

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2002

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

Absent: Mansfield

Also present: Ald. Johnson, Sangiolo, Parker and Bryson

City personnel present: Sandy Pooler (Chief Budget Officer), Ted Jerdee (Utilities Department), Robert Rooney (Commissioner of Public Works), Lou Taverna (Utilities Director), Carol Bock (School Department), Judy Malone Neville (Principal, Brown Middle School) and Eileen McGettigan (Law Department)

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES & PROGRAMS & SERVICES

#181-02 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the Board of Aldermen approve a new agreement between the City of Newton and the Town of Wellesley that will allow the Town of Wellesley to continue to pump sewerage through Newton's Cochituate Aqueduct to the MWRA collection system in Brighton.

RECOMMITTED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS & SERVICES ON 6/17/02

ACTION: **PUBLIC FACILITIES HELD 7-0**
PROGRAMS & SERVICES HELD 3-0

NOTE: Eileen McGettigan, Commissioner Rooney, Ted Jerdee and Lou Taverna were present for the discussion. Owen Dugan, Chairman of the Board of Public Works, Mike Paktis, Director of Public Works, Joe Duggan Water and Sewer Superintendent from the Town of Wellesley and Mike Hornbrook, Chief Operating Officer from the MWRA were also present for the discussion.

Commissioner Rooney explained that this agreement has been under review and negotiation for the past ten months. The new agreement will end a thirty-year agreement that was started May 15, 1972. The new agreement is for twenty-five years with five year reviews of compensation for and mitigation of the sewage that is pumped from Wellesley through Newton into the MWRA trunk line in Brighton. The Cochituate Aqueduct flows from the Quinebequin pump station directly west to east through Newton and into the Oak Square trunk line in Brighton. The capacity of this line is about 10 million gallons per day. When an exceedance is reached it overflows at Quinebequin and flows north along the Concord/Albemarle Interceptor then into the MWRA trunk line to the North. The capacity of that line is about 6.5 million gallons a day. Currently, dry weather flows meter results show Wellesley to pumping approximately .84 million gallons per day into the Quinebequin pump station and Newton's flows into that same

pump station is approximately 4.6 million gallons per day. Wet weather flows increase in both communities pumping and may result in overflows at either Quinebequin or Lyons Field where the sewage is diverted north. The reason for overflows at those two points is they are the lowest points in the system.

There are several differences between the two agreements. The new agreement will be a twenty-five year agreement with five-year reviews instead of a thirty-year agreement. The capacity that Newton is accepting from Wellesley is being reduced from 4.7 million gallons per day to 4.0 million gallons a day. The capacity charge, which is an administrative charge, is going from \$1,250 per year to \$4,000 per year with a CPI index adjustment. The charges for maintenance and repair of the Cochituate Aqueduct in the new agreement will be proportional to the flow instead of a set percent. An exceedance charge was not in the past agreement that is if Wellesley were to exceed the 4.0 million gallons a day, they would pay a penalty. If there are overflows that result in damage, fines by the EPA or the DEP or claims from residents Wellesley would participate in payment proportional to their share of flow. If there is any new construction, new meters and new segments put in Wellesley would participate proportionately. As per the old agreement, there are no additional tie-ins authorized through the next agreement period.

Owen Dugan stated that over the past thirty years, this agreement has worked very well and it is his understanding that there have not been any problems. The Town of Wellesley does not want to be a burden and would like to do what is fair and equitable. Unfortunately, Wellesley does not have any other way to get their sewage to the MWRA trunk line. The population of Wellesley has not grown significantly and Wellesley is a built out town. Wellesley has spent a little less than \$5,000,000 trying to resolve intake and infiltration problems and will continue to invest money in that. Wellesley is going to try to improve their performance so that they are not a burden during storms.

Mr. Hornbrook of the MWRA spoke regarding inter-municipal connections. They are very common in the MWRA service area. Typically, it is because of geography that interconnections are generated. The original sewers were built following the land as most sewers are gravity and geography does not match municipal boundaries. Inter-municipal agreements are not as common and do not come under the approval of the MWRA. The terms of the agreement, the duration and the conditions are usually negotiated between the communities involved. The MWRA would be involved if as a result of those negotiations there was a significant change in a drainage area to the MWRA's regional system. In 1992, the MWRA completed a \$90 million capital improvement project that served their western communities and Wellesley is tributary to that line. It is called the Wellesley Extension Sewer Replacement Project, it took the MWRA twelve years to get that project started because of the permitting involved, and the other complications associated with it. The design for that line, which serves about 80% of Wellesley among other communities, was based upon the current tributary areas. It did not include capacity for the section, which flows through Newton. If,

as a result of these community negotiations, it was decided that the flow could not go to Newton it would be problematic to the MWRA. The MWRA would then have to evaluate the capacity available in that system and then go through another lengthy process with regulatory agencies to address it.

