

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2002

Present: Ald. Sangiolo, Acting Chair; President Lipsitt, Ald. Carleton, Merrill, Fischman, Coletti, Parker

Absent: Ald. Gentile, Johnson

Other Aldermen Present: Ald. Mansfield, Stewart

Others Present: Gayle Smalley, Dolores Hamilton, Josephine McNeil, Tedd Hess-Mahan, Phil Herr, Christine McLaughlin

PUBLIC HEARING:

REFERRED TO PROG & SERV & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#163-02 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR proposing a reorganization of ARTICLE VI., the City Physician, sections 2-241-2-247 of the City of Newton Revised Ordinances, 2001.

ACTION: APPROVED 3-0

NOTE: Dolores Hamilton, Director of Human Resources, stated that in an effort to update the role of the City Physician the position was evaluated and it was determined that at this time the original ordinance was quite outdated and in most cases employees are referred to specialists when they are injured or ill at work. Ald. Merrill asked if there would be someone on staff to take care of emergency situations. Ms. Hamilton responded that if needed, an occupational health nurse is on staff in the Human Resources Department who would be available for employees.

There was no public testimony and the hearing was closed. The Committee approved the item 3-0.

#331-02 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR reappointing on August 16, 2002 PETER KASTNER, 49 Woodbine Street, Auburndale as an alternate member of the PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION for a term of office to expire on January 1, 2005 (60-day Board action date 10/17/02)

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: Peter Kastner has had a long-term interest in parks and playgrounds. The design of the Crystal Lake Renovation was of great interest to Mr. Kastner. He has also been interested in trying to turn some of Weeks Field into a neighborhood use.

#332-02 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR reappointing on August 16, 2002 GWEN FINEBERG, 27 Tudor Road, Newton as a member of the Parks & Recreation Commission for a term of office to expire on January 1, 2003. (60-day Board action date 10/17/02)

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: Gwen Fineberg said she has lived in the City of Newton for the past 30 years and has been involved in recreation for most of that time. She is interested in the environment and open space.

Ald. Parker moved approval and the Committee voted 5-0.

#333-02 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR reappointing on August 16, 2002 JAMES MAHONEY, 44 Grove Hill Park, Newton as a member of the Parks & Recreation Commission for a term of office to expire on January 1, 2005. (60-day Board action date 10/17/02)

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0

NOTE: Mr. Mahoney was present for this discussion. In the past, he had been Chairman of the Mayor's Open Space Advisory Committee. He believes Parks and Recreation plays an important role in supporting sports activity. He feels it has been very rewarding serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission as well as a great way to contribute to the community.

Ald. Lipsitt had questions regarding Parks and Recreation policies regarding the naming of Millennium Park. She had concerns regarding that in the future Commission rules would not be ignored. Mr. Mahoney said the naming had been considered very broadly and he understood that at that time the issue would be reviewed by the Board of Aldermen. He understood there was a time constraint with regard to the fund raising aspect. At the time he felt the Commission considered exempting the policy but members felt there all ready had been sufficient community input and that the Board of Aldermen would further review the project. President Lipsitt said that in no official way had the Board been informed of the existence of this project. She hoped in the future that anything that is presented to the Commission, as having the support of the Board of Aldermen would be confirmed with the Board's office. Mr. Mahoney said he thought there would be board review. President Lipsitt stated the Board did not get to review the naming and for some Aldermen the naming was a very critical matter.

President Lipsitt asked if there were plans to correct some conditions at some facilities of the Parks and Recreation Commission that are suffering from lack of capital to restore them. She questioned if it was the plan of the Commission to submit any of those items to the CPA. Mr. Mahoney explained that Andrew Stern of the Parks and Recreation Commission has asked for input from the Department for possible proposals in November.

Ald. Parker suggested that policies that are formulated are available on the Parks and Recreation web site.

Discussion took place between Ald. Fischman and Mr. Mahoney on the possible Skate Park. Mr. Mahoney said he felt the Commission would make a recommendation on the actual design of the park and the ultimate approval, decision making, and funding of the project would rest with the Board of Aldermen.

The Committee thanked the reappointments for their willingness to continue to serve.

#312-02 PRES. LIPSITT, ALD. JOHNSON on behalf of U-CHAN offering a resolution in support of a National Housing Trust Fund.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-1 (Ald. Sangiolo abstaining)

NOTE: President explained that U-CHAN stands for United Citizens for Housing Affordability in Newton. Josephine McNeil, Ted Hess Mahan, and Phil Herr were all present for this discussion. Mr. Ted Hess-Mahan has developed the figures that are included in the draft resolution. He explained the National Housing Trust Fund Act was introduced in both the Senate, House and Congress and has many sponsors including Senator John Kerry and co-sponsored in the House by Barney Frank. It is intended to use the profits that are generated from Federal Housing Agency to fund building units of affordable housing throughout the country over the next ten years to provide 1.5 million affordable housing units. There is a crisis of affordable housing in this country. Massachusetts is the least affordable place to live. Mr. Tess-Mahan said in Newton there are 6,000 households that earn a low to moderate income and would qualify for affordable housing, and there are only have 1600 units available. There has been a net loss of units rather than a net gain. Mr. Tess-Mahan said it is an important statement to make to have the Board of Aldermen reaffirm the importance and need for affordable housing and should petition the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation to support the National Affordable Trust Fund Act of 2001 and request the Mayor implement all reasonable measures to enable the City to take advantage of the National

Housing Trust Fund. Josephine McNeil said there were approximately 200 congressmen and women and over 3,000 organizations that have signed on to this.

Ald. Merrill noted that there was no mention of seniors on low income in the resolution. Ms. McNair explained it wasn't written to exclude anyone. She noted that the resolution makes reference to low income households which would include seniors.

Ald. Lipsitt suggested that she would work with Ted Hess-Mahan and Josephine McNeil to add another "Whereas" which would refer to economic diversity. Ald. Sangiolo expressed concern regarding developers using Chapter 40B as a threat. The Committee approved the item 4-1 (Ald. Sangiolo abstaining)

#344-02 ALD. LIPSITT & JOHNSON requesting that Honorable Board of Aldermen and His Honor the Mayor to adopt a resolution in support of janitors who are striking for health care coverage and a livable wage.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0-1 (Lipsitt not voting)

NOTE: Christine McLaughlin of the Junior Executive Board of the Service Employees International Union was present in support of the resolution. Ms. McLaughlin suggested some changes including language regarding full time employment, much needed health coverage, and economic issues. She was very pleased to see this resolution come out of Newton. Ald. Coletti moved approval and the Committee voted 6-0 in favor.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS REFERRED TO THE RULES SUB-COMMITTEE:

#334-02 ALD. SALVUCCI requesting an amendment to the Rules and Orders of the Board of Aldermen allowing for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America at the commencement of each full Board of Aldermen meeting.

ACTION: HELD

NOTE: Mr. Bernard Root was present and spoke regarding the Pledge of Allegiance and said he respects the flag for what it represents. He told the Committee he was proud as well as privileged to serve his country. Mr. Root said some religions don't salute the flag and he would urge the Committee to consider that it is not un-American and not disloyal to disagree with any of our institutions.

#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

#230-01 ALD. PARKER requesting an amendment to the Rules and Orders of the Board re the release of Confidential documents.

ACTION: HELD

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND LAND USE

#267-02 ALD. BASHAM requesting creation of rules for Board of Aldermen acting as Special Permit granting authority.

ACTION: HELD

#343-02 PRES. LIPSITT requesting that the Honorable Board of Aldermen and His Honor the Mayor adopt a RESOLUTION to our President, Senators and Congressman urging due deliberation before making a commitment to war with Iraq.
(ITEM REFERRED TO PROG/SERV BY FULL BOARD ON 10/7/02)

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0-1 (Ald. Sangiolo)

NOTE: Ald. Coletti felt the resolution to be very reasonable. Ald. Merrill does not want to see this country involved in a conflict that would cause many deaths. Ald. Merrill urged that the United Nations would take a position of leadership. Ald. Sangiolo was uncomfortable with the resolution. Ald. Lipsitt said she felt it was important to go on record saying to representatives in Congress that we don't want to get into a war that we can't get out of as well as harm our economy and be dangerous to the world. In Ald. Mansfield's opinion some action should be taken. The important focus, Ald. Mansfield said, was that the resolution was coming from an elected body in the City of Newton. Ald. Stewart said Congress has been enmeshed in this discussion for about fifteen months. He would suggest a very simple resolution without the supposed justifications in terms of policy, foreign policy and military analysis that is contained in so much of the verbiage of the resolution. Ald. Parker felt it was a great resolution and would vote in favor. Ald. Stewart wanted to make clear that he does not feel that this Board of Aldermen should be seriously debating some of these issues. Ald. Fischman made a motion to approve.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ald. Amy Sangiolo
Acting Chairman