

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2003

Present: Ald. Johnson (Chair) Ald. Sangiolo, Lipsitt, Coletti, Parker, Fischman

Absent: Ald. Gentile, Merrill

Other Aldermen Present: Ald. Gerst, Linsky, Stewart, Yates, Mansfield, Schnipper, Lappin

Also Present: Fran Towle (Parks & Recreation Commissioner) Bob DeRubeis (Deputy Commissioner) Mark Welch (Forestry) Sandy Pooler (Chief Budget Officer), Mike Cronin (School Dept.)

Re-appointment by the President of the Board

#478-02 ALAN DeCew 260 Chestnut Street, West Newton, re-appointed on January 1, 2003 as a member of the CHILD CARE COMMISSION for a term of office to expire on January 1, 2005 (60-day Board action date 1-31-03).

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0 (Parker and Fischman not voting)

NOTE: Mr. Decew was first appointed to this Committee in 1991. He said the Commission assesses the needs of childcare in the City of Newton and tries to get that information to the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen. In the years that Mr. DeCew has served on the commission, the scholarship fund has been able to distribute over \$500,000 in scholarships.

When as by Ald. Sangiolo ~~asked Mr. DeCew~~ if the Child Care Commission ever became involved in new Day Care facilities opening and whether the locations were either good or bad, Mr. DeCew answered replied that the Commission serves as an advisory position and if an organization is planning to put in a day care facility, they sometimes do call and often do speak with the Child Care Commission.

Ald. Lipsitt moved approval and the Committee voted 4-0.

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

# 21-03 TERENCE A. SACK, 64 Dorcar Road, Newton Centre, appointed on December 17, 2002 as member of the NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION, for a term to expire on February 1, 2006. (60-day Board action date 03/07/03)

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: The Committee first held Mr. Sack's appointment as he was not present when this item first came up for discussion. When he arrived, Ald. Lipsitt moved reconsideration and the item was discussed.

Mr. Sack has been coaching baseball since he was a freshman in high school in 1982. He has been involved with the youth of the City for twenty years. He also serves on the board of the Newton Athletic Association, and coaches three baseball teams in the course of a year. He has been on the Advisory Committee to the Youth Commission for the last two years. He sees the Youth Commission becoming more active than in the past. There was a Youth Day in October and Mr. Sack hopes to have more involvement from the two high schools.

The Committee voted 4-0 to approve Mr. Sack.

#36-03 EXECUTIVE SECRETARY to the Election Commission requesting the setting of Tuesday, June 3, 2003 for the Election of nine members of the Newton Highlands Area Council.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Mr. Karg was present and explained that the Election Commission will be glad to assist the Newton Highlands Community in coordinating this election together. The Committee approved this item.

**REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES**

#124-02(11) HIS HONOR THE MAYORsubmitting the FY04-FY08 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, pursuant to Section 5-3 of the NEWTON CITY CHARTER, which requires Board of Aldermen approval of a plan to finance new local capital projects totaling \$160,847,242 over the next several years:

SUMMARY

PUBLIC WORKS (GRANT/FEE FUNDED) .....	\$ 58,022,114
PUBLIC WORKS (CITY FUNDED) .....	\$5,820,000

PUBLIC SAFETY .....	\$3,349,000
PUBLIC BUILDINGS.....	\$3,941,400
PUBLIC EDUCATION .....	\$80,156,728
PARKS & RECREATION .....	\$7,479,000
OTHER .....	\$2,079,000
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$160,847,242</b>

**ACTION:      PARKS & RECREATION APPROVED 5-0  
PUBLIC EDUCATION HELD 6-0**

**NOTE:**      **PARKS AND RECREATION** Fran Towle, Bob Derubeis, and Sandy Pooler were present for discussion of this item When asked where Forte Park came in the list of priorities, -Fran Towle explained Forte Park was next in line to finalize its development. Forte Park is in Phase 1 and the State said they would fund both Phase 1 and Phase 2. After doing Phase 1, Phase 2 would be funded the following year. Commissioner Towle was told that after the acquisition phase was finished, Phase 2 would be picked up. Since Forte Park was in strong line for urban self-help monies, it has been the next in line for park development. President Lipsitt questioned why Edmands Park was listed before Nahanton Park and Commissioner Towle responded that she thought it was a mistake and it should be Nahanton Park. Ms. Towle hoped the dates would be Nahanton Park design in 04, construction in 05, and then Edmunds Park design in 06, and Cold Springs would be moved up. ~~Ald. Sangiolo questioned if the dates were realistic.~~

