

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2003

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chair), Gerst, Linsky, Salvucci, Stewart, Yates and Lappin

Absent: Ald. Mansfield

Also present: Ald. Lennon

City personnel present: Robert Rooney (Commissioner of Public Works), Lou Taverna (Director of Utilities), and Elaine Gentile (Director of Environmental Affairs)

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#338-03 HALINA BROWN, 56 Cloverdale Road, Newton Highlands, appointed as a member of the Citizens Commission on Energy for a term of office expiring 02/04/04 (60-day Board action date 10/10/03).

ACTION: **HELD 7-0**

NOTE: The item was held, as the appointee was not present to discuss her appointment to the Citizens Commission on Energy.

ITEM RECOMMITTED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES ON 8/11/03

#220-03(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR recommending that Department of Public Works fees for sewer back-ups be increased to more accurately reflect the City's cost of providing services. The increased revenue from these fees is to be part of the FY04 revenue estimates prepared by the Chief Budget Officer.

ACTION: **APPROVED 4-2-1 (Gerst and Salvucci opposed, Stewart abstaining)**

NOTE: Ald. Lennon, Commissioner Rooney and Lou Taverna were present for the discussion of this item. Ald. Salvucci moved hold on the item as Ald. Mansfield was unable to attend the meeting and he has an interest in this item. The motion to hold failed to carry by a vote of one in favor (Salvucci) and six opposed. Ald. Lennon asked that the item be recommitted to the Public Facilities Committee because he had questions regarding the addition of a second shift in the Utilities Division. The Chair explained that issues related to collective bargaining and impact bargaining do not belong before the Board. She suggested that Ald. Lennon speak with Commissioner Rooney privately but the Commissioner did not need to respond because collective and impact bargaining are not public discussions.

Commissioner Rooney explained that the second shift issue was discussed as part of the budget this past May. The request for an increase in the sewer fees was

made to make the fee more equitable to the cost to the City. Regardless of whether the Public Works Department implements a second-shift, the fees need to be increased. However, the draft ordinance states that there will be a \$100 fee for service calls between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m., Monday through Friday. Lou Taverna explained that if a second shift is not added the cost to the City for a service call between 3 p.m. and 11 p.m. will be greater as the City will be paying the employees overtime. The Commissioner went on to explain that even if the second-shift goes nowhere the \$100 fee would still be an improvement on the current fees.

The Committee discussed whether the fees needed to align with non-overtime and overtime hours. Ald. Lappin suggested not including hours in the Ordinance. Ald. Linsky felt that it was important to include what fee is in place at what time in the ordinance. He also felt that it is not necessary to link the hours to the overtime hours for the City. It was suggested that the item be voted as is and if necessary the Board can always amend the ordinance at a latter date.

Ald. Salvucci and Ald. Gerst revoiced their opinion that these fees are already included within the water/sewer bill. They will not support this item. Ald. Stewart reiterated his belief that the City should not provide this service to the citizens. It is his feeling that the homeowner should take full responsibility for the connection. Secondly, he is very concerned that there will be a loss of income to members of the Utility Department due to the implementation of a second shift. He would like to be assured that the passage of the fees would not give the administration some advantage in terms of negotiations with the union on the second shift. Ald. Schnipper asked that he speak privately with the Commissioner, as the question was not relevant to what is before the Committee. Ald. Lappin moved approval of the item, which carried by a vote of 4 in favor, two opposed and one abstention.

#220-03(3) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR recommending that Sec. 11 of the City of Newton Ord., 2001 be amended to institute a fee for collection of "white goods".

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-2 AS AMENDED fee to be \$10 (Gerst and Salvucci opposed)**

NOTE: Commissioner Rooney and Elaine Gentile joined the Committee for the discussion of this item. The Commissioner provided the Committee with a memo (attached) detailing how the City disposes of banned goods and the cost to the City. The memo also provided a definition of "white goods" containing five items. The white goods definition does not include items containing chlorofluorocarbons ("CFCs"), hydrofluorocarbons ("HFCs"), or Freon. The Commissioner and the Committee were under the impression that the white goods and Freon containing products had been voted separately. Unfortunately, that was not the case; therefore, there will be an early meeting on September 15, 2003 to institute a fee for the items containing CFCs, HFCs and Freon.

The Commissioner reviewed the specifications of the contract for collection of white goods. The City is asking that the contractor pick-up white goods within three days of notification except during severe weather or whenever requested units will require immediate pick-up. There were two bidders on this contract. One bid was \$7.00 per item and the other was \$17.50 per item. The low bidder is the firm who is currently picking up the Freon containing products. It is the Commissioner's understanding that the bid is low because the contractor is already in Newton collecting the Freon products. The contract also states that the firm chosen must dispose of the white goods as scrap metal for recycling per state and federal laws and per the Department of Environmental Protection regulations. The contract is for one year with two renewable optional years.

Ald. Salvucci asked what happens to white goods that are placed at curbside until the new fee and sticker program is implemented. Commissioner Rooney explained that white goods are picked up at curbside and will continue to be until the program is implemented. Ald. Salvucci asked if the City was being charged for this. Commissioner Rooney explained that the cost is part of the weight towards the tonnage fee.

Elaine Gentile explained the administrative costs and the process of obtaining a sticker for the pick-up of white goods. Many Committee members felt that a fee should not be instituted as the administrative costs of implementing the program are \$1 more than the cost of picking the white goods up and the need for white good pick-up is infrequent and the process for residents is cumbersome. A sticker program will be implemented for Freon containing goods, whether the white goods are included in the sticker program or not. Many Committee members would like the Public Works Department to come up with a less cumbersome method for residents to obtain stickers. Ms. Gentile feels that this fee is no different from any other user fee. The fee is will be used to offset the ever rising cost of the solid waste disposal contract. The state and federal government are banning more and more items from landfills.

Ald. Salvucci voiced his objection to implementing this fee as he feels that these services are already included in the taxed. Therefore, he moved denial of the item, which failed to carry.

After Ms. Gentile explanation, most of the Committee understood the necessity of the fee but felt that the fee should be lowered to \$10. Ald. Stewart moved approval of the item, which carried.

#339-03 ALD. SALVUCCI, on behalf of Anthony R. Cucchi, requesting that the square at Watertown and Adams Streets be named San Donato Square.

ACTION: **HELD 6-1 (Salvucci opposed)**

NOTE:

Ald. Salvucci presented the item to the Committee. Ald. Salvucci is petitioning on behalf of Anthony Cucci, 55 Upham Street, who was also present. Ald. Salvucci explained that San Donato is one of Newton's sister cities. He also brought a picture of a sign in San Donato proclaiming Newton as its sister city. Many ancestors of residents of Italian descent immigrated from San Donato, Italy to the City of Newton and a sign would be a nice way to recognize their forefathers.

Ald. Gerst and Ald. Yates felt that this was a great idea. Ald. Stewart stated that there was opposition to the petition. Mr. Anthony Pellegrini, 120 Farwell Street, was present and stated that he objects to the petition. He feels that the intersection is an inappropriate site for the sign. He would like the signs to be placed at each end of the City. Ald. Salvucci pointed out that there was a petition signed by many people in support of the sign at that intersection.

Ald. Stewart suggested holding a public hearing before acting on the petition. The Committee agreed to hold a hearing on October 8, 2003. Ald. Stewart moved hold, which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman