

Budget Resolution #1

Inspectional Services Department

Resolution regarding addition staff for ISD

Submitted by Councilors Krintzman, Laredo, Downs, Baker, Albright, Bowman, Greenberg, Noel, Leary, Malakie, Oliver, Grossman, Lipof, Wright, Danberg, Crossley,

Requesting that additional resources be made available to the Inspectional Services Department for an additional full-time position for enforcement of zoning code, special permit requirements, and other violations under the purview of ISD, and other related matters.

Budget Resolution #2

Health & Human Services Department

Resolution regarding non-police first responder pilot program

Submitted by Councilors Ryan, Humphrey, Bowman, Wright, Danberg, Krintzman, Greenberg, Leary

Requesting that Newton should pilot a non-police community first responder program to deal with calls for help that involve social and wellness issues.

Budget Resolution #3

Inspectional Services Department

Resolution regarding addition ISD staff for mediation

Submitted by Councilors Ryan, Humphrey, Downs, Bowman, Greenberg, Noel, Wright, Danberg, Markiewicz, Leary,

Inspectional Services should be provided with full-time staff for new roles in neutral mediation and resolution of property disputes and quality of life ordinances such as noise violations, construction work site regulation, and sidewalk snow clearance in commercial areas; this change would reduce the burden on Newton Police.

Budget Resolution #4

Planning Department

Resolution regarding additional staff to promote walkability/bikeability

Submitted by Councilors Bowman, Humphrey, Downs, Greenberg, Ryan, Danberg, Leary,

Requesting that Newton increase full-time staff specializing in transportation to facilitate walking and biking to schools, to promote walkability, bikeability, accessibility, safety, and climate action goals equitably.

Budget Resolution #5

School Department

Resolution regarding bus fee reduction/elimination

Submitted by Councilors Noel, Bowman, Krintzman, Kalis, Humphrey, Laredo, Greenberg, Leary, Grossman, Ryan, Lipof, Markiewicz, Wright, Danberg, Crossley, That the sense of the Council is that Newton's school bus pass fees should be eliminated or significantly reduced to promote equity, advance our climate action goals, and reduce congestion in Newton.

Budget Resolution #6

Planning Department

Resolution regarding increase in funds for conservation projects and maintenance

Submitted by Councilors Albright, Laredo, Greenberg, Downs, Baker, Leary, Bowman, Kelley, Humphrey, Grossman, Lipof, Wright, Danberg, Krintzman, Crossley

Change the line for Capital projects under Conservation (Account No. 0111471-5841000 – Grounds Improvement) to allow funds to be used for capital and/or maintenance projects. Currently the fund is only \$25,000 which is insufficient. The City Council resolves to add \$30,000 to these funds to total \$55,000 - which would include physical projects as well as maintenance. Among the projects this increase would support are increasing accessibility, creating new trails, creating trail markings in existing trails, ridding grounds of invasive plant material and adding native and pollinator species. This should be an annual appropriation which would reflect our residents' priority on maintaining and enhancing our open space.

Budget Resolution #7

Planning Department

Resolution regarding a Bike, Pedestrian and Accessibility Plan

Submitted by Councilors Bowman, Downs, Noel, Leary, Albright, Humphrey, Grossman, Ryan, Lipof, Wright, Danberg, Krintzman, Greenberg, Crossley

Fund the development of a comprehensive bike, pedestrian, and accessibility plan in support of the Climate Action Plan's goal to shift vehicle trips to biking and walking trips which also supports Safe Routes to School, economic development, accessibility, and the Open Space Plan.

Budget Resolution #8

Parks & Recreation and Culture

Resolution regarding improvement of the city's athletic fields

Proposed by Councilors Oliver, Laredo, Norton, Lipof, Wright, Grossman, Markiewicz, Greenberg, Krintzman

Requesting increased funding to improve Newton's multi-purpose athletic fields. Newton should immediately adopt and fund the plan already provided by Newton's athletic groups which includes details for maintaining, modernizing as well as managing permitting fees to establish a more self-sustaining maintenance budget.

Budget Resolution #9

Parks & Recreation and Culture

Resolution to move up Gath Pool renovation

Proposed by Councilors Lucas, Oliver, Gentile, Greenberg, Wright,

Asking that the Administration move up the complete renovation of the Gath Pool to FY22.

Budget Resolution #10

Public Works

Resolution to create civilian flagger program under Public Works

Proposed by Councilors Leary, Humphrey, Greenberg, Wright, Downs, Bowman, Albright,

Resolved that the City of Newton would be better served with the flexibility to engage a civilian construction detail flagger program under the Department of Public Works and that the necessary negotiations should be made to enable this change. Further resolved: that the crossing guard program could be strengthened by integrating it into a civilian detail flagger program.