Fran Towle explained that [tennis or basketball?]court repairs appear in the budget show the year they were actually repaired and what the budget reflects what the department feels would be a recommendation of the order for court repairs throughout the City. Park bench repair and replacement is ongoing. Ms. Towle said Marathon money receipts are used to work with community groups to upgrade playgrounds. Surfacing is another project that is currently being worked on with all of the 42 playgrounds hopefully completed. ~~Tree inventory is the assessment of trees throughout the City.~~ The department tries to replace trees that had to be taken down. There is currently a city-wide strategy plan being worked on for city-wide pruning and as this is becoming more apparent that that it this is an important factor in trying to maintain our urban forests, and turf control.

Ald. Parker asked what the totals were for trees lost and trees planted. Ms. Towle said about 400 trees a year were being taken down. In this fiscal year no trees have been planted, but the hope is to plant some in the spring. ~~The Tree Commission hopes that much of this money is set aside for tree planting/pruning.~~ Commissioner Towle told the Committee there

would be ~~emphasize empahsis~~ on the maintaining of existing trees that we have ~~through the pruning strategy and that~~. ~~R~~replacing tree for tree will probably not happen.

~~The Committee had several questions regarding how decisions were made as to what was funded./not funded within the CIP. Ald. Parker questioned why less money seems to be appropriated for tree replacement. President Lipsitt questioned how the decision is made to allocate money requested.~~ Fran Towle said Parks & Recreation requests the projects with a dollar ~~sign figure attanced~~ and the Mayor's office reviews that list item by item and makes the final decisions regarding what is funded by the CIP.

Ald. Sangiolo asked about using money from the Tree Ordinance for tree planting. The Tree Commission felt a large percentage of the money should be allocated for pruning and preserving. Ald. Parker expressed concern that funds from the Tree Preservation Ordinance will be seen as an opportunity to replace money that was already being spent on tree planting. Ald. Lipsitt suggested that when trees are discussed again that the Committee have some guidance from the Law Department on the interpretation of that portion of the Tree Ordinance. ~~T~~

Ald. Parker felt tree replacement should be a very high priority. In his opinion, about \$500,000 should be Priority 1. ~~If more money is available, equipment could be bought. He felt Priority 1,2, 3 should then be decided. Playgrounds are done with Marathon receipts.~~ Ald. Coletti said the CIP is a five-year document and items that are in the fifth year out are Priority 5, things that are in the fourth year out are listed in Priority 4, then down to Priority 3, ~~Priority-2 and then Priority 1.~~ ~~(In the Priority 1 there is a \$3 million dollar list.)~~ They are then prioritized into items 1 through 4 with in the current year. Ald. Coletti went on to say, Priority 1 items are reached by waiting 5 years from the time they appear on the document to the time they work down to Priority 1. Unfortunately, we are unable to do everything but do what we can. The list before the Committee is aggressive and if there is a bad winter, half will be deferred to some other account. It is the Mayor's prerogative to work with his department heads to propose this list and then the aldermen can move things around. Ald. Coletti liked the way the Mayor's office has set this up as he said it gives credibility and identifies what is important. Ald. Coletti supports the way the CIP has been proposed. Ald. Parker felt it would be useful to be able to prioritize within a given year.

Ald. Lipsitt respectfully suggested that the CIP for the Recreation Department be approved as amended [will the ammended CIP be included?]. Mr. Pooler had said that the Mayor's office was listening

through ~~his Mr. Pooler's~~ presence and through the Commissioner being at the meeting regarding our priorities. ~~and said the entire document is before the Board and each Committee will schedule as to when they discuss their items.~~ Ald. Parker suggested holding this item..

Ald. Lipsitt said approving this item would not prevent the Committee from coming back and adding some resolution about priorities, but in terms of discussing the items within the CIP and the dates, the Committee has gone as far with that portion as possible.

Chairman Johnson said she was in agreement with Ald. Coletti regarding prioritization. Ald. Lipsitt would like the Committee to acknowledge that work has been completed on this portion of the CIP.

Ald. Lipsitt made a motion to approve and the Committee voted 5-0 in favor.