Ald. Parker is concerned that the pipe is inadequate to deal with Newton's own sewage let alone Wellesley's. There are overflows all the time in the Quinebequin area and Lyons Field. He is very uncomfortable with a twenty-five year agreement. He would be much more comfortable with an agreement that is three or five years and is renewable. He would like Wellesley to come up with an alternative to pumping their sewage through Newton.

Ald. Sangiolo would like to know what happens during a surcharge. Does Wellesley's sewage go up the sewer line thereby flooding all the homes in the area and Lyon's Field. Would it be possible for Wellesley to use a sewer line through Needham. There is no line through Needham. During an overflow situation, the same time Newton is having overflows Wellesley is also having overflows. The Town of Wellesley pumps out of manholes into brooks and streams during storm events. During major storm events, the City of Newton calls Wellesley to throttle back their pumps. If it is not possible for Wellesley to throttle back, it all comes into the Newton sewer line. Wellesley cannot divert the flow other than dumping into the Charles River.

Mr. Hornbrook explained that there is no sewer system that you can guarantee will not overflow. There will be a storm at some point in time that will be large enough to create overflows. The MWRA tries to make sure that they catch 99.99% of the storms but they cannot catch a 50-year storm or 100 year storm. During very large storms, the MWRA tries to get as much to the treatment plant and to keep the sewage out of the homes by trying to control or divert overflows out of the homes into a river or stream. Ald. Yates asked why the MWRA did not include the 20% of Wellesley sewage flow, which flows through Newton when they built the new sewer in Wellesley. Mr. Hornbrook explained that when the project was planned fifteen to twenty years ago the inter-municipal agreement was in effect. Based upon the information received from Wellesley the MWRA continued with the design, as the current tributary areas existed. Ald. Yates asked if there has been any time since 2000 when enough rain fell that we would have previously experienced an overflow and did not due to Newton and Wellesley's reduction in intake and infiltration and repairs on the sewer lines. Mr. Hornbrook explained that he does not know what happens in detail on the local level. However, in March 2001 there was surcharging of the system. Ald. Yates requested that Mr. Hornbrook explain why it seems the amount of overflows have increased in the past twenty-five years. Mr. Hornbrook stated that the storms in 1996 and 1998 were the largest storms in 45 years. Second, DEP and EPA have gone to great extents to tighten the systems up and in many cases communities have local overflows and have had them for many years. As the DEP and EPA have brought enforcement to tighten the systems up, the overflows have disappeared leading to surcharging in the sewer systems. In 1996, the DEP took a

very dim attitude about bypassing and overflowing of systems. However, their attitude today after the two storms of 1996 and 1998 is much looser.

Ald. Stewart felt that the City should be trying to pin down the Wellesley and MWRA situations as precisely as possible before the agreement is signed. He asked that Mr. Hornbrook elaborate on the loosening up by the DEP in terms of bypassing. Mr. Hornbrook explained that after the storm of 1996 an overflow event occurred in Roslindale, where sewage entered approximately 200 homes. The MWRA has built a bypass so that in the case of another 100-year storm they will be able to divert flow into the Stoney Brook and into the Charles River. The MWRA has notified the DEP that they have built that bypass. The DEP has responded with a letter saying that they will use their enforcement discretion, if the MWRA were to use it. In the past, the DEP would have said cease and desist the construction of that bypass and take it out.

Several members of both Committees questioned whether Wellesley will be taking steps to eliminate the need to pump their sewage through Newton's pipe. Ald. Salvucci's primary concern is that there are residents in the City of Newton who have backup in their basements after every serious storm. He has been told that prior to the signing of the contract thirty years ago there were no backups. Ald. Salvucci would like to know how much Wellesley contributes to Newton's overflow problems during a storm. Mr. Duggan explained that he can tell how much sewage is coming out of Wellesley's pump station but he does not know the extent of the burden through Newton's system. Ald. Salvucci feels that the City needs to know that before the agreement is signed. Mr. Hornbrook said that reduction of intake and infiltration would help with overflow issues.

