

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 2006

Present: Ald. Hess-Mahan(Acting Chair), Ald. Sangiolo, Ald. Lipof, President Baker

Absent: Ald. Coletti, Parker, Merrill, Johnson

Other Alderman Present: Ald. Yates

Also Present: Fran Towle (Commissioner of Parks and Recreation), Bob DeRubeis (Deputy Commissioner), Jeff Knight (Superintendent of the Fire Department Wires Division), Susan Abele, Anne Larner (Jackson Homestead) Cynthia Stone (Director, Jackson Homestead)

#270-07      PATRICK PALMER, 37 Arapahoe Road, West Newton, appointed by His Honor the Mayor as a member of the NEWTON COMMONWEALTH GOLF FOUNDATION for a term to expire on May 18, 2009 (60 days 9-8-06).

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED 4-0**

**NOTE:**      Mr. Palmer was present for this discussion. He currently is President and CEO of the West Suburban YMCA. His background includes 30 years in the golf industry. He was a general manager of a golf resort in Arizona. His experience includes redesign and construction management of two golf courses in Tucson. He is also a member of the southwest division of the PGA and feels his background and experience lend some credence to his appointment to the Newton Commonwealth Golf Foundation.

President Baker asked if Mr. Palmer knew the history of the course. Mr. Palmer said he has lived in Newton for five years and has played the golf course many times. President Baker noted that this is a very important public resource because it is something that provides recreational opportunity that the City does not have to subsidize and it is very important that it maintain its self-sufficiency. President Baker emphasized that this is an important Committee and hopes that Mr. Palmer will urge the golf foundation to undertake updating some its bylaws.

The Committee voted 4-0 to Mr. Palmer's appointment.

**REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#275-06      HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$30,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of replacing the existing electrical cabinet and control panels at the Halloran Sports Complex at Albemarle Field.

**ACTION:**      **APPROVAL RECOMMENDED 3-0 (Baker not voting)**

**NOTE:** Fran Towle, Bob DeRubeis, and Jeff Knight joined the Committee for the discussion of this request. Ms. Towle said this is one of the few lighted, multi-purpose fields in the City. The system is about 30 years old and over the years has had many, many repairs. Over the past year, expenditures have been between \$15,000 and \$20,000. Ms. Towle said \$30,000 along with Jeff Knight's help would get the electrical box up and running. However, this will not be a final fix, eventually Ms. Towle will have to come back to ask for more help. There is currently a safety issue. The electrical cabinet has corroded due to prolonged exposure to weather. The intrusion of water to the electrical control panels has caused corrosion to the circuit breakers. Mr. Knight recommends that the cabinet and control panels be replaced with a modern system that would be more reliable. Ald. Hess-Mahan asked how long this fix would be in place before long-term solution will need to be implemented. Mr. Knight and Ms. Towle think the proposed fix will last a few years but more work will need to be done. They emphasized that this temporary solution is an essential expenditure that should not be delayed because of the safety issues involved. The Committee recommended approval of this request 3-0 (Baker not voting).

#191-03 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting a discussion with the Information Technology and Clerk of the Board Departments re increasing efforts to source reduce the amount of paper to be duplicated and to disseminate more information via the Internet.

**ACTION:** **NO ACTION NECESSARY 4-0**

**NOTE:** Ald. Sangiolo asked that this item be voted no action necessary as it is currently being handled in a Long Range Planning subcommittee. Both Alderman Albright and President Baker are on that subcommittee working with David Olson on reducing the amount of paper produced. The Committee vote to approve no action necessary.

#242-05 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting the Executive Department and IT Departments post all city board and commission meeting agendas and minutes on to the City Website.

**ACTION:** **HELD 4-0**

**NOTE:** Ald. Sangiolo asked that this item be held as there is some confusion about agendas being posted with some of the Commissions in the City when they are broken out into subcommittees. All agendas and reports are still not up on the web in a timely fashion. There is also a question of whether they are subject to the Open Meeting Law. The School Committee postings are not always timely and Ald. Sangiolo asked the committee to hold the item. The Committee voted 4-0 to hold.

#438-05 ALD. YATES requesting that the maintenance, care, and management of the city's historic burial grounds be transferred from the Parks and Recreation Department to the Newton History Museum.

**ACTION:** **APPROVED 3-0 as amended (Baker not voting)**

**NOTE:** Ald. Yates, Bob DeRubeis, Fran Towle, Cynthia Stone, Susan Abele and Anne Larnar were present for this discussion. Ald. Yates said his intent was that new Museum Director Cynthia Stone should continue the strong involvement that David Olson, the previous Director, had in restoring the historic burial grounds. Ald. Yates noted there is still much work to do from both a historic preservation and maintenance point of view.

In discussion with Fran Towle, Ald. Yates became aware that a complete transfer did not make any sense because that would mean putting all of the responsibility for maintenance, etc., on the museum, which has no physical capacity to handle it. What he wanted to achieve was, in fact, that Parks & Recreation would continue the maintenance, care, and management of the burial grounds in coordination with the Newton History Museum and that language would be added to the current language that currently states “that the Parks and Recreation Department has the maintenance, care and management of the burial grounds” and conversely that in the History Museum ordinance that currently makes no reference to the burial grounds now would add the following language:

“In coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department, the School Department, the Veterans Agent, and other appropriate public and private agencies, the Director of the Newton History Museum shall develop and carry out programs to preserve the burial grounds and to utilize them to educate current residents of the city about the persons buried in the grounds and the roles they played in the history of the City.”

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked which department had actual jurisdiction of the burial grounds. Ald. Yates responded that the burial grounds are currently under Parks and Recreation. The Committee voted to recommend 3-0 (Baker not voting) to approve as amended with language to be drafted and approved as to form by the Law Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Hess-Mahan, Acting Chair