Budget Resolution #11

Public Works

Resolution to fund Sustainable Materials Management position

Proposed by Councilors Leary, Greenberg, Downs, Bowman, Crossley, Danberg, Albright

During the Covid crisis a part time position was cut in the Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) budget, and it has not been restored in the current budget. The City has seen a 17% increase in the recently negotiated hauling contract. The

increase in costs is certain to continue with both hauling and disposal contracts. Funding this position will better enable the Director of SMM and the Waste Diversion Coordinator to focus on policies and programs to increase waste diversion and reduce costs to the City. In addition, the SMM program has an important role in helping to expand and develop Statewide EPR programs, which can help shift costs from municipalities resulting in significant savings.

Budget Resolution #12

Parks, Recreation and Culture

Resolution for addition investment in tree maintenance

Proposed by Councilor Norton, Malakie, Greenberg, Wright,
Requesting additional \$250,000 to Parks, Recreation and Culture for investment in tree planting and maintenance to avoid loss of tree canopy while City Shade Tree Master Plan is drafted.

Budget Resolution #13

Planning Department

Resolution regarding discrimination in rental housing

Proposed by Councilors Malakie, Norton, Greenberg, Wright,
Requesting that Newton establish a "matched pair" testing program to determine the extent of, and discourage, discrimination in rental housing in Newton, as was found in the 2020 study "Qualified Renters Need Not Apply: Race and Voucher Discrimination in the Metro Boston Rental Housing Market" that included but did not break out data for Newton.

Planning Department

Resolution regarding increase in funds for conservation projects and maintenance

Submitted by Councilors Albright, Laredo, Greenberg, Baker, Leary

Change the line for Capital projects under Conservation (**Account No. 0111471-5841000 – Grounds Improvement**) to allow funds to be used for capital and/or maintenance projects. Currently the fund is only \$25,000 which is insufficient. The City Council resolves to add \$30,000 to these funds to total \$55,000 - which would include physical projects as well as maintenance. Among the projects this increase would support are increasing accessibility, creating new trails, creating trail markings in existing trails, ridding grounds of invasive plant material and adding native and pollinator species. This should be an annual appropriation which would reflect our residents' priority on maintaining and enhancing our open space.

Background in Support:

The Conservation Commission supervises the City's conservation lands and trails. It receives \$25,000 each year for annual maintenance from a contribution by the Newton Commonwealth Golf Course, and City funds of \$25,000 for capital improvements (such as improved accessibility and emergency tree removal).

In fiscal 2021, the Conservation Commission is on track to having spent over \$71,000 on capital projects alone (by relying on roll-over money and money from a gift fund for Houghton Garden). Some of the larger projects executed this year include:

- Houghton Pond hydroraking (\$26,000)
- Hazard tree removal (\$17,545)
- Accessible path at Dolan Pond (\$9,800)
- Stairs to Webster Woods (\$9,600)
- Boardwalk and fence work (\$5,500)
- Invasives control at the Old Deer Park (\$2,000)

Conservation needs this increase because addressing the increasing numbers of hazard trees, the cost of services for new open space resources (Webster Woods and the Old Deer Park), necessary improvements to accessibility and connectivity, and restoration of existing infrastructure, exceed the \$25,000 currently allocated.

Some projects identified for near-term implementation (budget allowing) include:

- Building the stairs to connect the Upper Falls Greenway with the Conservation land to the south.
- Converting the Norumbega loop path to a fully ADA compliant surface (Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) action #65)
- Building a boardwalk and bridge through Kessler Conservation area. (OSRP action #102)
- Implementing the ACROSS trail loops by installing trail markers in the field (OSRP action #101)
- Cleaning-up the Pine Street lots and transferring them to Parks or Conservation (OSRP action #111)

Resolution #6

- Undertaking invasive species management to remove some of the most aggressive invasive species that are threatening our tress, parks, and natural areas. (OSRP action #48)
- Safety upgrades to the boardwalk at Kennard is aging and heaving and should needs some significant rehabilitation now or in the next couple of years.
- Brush and log removal from Norumbega, Wilson, Kennard, and select areas of Webster to alleviate fire hazards and improve aesthetics.
- Stabilizing the Warren Street entrance to Webster Conservation Area entrance (with a geogrid) to keep fire and utility trucks from getting mired.

By contrast, the Parks and Recreation Department, which also has public land to maintain, has budgeted amounts as follows:

Public Grounds Maintenance (operating and capital): \$2,537,578

Forestry Services: \$1,812, 658

Community Beautification: \$980,823

Those three accounts are slated for increases in fiscal 2022 of \$513,239, \$301,960, and \$60,842, respectively.

During the budget discussion in the Zoning and Planning Committee, Mr. Yeo indicated that if there were needs in Conservation, he would consider it. (See summary prepared by the Zooning and Planning Committee Clerk below.) It would be wise to prepare for those needs now.

From a summary prepared by the Clerk for the Zoning and Planning Committee:

Conservation maintenance \$25,000 summary from audio.

Councilor Leary stated that \$25,000 seems really low, please explain what this money covers.

Mr. Heath answered that this money covers maintaining trail network on conservation lands. 25,000 seems low, but usually a balance moves forward. The City has been very busy and are working with a great contractor. Money has been spent on Houghton Gardens for hydro-raking removing vegetation, not dredging. There were some funds but not enough, neighborhood helped significantly. There needs to be more resources available hopefully the administration will look at the needs.