Wellesley is looking into alternatives to pumping through Newton. Holding tanks have been discussed as well as other alternatives but these things take time. Ald. Lappin asked if the agreement could include a clause stating that Wellesley works towards finding an alternative solution. The new agreement calls for a five-year review, which will give Newton and Wellesley the opportunity to discuss any issues. Wellesley in the next five years will investigate various alternatives and will let Newton know what they have found. Mr. Duggan said that Wellesley is already trying to reduce intake and infiltration and it may be time for Wellesley to look into a bypass system. Ald. Parker and Ald. Gerst would like to have the agreement be a five year term and then renewable and the second thing he would like is a commitment that the Town of Wellesley will immediately begin pursuing all avenues to find alternative routes for their excess sewage and will report back on a regular basis on that progress. Therefore, when it comes time, at the end of five years, to renew the agreement Newton would have a sense to what alternatives have been explored and what the timeframe is for implementation. Ald. Johnson would like a written agreement with Wellesley that states that Wellesley will look into alternatives. Wellesley is willing to bring documentation to the City after discussion with officials in the Town of Wellesley.

Eileen McGettigan explained to the Committees what reviewable means in terms of the agreement. If either party has an issue with the agreement, the pricing or other provisions they can request that the other side come to the table and completely renegotiate the agreement. She believes that the agreement as written provides that as early as five years from now the City can be terminated. Ald. Parker asked if the language could be changed. Ms. McGettigan stated that the problem with changing the language would be that it would have to go back to Town Meeting in Wellesley and at this point, the next Town Meeting is in April of 2003. Ald. Salvucci asked if Ms. McGettigan was satisfied with what is to take place in the next five years, She is satisfied with the agreement as written.

Commissioner Rooney feels that it is the City of Newton's system that has contributed to the failures and backups to date and not the small amount of sewage that Wellesley pumps through Newton. Newton has made many repairs and improvements in the sewage system recently. Ted Jerdee explained the difference between the 1998 operation of the Quinnebequin Pumping Station and today. If you look at the overflows that occurred in the past, they are not due to the Town Wellesley but because of blockages and mechanical failure. Recently the City has put a redundant level control in wet well so that one runs through a TLC and one runs through a circuit and the city has put in a redundant system as far as telemetry goes. There is supervisory control data acquisition, where if there is an alarm at the station it pages the persons responsible for handling the situation. The station also now has three constant speed pumps and one variable speed pump, which takes the burden off of the cycling of the other pumps during wet weather situations which decreases the load on the pumps. The reasons for the backups in the Quinnebequin area were due to failures at the pumping station.

Ald. Parker moved hold in Programs and Services in order for Wellesley to investigate alternatives and to review and possibly change the language of the agreement. Members of both Committees would like a memorandum of agreement from Wellesley stating that they will investigate alternatives. Ald. Lappin moved hold in Public Facilities, which carried unanimously. Both Committees voted approval of the item below to extend the agreement, which is in place at this time.

- #181-02(2) **PUBLIC FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEES**
requesting a six month extension of the existing agreement between the City of Newton and Town of Wellesley that allows the Town of Wellesley to pump sewerage through Newton's Cochituate Aqueduct to the MWRA collection system in Brighton.
PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 7-0
PROGRAMS & SERVICES APPROVED 3-0

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #246-02 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$150,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of funding masonry repairs to the Cabot Elementary School.

ACTION: **APPROVED SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL 7-0**

NOTE: Carol Bock and Sandy Pooler presented the item to the Committee. The Cabot masonry repair project has been on the C.I.P. for the past four years. Over this four year period the masonry has deteriorated further and infiltrated into the building. The school was built in 1929 and this is the first time that this type of work has been done.

Arthur Cabral has developed a scope of work and received a proposal from Tristano Restoration, who is the on call masonry contractor for the City. The bricks along the front side of the wall and the return of the school will be power washed and waterproofed. All the joints and granite will be cut out, recaulked and all the windows, metal doors and vents in the exterior of the building will be recaulked. Cast stone and bricks at the south entrance will be cut out, power washed, waterproofed and recaulked. There have been gutter problems and these will be repaired.

The budget of \$150,000 includes \$9,000 for contingencies. The early proposal estimates that the work on the north entrance will cost \$21,000. The window estimate is \$26,000. Cutting out the stone at the south entrance and caulking the joints is estimated to cost \$16,000. Powerwashing all the elevations of the entire building, checking all joints in the water table around the entire building, repairing cracked joints in the water table and waterproofing the entire building is estimated to cost \$78,000.

