

CITY OF NEWTON
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN
PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2010

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chairman), Lennon, Albright, Salvucci, Gentile, Crossley, Danberg, and Lappin

Also present: Ald. Fuller and Sangiolo

City staff present: Maureen Lemieux (Chief Financial Officer), Robert Rooney (Chief Operating Officer), Tom Daley (Commissioner of Public Works), Stephanie Kane Gilman (Public Buildings Commissioner), Arthur Cabral (Budget and Project Specialist; Public Buildings Department), Clint Schuckel (Associate City Engineer) and Jim Danila (Transportation Engineer)

#303-10 NATIONAL GRID petitioning for a grant of location to install and maintain 90' ± of 6" gas main in ROSALIE ROAD from the existing 6" gas main at 135 Rosalie Road westerly to 124 Rosalie Road. (Ward 8) [10/19/10 @ 1:24 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED AS AMENDED 6-0 (Lennon and Danberg not voting) 160' of 6" gas main**

NOTE: The Chairman explained that the gas main extension installation is already underway, as the homeowner at 124 Rosalie Road is without heat. Unfortunately, the contractor removed all of the oil heating equipment before realizing that a gas main extension is necessary to provide gas to the home. If the petition went through the normal grant of location process, the property owner would not have heat until mid-December. Dennis Regan, National Grid Permit Representative, explained that National Grid was not made aware that there was a need for an extension until the equipment was removed. National Grid is working to install the gas main as quickly as possible. Mr. Regan estimated that the work would be complete in one week. The Department of Public Works reviewed the petition and recommended approval of the work before National Grid began the work. The Committee members understood the need to circumvent the process, as it was an emergent situation.

There was some discussion on what might be done to ensure that this type of situation does not occur again. It was suggested that there should be a letter sent to the contractor explaining the necessity of involving the gas company before moving forward on a project. Ald. Lappin moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

Ald. Danberg raised a concern regarding whether the Public Works Department checks to make sure that the conditions of a street opening permit are met. She has noticed that granite curbing and permanent patch has not been installed on many seemingly complete National Grid projects. Mr. Regan stated that he would investigate. Public Works Commissioner Tom Daley stated that there is 90-day wait period before permanent patch is undertaken in order to allow the dirt to settle. The Public Works Department requires bonds from National Grid to ensure that if the work is not completed, the City has the funds to complete the project.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#308-10 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend sixty-four thousand five hundred dollars (\$64,500) from Budget Reserve for the purpose of funding the environmental cleanup projects as follows:

PROJECT	COST
Cabot School LSP Services	\$7,500
Horace-Mann Elementary School LSP Services	\$41,000
Newton South High School LSP Services	\$8,500
Elliot Street DPW Yard LSP Services	\$7,500
TOTAL	\$64,500

[10/22/10 @ 2:44PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 2-0-5 (Albright, Gentile, Crossley, Danberg, Lappin; Lennon not voting)**

NOTE: Arthur Cabral, Budget and Project Specialist, presented the item to the Committee. The funds will be used to fund four ongoing environmental cleanup projects. Three of the projects began in 1998 and one project began in 2001. The Cabot Elementary School site, Elliot Street DPW Yard site, and the Newton South School site should be closed out this year.

Ald. Lappin recalled that the last time there was a request for funds for these projects, Mr. Cabral told the Committee that the three projects would be closed out. Mr. Cabral explained that due to a request for additional testing by the Department of Environmental Protection at the Elliot Street Yard site, a delay in obtaining property description papers for the Newton South High School fields, and the revision of some paper work at Cabot Elementary School the close outs were delayed. Mr. Cabral informed the Committee that the Law Department is working to provide the property description for the Newton South fields. The Committee requested an update regarding the status of the property description.

Committee members expressed concerns about the overall cost of the environmental cleanups. Therefore, Committee members requested documentation from the licensed site professional contractor regarding the delays and a breakdown of the costs of the projects since they began. Mr. Cabral agreed to provide the information before the next Finance Committee meeting. Ald. Salvucci moved approval, which carried by a vote of two in favor and five abstentions. The five members who abstained wished to review the requested information before taking an action on the item.

REFERRED TO PS&T AND PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE

#196-09 ALD. MANSFIELD AND SANGIOLO requesting rescission of Sec. 19-99 (b), Speed humps of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Newton. [06/17/09 @ 11:24 PM]

ACTION: **HELD 7-0 (Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: See below note as the items were discussed in conjunction.

REFERRED TO PS&T AND PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEES

#196-09(2) **PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE** requesting to broaden Sec. 19-99, Speed humps of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Newton to cover all vertical deflection: raised intersections, raised crosswalks and speed humps, regardless of dimension. [01/20/10]

ACTION: **HELD 7-0 (Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: The two items were discussed and held on October 4, 2010 for information on funding mechanisms for traffic calming measures when approved. The Committee also had concerns regarding the draft ordinance language. Traffic Engineer Clint Schuckel stated that traffic calming on streets that were scheduled, as part of the Department of Public Works annual reconstruction plan would be funded as part of the road reconstruction.

The Committee reviewed the draft language that was attached to the agenda. There was discussion surrounding whether the proposed threshold standards for citizen traffic calming petitions were too stringent. Several members felt that the thresholds did not give any leeway if a street were determined to be dangerous but did not meet the thresholds. Mr. Schuckel pointed out that without thresholds it would be difficult to prioritize traffic calming projects. In addition, there was concern that the draft ordinance did not have any language to address projects funded through mitigation or private funds. Ald. Lennon moved hold on the item to work out the details and cleanup the draft ordinance language.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#309-10 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to reduce the following FY'11 Water and Sewer Fund Revenue Budgets and corresponding expenditure budgets as projected revenues for the complete fiscal year are expected to be less than the forecasted revenue projections:

WATER FUND REVEUE	REDUCTION
Current Year Reserve.....	\$110,000
Transfer to Sewer Fund.....	\$620,000
Autos/Light Trucks	\$171,000
Engineering Services	\$200,000
TOTAL WATER REDUCTION	\$1,101,000

SEWER FUND REVEUE	REDUCTION
Reserve.....	\$276,000
MWRA Payments	\$52,000
PC Software Administration	\$190,000
Autos/Light Trucks	\$150,000
Construction Equipment	\$15,000
Capital	\$200,000
Temporary Staffing.....	\$37,000
TOTAL SEWER REDUCTION	\$920,000

[10/22/10 @ 2:44PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0 (Lennon and Albright not voting)**

NOTE: Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux stated that the Board of Aldermen need to take an action on this item before the City can submit the tax rates for next year. She

explained that when the Comptroller reviewed material for setting the tax rates he noticed that the actual water/sewer revenues were \$1.4 million less than projected. It is important that when the tax rate information is submitted to the Department of Revenue that the City's water and sewer enterprise accounts reflect balanced budgets. Therefore, the Mayor is requesting authorization to reduce the water and sewer fund revenues collectively by \$1.4 million. The only other options would be to raise the water/sewer rates to address the shortfall or use the water reserve fund. However, the actual figures are based on information from June 30, 2010, and it is expected that water usage over the summer months will boost the actual revenue above the projected revenue.

It is expected that the reductions will be restored once the real numbers are known. Ms. Lemieux and Commissioner of Public Works Tom Daley reviewed the proposed deferrals with the Committee. If the revenues in the funds do not pick up, the reductions would be permanent. Commissioner Daley stated that as long as the funds are restored there would not be a significant impact on the Utilities Division of Public Works. He provided the Committee with the attached graph reflecting actual water consumption for Calendar Year 2008, 2009 and a portion of 2010. The data for 2010 depicts a sharp rise over last year's water consumption over the summer months. The numbers used for the projections for this year were based on the 2009 figures; therefore, the City should exceed the projections. The City should know if it has exceeded the projections in February or March.

