

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2001

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chair), Salvucci, Antonellis, and Yates

Absent: Ald. Gerst, McGrath, Mansfield and M. Lipof

Also Present: Ald. Samuelson, O'Halloran, Ciccone, Bullwinkle, Bryson, Lipsitt, R. Lipof, and Baker

City Officials Present: Edward Murphy (Fire Chief), Michael Trotta (Deputy Commissioner of Public Works), Arthur Cabral (Public Buildings Department), Carol Daynard (Principal of Angier School), Michael Rourke (Chief Administrative Officer), and Sandy Pooler (Chief Budget Officer)

APPOINTMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

24-01 DON FISHMAN, 68 Littlefield Road, Newton Centre, appointed as the community representative pursuant to Sec. 5-56(i) on January 10, 2001 as a member of the DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE for the duration of the Newton South High School renovations.

ACTION: **HELD 4-0**

NOTE: The Committee held the item as Mr. Fishman, the appointee, was not present for the discussion.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES & PS&T COMMITTEES

#103-01 ALD. BAKER, SCHNIPPER & LIPSITT requesting discussion of City response to power outages, including emergency pumping assistance for basements during severe weather.

ACTION: **PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION HELD 6-0**
PUBLIC FACILITIES HELD 4-0

NOTE: The Public Safety and Transportation Committee joined the Committee for discussion of this item. This item was filed in response to the problems residents experienced during the last major rainstorm. Chief Murphy was present for the discussion but, unfortunately, a representative from NStar was unavailable to meet with the Committees. The City needs to take measures to ensure the safety of its citizens because large storms are more frequent in recent years. It is important that NStar and the City coordinate with each other during storms.

Several residents lost power during the storm for a long period and their basements flooded. Many residents, in areas which flood, have sump pumps in the basement but these do not work when there is no power. Mr. Jim Taylor of 14

Lawrence Road was present for the discussion. He stated that he was without power from approximately 3 AM to 9 PM. Fortunately, Mr. Taylor has a generator and was able to pump most of the water out of the basement but still had 8" of water. Many of his neighbors' basements were also flooded and had no sump pumps, as the power was out. Mr. Taylor placed two calls to the Fire Department and never heard back from them. He would like the situation to improve.

Chief Murphy explained that the Fire Department and NStar have met and discussed what the priorities are during storms. NStar has worked very well with the Fire Department, however, there are occasions when the City is in emergency mode and NStar is not. Chief Murphy also feels that NStar is undermanned making it difficult for them to respond promptly. Citizens usually call NStar to report power outages and the Fire Department is not immediately aware of outages. All calls to NStar are routed through Boston and are prioritized in the order they came in. Often times this is not the order the Fire Department would have them answered.

The last storm caused several transformers to blow leaving approximately 10,000 residences without power. The Fire Department received 413 calls for assistance during the storm. It took a couple of days for the Fire Department to respond to all requests for pumping out the basement. Sometimes it is impossible for the Fire Department to pump out a basement because there are areas of the City where backyards flood and the water goes into the basement as fast as it goes out.

There is no place for water to accumulate. The City needs bigger and more storm drains. The City is in the process of repairing, relining, or replacing the sewer pipes. This will take a number of years to complete. Ald. Lipsitt suggested notifying residents that live in the next area to be repaired of the impending work.

Ald. Baker commended the Fire Department for their hard work during the storm. He would like the City to send something to citizens in high flood areas giving the protocol during power outages. It was suggested that a fact sheet be prepared explaining whom residents should notify about power outages and flooding. The notices could be sent out with the quarterly water bills.

Mike Rourke stated that the City could use reverse 911 to inform residents in particular areas, which are in emergency situations. He also informed the Committees that the Executive Department is filing complaints against NStar regarding response time to many situations.

Both Committees held the item for further discussion with Jay Fink, the Utilities Director, regarding the repair of storm drains and a representative from NStar to discuss priorities and emergency plan during storms.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#107-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$33,621.39 be appropriated and expended from the Department of Public Works Damage Recoveries Fund for the purpose of making repairs to the Elliot Street Salt Shed. The salt shed was damaged by a trucking company vehicle. The City has received a check in the amount of \$33,621.39 from the Worcester Insurance Company as compensation for the damage.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Mike Trotta presented the item to the Committee. The Elliot Street salt shed was damaged during a delivery of supplies by a trucking company vehicle. The truck snapped the main truss of the salt shed. The City has received a check for \$33,621.29 from the company's insurance agency. The funds will cover all of the damages to the shed. Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the item, which passed unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#108-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$60,000 be appropriated and expended from the Sewer Surplus Fund for the purpose of repairing the sewer main on FLORENCE STREET. The entire cost of the project is estimated at \$130,000; \$52,000 will come from capital improvement funds in the FY01 Sewer operating budget, and \$18,101 will come from Sewer Rate Relief Funds from the MWRA.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Mike Trotta presented the item to the Committee. It is a request for \$60,000 to repair the sewer main in Florence Street. There is a drop manhole, which is a severe change in the elevation of the sewer line. The manhole has become impacted with grease causing decreased flow. A portion of the sewer pipe has also sagged creating more build up in the line. In order to repair the manhole it must be taken out of the street.

The Engineering Department has suggested replacing the pipe and running it down at an angle to eliminate the drop manhole. The existing pipe is very old and needs to be replaced. The construction will have very little impact on the residents of the street. Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the item and it passed unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#109-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$1,235,000 be appropriated and expended from the Water Surplus Fund for the purpose of completing repairs to the WABAN HILL RESERVOIR. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$2,185,200. The remaining costs will be met with the approximately \$1 million of capital improvement funds allocated in the FY01 Water operating budget.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Mike Trotta presented the request for funds to complete repairs to the Waban Hill Reservoir. The request is for \$1,235,000 to repair the roof and walls of the structure. The roof was repaired about nine years ago with a rubber membrane. At the time, there was not any major damage to the roof but now there is structural damage. .

The roof will have a geo-technical fabric layer made to wick water to side; a sand layer and a top layer of gravel with epoxy grout. The outside walls will be lined with polyurthelane from the bottom to 1” above the water line. These repairs should last for many years.

Ald. Salvucci moved approval, as these repairs are necessary. The committee approved the item unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#145-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$129,808 be appropriated in order to fund the cleaning, disposing, and testing for the presence of asbestos in the basement of City Hall as follows:

FROM:	Reduction of request for item #97-01.....	\$ 16,000
	Capital Stabilization.....	\$ 15,000
	Closeout of C11401 (WHDH LAND).....	\$ 35,000
	Free Cash.....	\$ 63,808
	TOTAL.....	\$129,808

ACTION: APPROVED 3-0-1 SUBJECT TO SECOND CALL (Ald. Yates Abstaining)

NOTE: Arthur Cabral and Mike Rourke presented the item. The situation in the Planning Department is serious. During testing 15 spots containing asbestos were found after the first clean-up attempt. It was determined that the area needs to be completely abated. There was no air borne asbestos particles found during the testing. There is also a plan to encapsulate all asbestos laden pipes within City Hall.

The Administration has hired space planners to possibly move some of the planning staff into the offices, which they work closely with. The Administration will come back to the Board when the plan has been completed.

Ald. Yates had some questions regarding a portion of the funding. He would like to know if there is any stipulations attached to the money from WHDH and would like to be assured that the money was not set aside for a specific purpose. No one on the Committee could recall the specifics in regards to those funds. Mike Rourke agreed to look into the funding before the item was discussed in Finance.

Ald. Salvucci moved the item subject to second call. Ald. Yates abstained from voting on the item until all of the information was available. The item was approved.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#146-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$70,000 be appropriated from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purpose of installing a lift and handicapped accessible bathroom at the Angier School to accommodate a student in a wheelchair who will attend the school this fall.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Arthur Cabral presented the item to the Committee. The funds are necessary to provide a lift and a handicapped accessible bathroom at Angier School to accommodate a student. The lift will give the student access to most areas of the school and restroom facilities. The installation will also allow Angier to become a polling place again because it will be compliant with the American Disability Act. Ald. Salvucci moved approval of the item, which passed unanimously.

#147-01 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the sum of \$405,000 be appropriated from Free Cash for the purpose of funding construction activities for the replacement of the roof at the Pierce Elementary School.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Arthur Cabral presented the requests for funds to replace the roof at Pierce School. The design portion of the project has already been reviewed and approved by the Committee and Board. The new roof will be a cold membrane roof. The roof is guaranteed for twenty years with a built in twenty year maintenance program. The new roof and maintenance program covers the roof, new drains and masonry, including flashing against the parapets. Ald. Salvucci moved the item, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chair