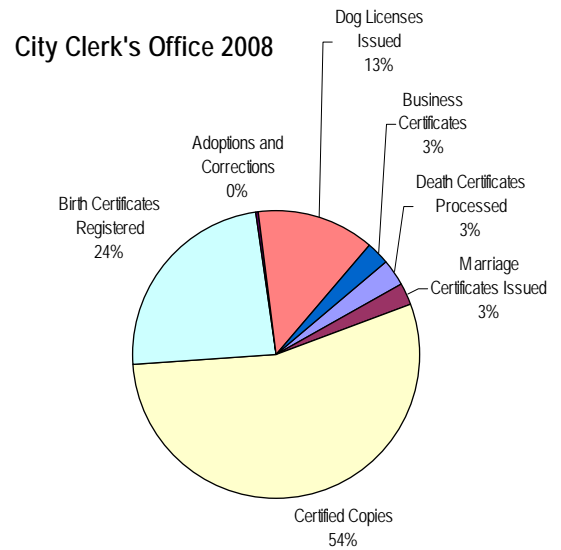
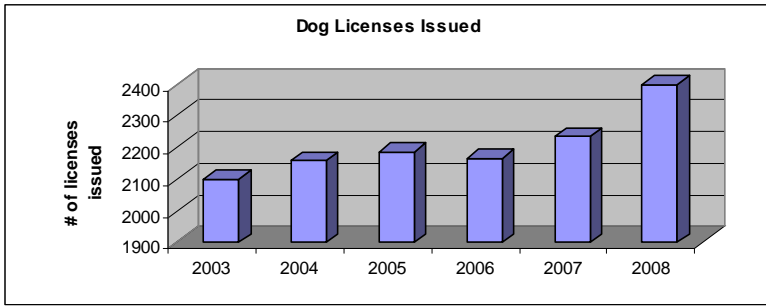
- Continue to expand and organize information available via the web.
- Develop a genealogical resources website with Library and Museum.
- Continued development of Policy and Procedure Manuals for operations.
- Explore acceptance of On-line payments for Vital Records requests.
- Find ways to improve cross department document sharing.



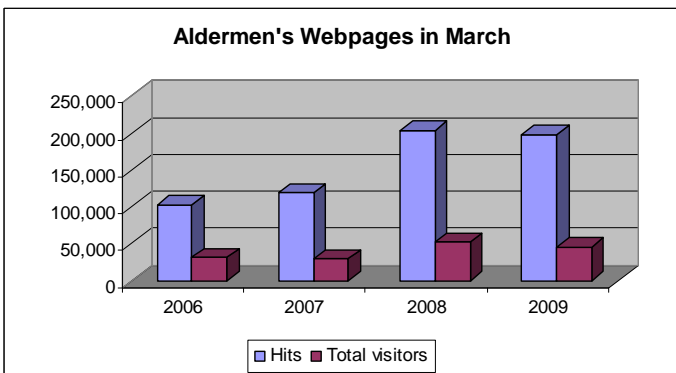
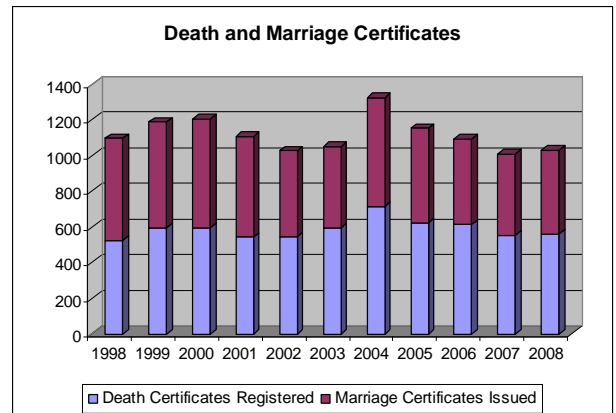
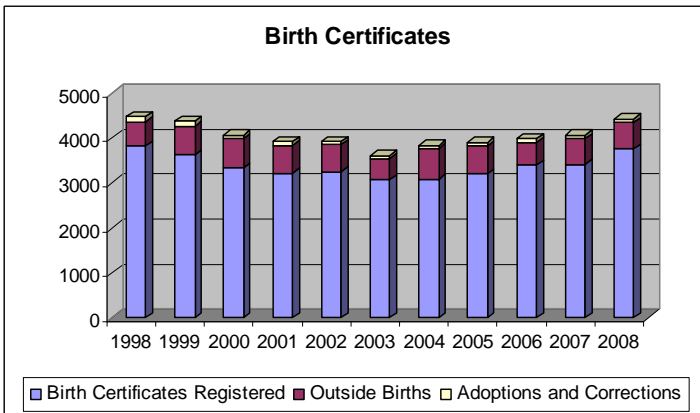
TermTracker Software

City Clerk/Clerk of the Board of Aldermen

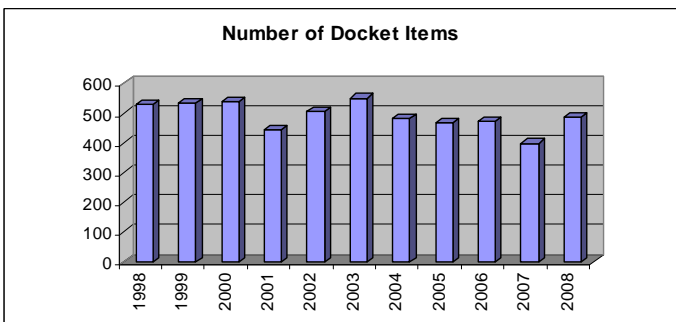
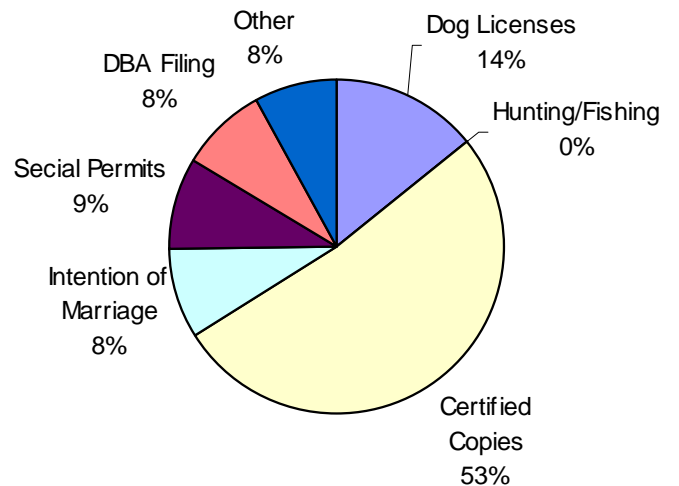
Service Level Dashboard



	2005	2006	2007	2008
Birth Certificates Registered	3,195	3,388	3,408	3,763
Outside Births	631	515	568	580
Adoptions and Corrections	74	75	88	75
Death Cert. Registered	623	612	555	561
Marriage Cert. Issued	529	480	451	467



Income 2008





NEWTON HISTORY MUSEUM

 at The Jackson Homestead

David B. Cohen, Mayor
Cynthia Stone, Director



Memorandum

To: Aldermen of Programs and Services Committee

From: Cindy Stone, Director Newton History Museum

Re: Museum Statistics for Calendar Year 2008

Date: May 6, 2009

Please find below the statistics for calendar year 2008. As Anne Larner described, we are working to upgrade our facilities at the Jackson Homestead as we continue to develop the Durant-Kenrick project and finish the restoration of the burial grounds. For the Jackson Homestead, we are raising money to expand and improve the archives and add a classroom to the rear of the Homestead as a better space for school groups. The latter will, in turn, allow us to develop a better entryway/orientation area for visitors in our current entry area which right now serves double duty as school classroom and visitor orientation space. This will help us to do a better job with visitors and groups and hopefully increase their numbers.

In 2008 we had turnover in programming and group education staff which resulted in our being unable to schedule summer camp groups and some summer programs. As a consequence our numbers are somewhat lower than usual.

School and other Groups:	2540 in 115 groups
Public Program Participants:	2365 in 47 programs
Visitors not in groups or Programs:	1929
Website hits:	20148
Historical Inquiries answered:	354
Newsletter with history articles:	6600

*Headquarters of
the Newton
Historical Society*

In addition, we mounted exhibitions at the Newton Free Library, City Hall, and aired our programs on New T.V. in two one hour time slots on weekends and two half hour slots during the week on the red channel. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.