One of the proposed reductions would eliminate the sewer reserve. Committee members expressed concern that there would no longer be any funds in the reserve account. Ms. Lemieux stated that she would speak with the Mayor and Comptroller to determine if it were possible to reduce the water fund further and not deplete the sewer reserve. If it is possible, she will provide a letter amending the item before the Finance Committee meeting on November 8, 2010. Most auditors look for a city to have 7 to 15% of the operating budget in reserve and the same holds true for enterprise funds. There is approximately \$1.7 million currently in the water fund reserve and \$276,000 in the sewer fund reserve. Ideally, the city should have \$3 million in enterprise reserves. Ald. Fuller inquired why there was a determination not to increase the water and sewer rates. Commissioner Daley responded that it was felt that it would be premature to adjust the rates as it is expected that the City will exceed its projections.

Ald. Lappin moved approval of the item, which carried by a vote of six in favor and none opposed.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

#76-07 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$300,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of conducting a study of the municipal buildings throughout the city. [02-27-07 @ 4:16 PM]

FINANCE VOTED NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0 ON 03/08/10

ACTION: NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Lennon and Salvucci not voting)

NOTE: The Committee voted the item no action necessary, as the requested funding source is of FY'07 Free Cash is no longer available. In addition, there is money in the current Capital Improvement Plan for a facilities assessment.

ITEM RECOMMITTED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE ON 6/19/08
REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#11-08 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$1,200,000 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of funding the installation of four modular classrooms. [01/02/08 @ 4:53 P.M.]

B) \$1,225,000 from bonded indebtedness

NOTE: Letter received from Mayor on 1/4/08 requesting that appropriation amount be amended to \$1.3 million. Letters received 5/7 and 5/21 requesting that the funding source to capital stabilization for costs incurred for design work and the remaining \$1,225,000 from bonded indebtedness be voted no action necessary. Part A) \$75,000 from Capital Stabilization approved on 6/19/08.

FINANCE VOTED NO ACTION NECESSARY 8-0 ON 11/09/09

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Lennon and Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: The School Department is coming with a new request to address space needs at several elementary schools and one middle school. Therefore, the Committee voted the item no action necessary.

REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV., PUB.FAC. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#89-08 ALD. PARKER requesting the following:

- A) review of the maintenance practices for buildings, parks and other properties owned by the City (including School Department facilities and grounds)
- B) development of a comprehensive maintenance plan that includes regular schedules for preventive maintenance for each specific site or facility
- C) a RESOLUTION requesting that implementation of said maintenance plan be funded using operating budget funds. [02/13/08 @ 12:07 PM]

FINANCE VOTED NO ACTION NECESSARY ON 3/8/10

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0 (Lennon and Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: The Administration is currently addressing the above request; therefore, the item was voted no action necessary.

#385-07 ALD. SCHNIPPER AND GENTILE updating the Public Facilities Committee on the progress of the Newton North High School Project. [11/21/07 @ 10:23 AM]

ACTION: **HELD 6-0 (Lennon and Salvucci not voting)**

NOTE: The Newton North High School construction meeting was cancelled; therefore, there was no update on the project. However, Ald. Schnipper and Gentile informed the Committee that there has been discussion about changing the bump outs on Lowell Avenue at the request of the neighbors. The change will be discussed at the next construction meeting and an update will be provided at the next Public Facilities Committee meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
Water Supplied: City of Newton

MGD	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average
CY2008	8.032	8.128	7.707	8.193	9.415	10.834	10.676	10.056	9.975	8.386	7.754	7.596	8.897
CY2009	8.252	8.339	7.972	8.327	9.263	9.369	8.780	9.891	9.701	7.863	7.545	7.479	8.565
CY2010	7.835	7.985	7.742	7.922	9.282	9.748	11.781	11.152	10.318	0.000	0.000	0.000	9.321

MG	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
CY2008	248.989	235.714	238.921	245.795	291.877	325.034	330.967	311.732	299.262	259.968	232.608	235.489	3,256.355
CY2009	255.823	233.482	247.117	249.818	287.146	281.056	272.192	306.629	291.045	243.739	226.364	231.834	3,126.245
CY2010	242.873	223.589	239.988	237.649	287.740	292.447	365.218	345.709	309.546	0.000	0.000	0.000	2,544.758

Newton Water Consumption

