

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2002

Room 222

7:15 p.m.

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

Absent: Ald. Gentile

ELECTIONS

Mr. Karg was present and explained the major distinction between the first version and the second version of the budget is that the student position has been eliminated. The census positions will be kept at least through next year in order to better evaluate the census process. Ald. Lipsitt stressed the importance of hearing from the census bureau regarding an error in the Ward 6/Ward 7 lines. Mr. Karg said he has received a letter saying that the material has been received and currently is under review. The area in question is the Chestnut Hill Towers Building which had been presumed to be in Ward 7, Precinct 1 for at least ten years and now the Towers turns out to be in Ward 6, Precinct 1. Mr. Karg said another postcard notification would be mailed out in the fall in time for the state election. Sandwich boards will be placed in all the Newton squares as well as a notice in the tax bills.

The Elections Budget as revised by #124-02(2) was approved 4-0.

VETERANS/LICENSING/WEIGHTS & MEASURES

Mr. Guzzi and Mr. Baker were present for discussion. In response to a prior question from Ald. Parker regarding why package stores cannot open on a Sunday, Mr. Guzzi explained that other than bordering towns of New Hampshire or Vermont within a ten mile radius, stores that sell alcohol cannot be open during the year with the exception of a designated time in the November/December holiday period. In response to a question from Ald. Lipsitt regarding increasing filing fees, Mr. Guzzi said it is possible to raise fees and further study will be done.

Mr. Baker explained that he was able to charge \$10.00 every time he calibrated a pump. The average gas station pays the City of Newton \$400. Budget Officer Sandy Pooler informed the Committee that since Mitch Baker has taken over the job as sealer, Newton has become a model for other cities and towns. Fees brought in by Weights and Measures come to about \$20,000 a year. Ald. Lipsitt asked Mr. Baker to check on fees for other surrounding cities and towns including Boston.

The Veterans/Sealer of Weights & Measures Budget as revised by #124-02(2) was approved 7-0.

JACKSON HOMESTEAD

Mr. Olson joined the Committee for his brief budget discussion. The H grade salaries and the printing line have been restored.

The Jackson Homestead Budget as revised by #124-02(2) was approved 7-0.

HUMAN SERVICES

Beverly Stachowicz presented an overview of her department budget. After the override was passed, the Senior Centre receptionist position was restored. Monies were also able to be restored that were cut from the Child Care Commission and the Youth Commission. All other line items are level funded. Ald. Lipsitt asked how outside boards and commissions were assisting work in Human Services. Ms. Stachowicz explained the Child Care Commission is a very important commission that makes possible scholarships for children to attend after-school programs, trains owners of child care programs such as CPR classes. Ms. Stachowicz said some funding has been given for a skate park. Ald. Johnson also said the Youth Commission has been very supportive of Brigham House. President Lipsitt asked about services to Middle Schools. Ms. Stachowicz said the Youth Commission is devoted primarily to the older adolescent population. Senior transportation account has been reduced due to the consolidation of senior transportation services. Volunteer services has complimented the Human Services Department. She further noted that Beverly Droz works closely with Human Services and helps to get volunteers for the various programs including senior center and youth programs. The Servathon was a big accomplishment by Bev Droz.

The Committee approved the budget 7-0

HEALTH/CITY PHYSICIAN

David Naparstek introduced members of the Health Advisory Council. He pointed out that Carolyn Darack is the retired director of the Mass. Medical Health Council. Helen Meltzer was the Executive Director of the Mass. Public Health Association. Rhona Shoul was a social worker in our school system. Dr. Herb Selenkow is retired physician with a tremendous amount of public health interest. Dr. Stephen Colchmiro is a dentist who works at a community health center. He pointed out he had a wonderful advisory council.

The Health Department nurse practitioner retired this year and there was no need to replace that position. Mr. Naparstek proposes to combine two positions and create two school nurse positions. This will enable each school to have a nurse. The position of an environmental health aid has been restored. The Health Department would like to do some inventories of school indoor air quality issues. There has been serious concerns of indoor air quality and some assistance is needed for Health Inspector Bob DeLuca. Mr. Naparstek also pointed out that approximately 40 day camps are licensed by the Health Department.

The Health Department Budget as revised by #124-02(2) was approved 7-0

LIBRARY

Kathy Glick-Weil, Anita Capeless, Sandy Butzl, and Joan Harrington were present for this discussion. Ms. Glick-Weil pointed out that there was a continued increase in service demands. There has been a 15% increase in circulation. (Circulation is up about 200,000 items) A resolution for a \$30,000 increase in library funds was approved 4-1-3 (Ald. Parker, Sangiolo, Lipsitt in favor, Coletti voting no and Merrill, Fischman and Johnson abstaining)

The Library Budget as revised by #124-02(2) was approved 7-0

CITY PHYSICIAN

Mr. Rourke appeared before the Committee to discuss the position of City Physician. He said over the years the role has changed. There has been a redirection of the medical services required by the City such as pre-employment, overseeing sick leave use; administration of workers comp and the injured on duty leave with police and fire. The City is now using a series of specialists, using the hospital of the provider for the pre-employment and not the city physician and so essentially what is being recommended is that the city physician position be eliminated and contract for the necessary services. Mr. Rourke feels we will have a better level of service because of the specialists available to us and also ultimately have a better handle on what is going on in those various areas by coordinating through the Director of Human Resources much of the information that now goes to the different places and isn't really focused on one office. Ald. Lipsitt questioned what Dr. LaRossa's role has been. In the past, it was necessary but now the services are much more limited. Ald. Parker said the city physician is required by the city charter and not just in the ordinance. The Committee asked that the Law Department look into this. (See attached)

The City Physician Budget as revised by #124-02(2) was approved 7-0

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Johnson, Chair