**NOTE:**

**PUBLIC EDUCATION**

Michael Cronin of the School Department was present for this discussion. He stated that approximately 60 million dollars is presently tied up in high school projects. Of the approximate 20 million-dollar balance, 10 million is tied up in technology for computers and support technology. Ald. Lipsitt asked what has happened to the technology money that was expected to go to the middle schools from the over-ride. Mr. Cronin said that approximately \$774,000 was infused into the School Department with some additional monies going into support of the high schools and the elementary schools.

Ald. Lipsitt requested that the Board of Aldermen receive a report on the relationship between the money approved in the bonding for Newton South and what the real expenses will be. Ald. Coletti said even though the Board of Aldermen authorizes a certain amount of money for the project, there could be funds directed to other projects.

Mr. Cronin explained that the high school technology component is about 70 million and 10 million is slated over the next five years for essential items. He went on to say that the main components make up a building include the structure, window system, heating system (boilers and uni-vents), plumbing, and generators. Those are the main items that need to be supported from the Capital Improvement Plan. Some generators and boilers have gone beyond their useful life and it is inefficient to use a Band-Aid approach for maintenance of this antiquated equipment. Mr. Cronin proposes that what is currently listed in the CIP be changed. ~~this be changed.~~ Ald. Fischman asked if it would be more economical to buy

~~in bulk and Mr. Cronin responded that these items must go out for public bid.~~

There was a discussion of air quality and Mr. Cronin explained an air sample is a snapshot in time which may or not be representative of an entire classroom. Due to many inconsistencies and questions that Mr. Cronin was unable to answer, regarding the CIP Chairman Johnson suggested that some editing is needed for these requests and after Mr. Cronin checks further with the School Department that he return, come back to the Committee to discuss what the schools are looking to do along with first and explanation of what is first priority, second priority, for FY'03 etc. ~~explaining a list of what constitutes each priority. , fspriority,~~

Ald. Parker said when this item comes back to committee, he would like Mr. Pooler to provide information regarding the 16 million in FY04 that is for high school renovation and 4 million for other things. What he would like to know is how much will come out of the city's free cash and how much is in the School Department budget or whether that 4 million is really going to happen. If windows in the school were replaced, Mr. Cronin said the cost would be approximately \$100,000 per school. If the windows are not done, there is added expense in heating the buildings. Mr. Pooler said he did not think there was money in the School budget for air quality and asbestos replacement. Mr. Cronin stated carpet replacement has been a very positive experience change in the three buildings where this has taken place. that had this accomplished. [PLEASE LIST THEM IF THEY ARE ON THE TAPE]

Chairman Johnson addressed Mr. Cronin and explained the Committee would like him to bring back a corrected CIP page with first, second and third priorities listed.

The Committee voted 6-0 to hold.

#294-02 ALD. JOHNSON, SANGIOLO AND PARKER requesting discussion regarding public disclosure via the internet/newspaper, etc. regarding how each member of the Board votes on docketed items.

ACTION: HELD 6-0

#510-00 ALD. GERST seeking a report from the departments of Public Works and Parks and Recreation on the operational status of water fountains in city parks and schoolyards.

ACTION: RESOLUTION APPROVED 5-0.

NOTE: Commissioner Towle reported to the Committee that a survey had been conducted on the water fountains throughout the City. There are approximately 48 fountains and 28 are operating. After talking with both the Water Department and Building Department, there is a recommendation to remove 14 of the fountains and relocating them to Public Buildings. Four are recommended to be removed from service and two will be repaired. Fran Towle said she would like to see priority for repair in very active areas.

Ald. Gerst felt he would like to see as many water fountains as possible restored. In his opinion broken fountains should be removed if there was no chance for repair. Commissioner Towle said the approximate cost for removal or relocation is between \$700 to \$900. Removing old fountains and replacement cost is approximately \$1,600. Ald. Lipsitt asked for a more aggressive explanation for why all of the water fountains can not be fixed.

Ald. Johnson said we were looking for a plan and not just an inventory.

~~————Sandy Pooler told the Committee we have more projects than we have money to accomplish.~~ Ald. Coletti does not feel that drinking fountains are more important than the quality of buildings that people have to work in, for example our Fire Stations.

Ald. Fischman was interested in knowing why some water fountains worked and others do not. Commissioner Towle said some have had minor repairs that successfully solved some problems while others have more serious difficulties that cause them to malfunction. Ald. Fischman felt that selective locations should have priority. Chariman Johnson said there had been discussion regarding conducting a park survey and perhaps the need for usage of water fountains could be included.

Ald. Parker proposed a *resolution requesting that water fountain replacement be made a priority within the current fiscal year. [Make sure that this matches what Ald. Parker stated]*

Chairman Johnson said she hoped that as many fountains as possible could be repaired with the goal of taking them out or repairing them within the next few years

The Committee voted 5-0 in favor of this resolution.

#113-01(2) PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEE requesting discussion with Commissioner of Parks and Recreation regarding ongoing expenditures for maintenance of public land and other items contained in the Parks and Recreation Department FY2002 Operating Budget, particularly with respect to the effectiveness of work being done that has been contracted out as of this fiscal year.

ACTION: HELD 6-0

#346-99 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting creation of an ordinance that would prohibit dogs (leashed or unleashed) from all elementary school playgrounds.

ACTION: HELD 6-0

NOTE: Ald. Sangiolo wanted to hold this item and discuss it along with the dog park item.

**REFERRED TO PROG.& SERV. PUB.FACIL. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#503-02 MAYOR COHEN AND PRESIDENT LIPSITT requesting RESOLUTION of support for expenditure of up to \$50,000 to complete work of the Newton North Citizens Task Force. Source to be funds previously authorized for the high school renovation project.

ACTION: **HELD IN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (5 in favor, 1 against (Sangiolo))**  
**HELD IN PUBLIC FACILITIES 5-2 (Lappin, Linsky against)**

NOTE: The Committee was joined for discussion of this item by the following members of Public Facilities Ald. Yates, Mansfield, Lappin, Gerst, Linsky, Schnipper, Stewart.

President Lipsitt explained that, after Dr. Jellinek agreed to undertake this Task Force, he met with Ald. Lipsitt, the Mayor, School Committee Chair Lerner, and Theresa Park of the Planning Department. They discussed how this process would work. One of the questions that Dr. Jellinek had was what [funding there is to support the work of the Task Force. happens if money will be needed to spend on this project?](#) The Mayor responded that he had already checked with the Law Department and had determined that the bond authorization approved for the Newton North project would cover any expenses that were associated with the Task Force. However, President Lipsitt firmly felt it would be better that before such funds were expended, there should be some discussion with the Board. Support for this would be an acknowledgement by the Board and a continuation of involving the Board in the process. Dr. Jellinek [recommended the amount](#)



~~of was asked for an amount that might be needed for certain expenses and the response was \$50,000 to cover certain expenses that might arise.~~

~~Ald. Schnipper said requested assurance that her hope was that the City would not have to pay for the space at Newton North where the meetings are taking place – Ald. Lipsitt provided this assurance. would not have to be rented. Ald. Lappin asked if this \$50,000 appropriation was included as part of funding already approved by the Board.~~

~~When the discussion focused on the funding for the High School project Ald. Lipsitt said stated that bonds have been approved for 39 million dollars for this project and her understanding is that part of the decision-making process for this Task Force will be an evaluation of the fiscal realities of any new project, whether it is continuing with the project as it was originally designed on a different timetable or building an entirely new school. The financial piece must be part of whatever recommendations are made. Ald. Lappin questioned the possibility of some State Aid. In response to the Aldermen's questions about State Aid, Sandy Pooler said he had talked to the State about eligibility for modifying plans or building a new school. Their response was they might pay for a new school if there was proof that there is no other alternative. Mr. Pooler went on to say that in the spring when they had more input, they could then talk regarding State Aid.~~

~~Ald. Sangiolo said, as a member of the Board, if the Task Force decided that it needed to hire a Consultant to support its work she would like to know beforehand who was going to be hired. In response, Ald. Johnson explained that there is an item (#466-02(2)) scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of every month which requests monthly progress reports from the NNHS Task Force to this Committee. President Lipsitt pointed out that four members of the Board of Aldermen are representing both the Board and City interest. Ald. Coletti does not think this money is necessary. Ald. Lipsitt responded she understands that the substantial majority of that money was spent on studies. Ald. Schnipper requested that updates on this project be sent to the entire board. Ald. Lipsitt thought this item would come up after the Task Force had begun meeting so we would have more information regarding the how the \$50,000 might be spent.– Ald. Sangiolo agreed with Ald. Linsky and felt she was not prepared to take any responsibility for any fees expenses- that the Task Force might incurs and would like to move NAN.~~

~~Ald. Lipsitt moved to hold the item in Programs and Services. The vote was 5 in favor, 1 against (Sangiolo)~~

A motion was made in Public Facilities to hold with a vote of 5-2.  
(Lappin, Linsky against)

The Committee adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Johnson, Chair