Councilor Baker stated that \$25,000 is not enough funding to cover the City.

Mr. Yeo answered that in reviewing line items for the budget, there was not a need to update the conservation budget amount. If additional funding is necessary for important projects, the administration will work to find the funding and think of new line item for next year.

Excerpt from the Budget Report.

Q: \$25,000 for Conservation Capital expenses seems very low. Do you need additional funding for conservation efforts?

Resolution #6

A: These funds have been reserved for maintaining the trail network and other conservation projects. This number seems low, but we typically have carry forward money as well.

Chief Operating Officer Jonathan Yeo noted that in reviewing line items for the budget, there wasn't a need to update the conservation budget. He explained that if there are critical projects, the City will work to find funding. Councilors remained concerned that this line item is too low and does not provide enough opportunities for the promotion of conservation efforts. Councilors expressed enthusiasm for continued efforts to work with the city's conservators and to improve the quality of the city's open spaces and wildlife habitats.



**CITY OF NEWTON
SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT
COMMISSION**

1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459-1449
Ruthanne Fuller, Mayor

**Members: Steven Ferrey, Sunwoo Kahng (Chair), Meryl Kessler, John Lewis, Robin Maltz, Seth Parker, Marian Rambelle (Vice Chair), Karen Slote, Miles Smith, Carl Valente (Secretary)
Ex-Officio Member: Jim McGonagle, DPW Commissioner
Advisory: Waneta Trabert, Sustainable Materials Management Division Director**

June 11, 2021

The Honorable Members of the City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459-1449

Re: DPW's Sustainable Materials Management Division Staffing

Dear City Councilors:

The City of Newton Sustainable Materials Management Commission (SMMC) would like, first of all, to thank you for your recent passage of the Resolution Supporting Extended Producer Responsibility and an Expanded Bottle Bill. Along with the prior passage of the expanded plastic bag and the polystyrene ordinances, we applaud the Council's continued commitment to:

- the resolution passed on May 16, 2016 that requested the development of a long-range plan to improve the City's recycling rate and reduce trash tonnage, including setting ambitious, yet attainable goals that are at least consistent with the State's 10 year Solid Waste Master Plan; and
- Newton's Five-Year Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2020-2025, adopted by the City Council on November 15, 2019, which includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with disposal of materials – by evaluating strategies to improve waste reduction and diversion among residents, businesses, and municipal operations.

With landfills closing in the Northeast, the cost of municipal solid waste management is likely to rise significantly in the future. Newton's current 5-year waste hauling contract with Waste Management is 17% higher than the prior contract, and based on the experiences of other communities in Massachusetts, the cost will rise again with the next contract starting in 2025. Newton's trash tonnage has remained about the same over the last five years, and Newton must begin implementing new measures to reduce waste tonnage if we are to avoid a sharp rise in fees. The SMMC recommends the City take strong action to reduce residential waste generation through expanded public education and the implementation of new programs that incentivize waste reduction and diversion from disposal.

Newton City Council
SMMD Staffing
June 11, 2021

Restore Funding for Half-Time Staff for Sustainable Materials Management Division

The SMMC praises the work of Waneta Trabert, Director of Newton's Sustainable Materials Management Division (SMMD). She has set in place a number of measures that are successfully helping Newton manage waste more sustainably. As she worked to expand programs, her department grew to employ a full-time staff member, and a half-time position by the start of 2020. However, the half-time position was cut due to budget shortfalls brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, and they have not been restored in the current proposed budget. The SMMC requests that the funding for the previously-funded positions be restored this year. The SMMD is led by a very capable director with a clear vision of the work needed to move Newton to 'net zero waste', as laid out in the 2016 Resolution and in the Newton CAP. However, regardless of how clear the plan, this work can only be done successfully with adequate staffing. In addition to increasing the residential participation in the successful programs already established in our city, we anticipate that Newton will have to implement new programs promoting source reduction, reuse, composting, and expanded recycling if we are to reduce and divert most materials from the waste stream by 2050. To design and implement these programs successfully will require more staff. By comparison, the City of Cambridge operates with a staff of 5 full-time employees for 46,835 households, and the Town of Brookline has 3 full-time staff members for 24,436 households. (In comparison, Newton has 31,139 households.)

Invitation to SMMD Cart Top Sticker and Data Collection Project

As described in the June 10, 2021 Mayor's Update email, the SMMD will conduct an education campaign from June 14 through August 2021 to address 'contamination' (i.e., unacceptable items) in curbside green recycling carts. Volunteers will walk the trash pick up routes from 7:00 to 10:00 am and affix large informational stickers that explain what can and cannot be placed into the green recycling carts. In addition, the volunteers will gather simple data from the carts on waste and recycling. We invite Councilors to spend some time walking with the volunteers as they affix the stickers and gather data in order to get a sense of the issues surrounding curbside waste and recycling management in the City. Please contact Erica Braman, DPW Waste Diversion Coordinator, at ebraman@newtonma.gov to schedule a slot.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Sunwoo Kahng

Chair, Sustainable Materials Management Commission