Ald. Salvucci asked if this contract had to go out to bid. Sandy Pooler responded that he believed that it does. Ald. Salvucci wanted assurance that this was the case. Mr. Pooler stated that he would get the information before the next Board of Aldermen meeting (Attached). Ald. Schnipper requested that an itemized budget also be included. Ald. Salvucci questioned how and when the cost estimate was given. Carol Bock thought that Public Buildings had worked with Tristano Restoration last spring to come up with a figure for budgeting purposes. Ald. Salvucci wanted to know if there had been any interior damage caused by the leaking. Ms. Bock stated that a couple of classrooms had been damaged. The repair work in these classrooms has already been done by Public Buildings. Ald. Stewart voiced his concern regarding the lack of documentation on this docket item. Ald. Schnipper assured the Committee that if further information was not received by the next Board of Aldermen meeting the item would be recommitted.

Ald. Yates moved approval of the item subject to second call. The item was approved unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBFAC, PROG&SERV & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#243-02 **HIS HONOR THE MAYOR** requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$25,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of implementing Phase I of a project to retrofit and reconfigure science rooms at the Brown Middle School.

ACTION: **PUBLIC FACILITIES APPROVED 6-0-1 (Stewart Abstaining)**
PROGRAMS & SERVICES APPROVED 3-0

NOTE: The Public Facilities Committee and Programs & Services Committee met jointly on this item. Carol Bock and Judy Malone-Neville presented the item to the Committees. The science classrooms at Brown Middle School have been a concern for twelve years. The building opened in 1956 and there have been no improvements to the science classrooms since then. There are nine science classrooms at Brown and only six of these were designed to be science rooms. The other middle schools within the City have more modern science classrooms because they have either been renovated or constructed more recently than Brown.

The total estimate for the renovation of the science rooms is \$125,000, however, the project will be done in phases and this request is for \$25,000 to begin Phase I. The \$25,000 is included in the proposed FY'02 Supplemental C.I.P. Request, which is attached along with the estimate.

Judy Malone-Neville and Carol Bock explained that the teachers had been asked for their input in regards to what they need to implement a more modern curriculum. When the science rooms at Newton South were renovated, all of the cabinetry was taken out of the rooms and was stored in trailers. The cabinetry was used to create three new demonstration tables for the sixth grade science rooms at Brown. The \$25,000 will be used to continue to upgrade the sixth grade classrooms by spending \$7,500 on each of the classrooms. Each room will be outfitted with ten tables for student seating rather than individual desks. Locks on instructor's benches will be repaired and storage shelving and cabinets will be created. Electrical outlets will be added to the rooms where they are needed. They will not be putting sinks in the instructor's benches, as it would require drilling through the foundation. The classrooms in the sixth grade already have adequate sinks and the cost would be quite high.

Ald. Salvucci asked why the whole renovation is not being done all at once. He feels that this would be most cost effective. Ald. Johnson also felt that it is shortsighted because the costs are going to go up exponentially until all phases are complete. It is going to cost the City additional money. She would like to see the whole project done at once and the students provided with all the right equipment as soon as possible. Mr. Pooler and Carol Bock explained that the equipment will go out to bid but the work will be done in-house by the Public Buildings Department. Mr. Pooler stated that the funding source is Free Cash and the School Department has used their allocation of Free Cash for various projects and the \$25,000 is what is left. At the end of June, Free Cash was moved to Capital Stabilization otherwise it would have disappeared. Ald. Linsky asked if \$125,000 was enough money to renovate all nine classrooms. Ms. Malone-Neville explained that the renovations are very modest and the \$125,000 should cover the costs.

Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the item in Public Facilities, which was approved by a vote of six in favor and one abstention. Ald. Parker moved approval of the item but voiced his concern that corners are not cut in regards to safety in the science rooms. Programs and Services Committee approved the item unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#253-02(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$91,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of funding the relocation of two modular classrooms from the Carr School to the Horace Mann School.

ACTION: **APPROVED SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL 7-0**

NOTE: Sandy Pooler and Carol Bock presented the item to the Committee. The Board of Aldermen has already approved the site plan for this project. The bid opening for this project is next Wednesday.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$117,600 with a 5% contingency. The request is for \$91,000 from the Capitalization Fund. The rest of the funding will come from the Charter Maintenance Account at the School Department. Attached is a breakdown of the costs. Ald. Yates moved approval, which was voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman