



## Programs & Services Committee Report

### City of Newton In City Council

**Wednesday, October 20, 2021**

**Present:** Councilors Noel (Vice Chair), Albright, Baker, Humphrey, Ryan, Wright, and Greenberg

**Absent:** Councilor Krintzman

**Also Present:** Councilors Kelley, Leary, Lipof, Markiewicz, Bowman, Oliver, Downs, Lucas, Malakie, and Grossman; Ruth Goldman, School Committee Chair

**City Staff:** John Lojek, Commissioner of Inspectional Services; Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent; Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer; Lt. George McMains, Newton Police Department; Chief John Carmichael, Jr., Newton Police Department; Maureen Lemieux, Chief Financial Officer; Nathan Giacalone, Committee Clerk

**#365-21      Appointment of John Rice to the Parks and Recreation Commission**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing JOHN RICE, 9 Selden Street, Waban, as an Alternate member of the PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION for a term to expire on October 31, 2024. (60 Days: 12/03/21)

**Action:**      Programs & Services Approved 7-0

**Notes:**      The Committee invited Mr. Rice to introduce himself and describe his desire to join the Commission. Mr. Rice said that he was a former member of the Programs & Services Committee for 10 years, during which time he was frequently involved with Parks issues. This involvement continues through his work at the Hyde community Center which does a significant amount of programming with the Parks, Recreation and Culture department, such as the Halloween Haunted House and other senior programming. He has also worked with different field groups in Newton, with 20 years of being involved in Newton's parks. Mr. Rice said that with the free time of no longer being on the City Council, now is a good opportunity to give back when there are large scale projects ahead such as the Gath Pool and Crystal Lake.

Mr. Rice was thanked for his presentation to the Committee as well as for the mentoring skills and lessons in compromise he has provided over the years.

Councilor Humphrey made a motion to Approve which carried 7-0.

**#366-21**      **Appointment of Sam Figler to the Newton Commonwealth Foundation**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing SAM FIGLER, 63 Sumner Street, Newton Centre, as a member of the NEWTON COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION for a term to expire on October 30, 2024. (60 Days: 12/03/21)

**Action:**      **Programs & Services Held 7-0**

**Notes:**      Councilor Baker made a motion to Hold which carried 7-0.

**#367-21**      **Appointment of Joyce Picard to the Council on Aging**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing JOYCE PICARD, 14 Halcyon Road, Newton, as a member of the COUNCIL ON AGING for a term to expire on November 1, 2024. (60 Days: 12/03/21)

**Action:**      **Programs & Services Approved 7-0**

**Notes:**      The Committee invited Ms. Picard to introduce herself and describe her desire to join the Council on Aging. Ms. Picard said that her family has lived in Newton since 1962 and that she has both a long professional and civic resume as an activist. In Newton, Ms. Picard said that she was appointed to several committees by Mayor Mann and that she has also authored 12 articles on senior housing. These articles address the gap population of seniors who are resistant about leaving their homes and downsizing. She said that the City should have more of a role in providing options for seniors looking to move out of their big homes.

Discussion:

A councilor remarked that Ms. Picard's articles do a good job at pointing out the needs of the community and the direction to go in regarding housing for Newton's aging population. It is important to raise attention about these particular needs in our community. Ms. Picard pointed out that the city missed an opportunity to buy some land several years ago that could have been converted into mixed income housing for seniors.

Councilor Albright made a motion to approve which carried 7-0.

**Referred to Public Safety & Transportation and Programs & Services Committees**

**#49-20(3)**      **Requesting report as to the implementation of the leaf-blower landscaper registration and enforcement**  
COUNCILORS ALBRIGHT, BAKER, WRIGHT, HUMPHREY, NOEL AND GREENBERG requesting a report from the Executive Department, including the Chief of Police and the Commissioner of Inspectional Services, as to the implementation of the leaf-blower landscaper registration and enforcement ordinance amendments effective Labor Day 2021.

**Action:**      **Programs & Services Held 7-0**  
**Public Safety & Transportation Held 8-0**

**Notes:**      The Committee was joined for discussion by members of the Public Safety & Transportation Committee, as well as Chief Carmichael, Mr. Yeo, Mr. Lojek, Ms. Lemieux, and Lt.

McMains.

Mr. Yeo said that he thinks the implementation changes have been successful so far. The registration system created in the spring has recently been implemented this fall and is currently considered to be in a learning period. Going forward, this registration will be implemented on a yearly calendar basis. Mr. Yeo said that the Police Department is still the primary enforcer of this ordinance as only they can respond rapidly anywhere in Newton. He also said that the City is in the process of hiring a seasonal code enforcer who will work with the Police on code enforcement and to help ensure compliance.

Mr. Lojek then spoke, saying that significant progress has been made as 41 landscapers have registered. Currently, registration is a \$25 fee that will increase to \$50 in 2022. The seasonal code enforcer mentioned by Mr. Yeo is a retired Newton police officer, whom Mr. Lojek said will be responsible for driving around the City with registration forms to help ensure all landscapers are properly registered and marked. The registration fee will include a bumper sticker that Mr. Lojek said must be affixed to the rear of any vehicle operating leaf blowers. Due to ongoing supply issues, the stickers have not yet arrived but hopefully will soon. These stickers will be bright orange and say, "City of Newton" and be followed by the registration number. In the meantime, a code enforcement officer will address the issue, but Mr. Lojek stressed that one individual can only do so much. Mr. Lojek acknowledged that compliance with the ordinance is currently not great, but he hopes this will improve as the new ordinance is implemented.

Chief Carmichael then spoke, saying that the police have received over 1,500 calls for leaf blower violations since the ordinance was enacted. So far in 2021 police have responded to 173 leaf blower calls, a 17 percent decrease from the 209 calls in 2020. He said that in 48 percent of the calls the operators are gone upon arrival. Since Labor Day when the ordinance updates went into effect, the police have responded to 26 leaf blower calls, last year in the same time frame they had responded to 13 calls. Chief Carmichael said that most calls are not repeat offenders and the biggest report is usually for improper equipment.

Discussion:

Staff was thanked for its help and the progress seen on the ordinance thus far. This is not just for increased compliance, but to protect residents and operators from noise and the particulate substance as well.

**Looking through the violations, there is a violation for no registration, but these do not show up as such in the log. What protocols are there to advise officers about the different elements of the new ordinance?**

Chief Carmichael said that officers are aware of the new ordinance but not yet trained in how to distinguish the registered and unregistered equipment. This will improve with more training. All police calls are logged, and the information can be brought up upon request. Officer discretion also determines whether a citation is issued or not. Mr. Lojek added that ISD is coordinating enforcement with the police and that the arrival of the bumper stickers will help this process.

It is good to see the Police keeping a log of violations, but they still should not be involved with enforcing the ordinance.

Even today, there are still unmarked landscapers operating in Newton. Those who follow the new ordinance have said they just want a fair playing field.

**During regular business hours, does ISD or the police get the call on a violation first?**

During the day, the police enforce this ordinance while ISD manages registration. The new staff member will help find new landscapers to ensure compliance of all landscapers operating in Newton. With police as the response model, it will be a cooperative venture between the two departments. While the enforcement employee will not have a radio, he will still be out in the field. Mr. Lojek added that the enforcement employee will be capable of writing tickets, but it will not be his main function and it will not be in the same capacity as the police. He will primarily check in with landscapers to make sure they are following the ordinance and will use a clearly marked city car and identifying outerwear.

**Are there special citation books for these violations?**

They will just be written in as "other". Calls should be sent to the police first.

**What will the sticker look like?**

It will be bright orange and 3 by 8 inches, with text saying City of Newton Leaf Blower Registration followed by a registration number. This will allow officers to quickly see if a landscaper is registered or not. There will be a different color each year.

**What kind of car will the enforcement officer drive?**

It will be an electric vehicle.

This ordinance appeared to be a failure until recently. Noise is a serious health and quality of life issue and leadership should impress the importance of this upon officers. Calls have likely been going down in part due to a lack of enforcement. It is very good to see the resources being put into this effort and hopefully enforcement will be able to give out more information as well.

**Will the code enforcement officer be bilingual as many of the operators often speak no or little English?**

Mr. Lojek said that he doubts the enforcement officer will be bilingual and added that Spanish is not the only language being spoken. He stressed that the City was lucky enough to get someone to come forward and fill the position and that the new code enforcement officer will be a good fit for the job as a former Newton police officer. He will give out information on the ordinance and do what he can, but there are many more landscapers in Newton than the 41 who have registered.

**Do police officers know the difference between legal and illegal equipment?**

The blower should have a decibel sticker on it anyway. Though calls are often stacked in an area for efficiency, sometimes the officer arrives, and the blower is not in use or the operator has left the area.

**What happens if an operator does not allow their equipment to be checked?**

City personnel cannot force an operator to allow inspection of their equipment, but in cases like

this staff will assume the equipment is non-compliant and write a violation.

**How many stickers per landscaper does the \$50 registration fee cover?**

It provides each company with however many stickers they need, as the main goal is to get companies registered.

**What will the hours of the enforcement officer be?**

These will vary as he is a seasonal part-time employee, but we will try to have him work Saturdays.

**Will the code enforcement officer have access to complaint data?**

The Police Department will work on how much data it can share with him.

It can be hard to find the ordinance on the City website, so ISD should work to make it more accessible.

**What can the city do about lack of identification on a landscaping truck?**

The City cannot control trucks having no lettering, but they can inform them that this is already against state law. A provision can also be included on the registration form saying that the company agrees to ensure its vehicles are clearly marked.

The leaf blower ordinance brochure needs to be updated to reflect the new changes.

**Is there a plan for a mailing to residents to communicate the updates to the ordinance?**

There is limited opportunity for this as the city needs to prioritize what and when it sends large-scale mailings out on, but the administration will continue to explore new methods of outreach.

**Today if either a police officer or the code enforcement officer comes across unregistered equipment, how can the homeowner be notified?**

Historically the city has mailed notice to homeowners in the event of a violation. A first offense is a warning, but if they continue to use unregistered landscapers they will be ticketed.

The Committees decided to begin drafting a letter to send to the administration regarding the updates on leaf blower ordinance enforcement.

Councilor Baker made a motion to Hold for Programs & Services 7-0.

Councilor Bowman made a motion to hold for Public Safety & Transportation which carried 8-0.

**Referred to Programs & Services and Public Safety & Transportation Committees****#271-21 Request for a discussion on School Bus Transportation**

COUNCILORS BOWMAN, CROSSLEY, DANBERG, DOWNS, GREENBERG, GROSSMAN, HUMPHREY, KALIS, KELLEY, KRINTZMAN, LAREDO, LUCAS, MARKIEWICZ, NOEL, NORTON, OLIVER, RYAN, LEARY AND WRIGHT requesting a discussion with the Newton Public Schools to review the school bus transportation program including expenses and fees charged to students and upcoming bus contract and as part of a comprehensive school transportation strategy.

**Action:** **Programs & Services Held 7-0**  
**Public Safety & Transportation Held 7-0 (Councilor Lipof not voting)**

**Notes:** The Committee was joined by members of the Public Safety & Transportation Committee along with Mr. Hurley and Chair Goldman of the School Committee.

Chair Goldman said that to prepare for the meeting, she and Mr. Hurley decided on a conversation centered around the RFP for the busses, as well as a brief comparison with the bus fee structures of other communities and the viability of using electric busses. This discussion would feed into the larger discussion about school fees in general.

Mr. Hurley then spoke, saying Newton was in the fifth year of a contract with Eastern Bus. The last bid had language to explore the feasibility of electric busses as well, though there would be significant costs associated with this conversion. He said that the city has also begun using online school bus registration, which is an easier process for families to use. This year, 3,714 bus passes have been issued, which Mr. Hurley said was an increase of 500 from the 2019-20 school year. Fee revenue is approximately \$685,000, which is higher than anticipated as expectations were scaled back due to possible reluctance to use the bus because of COVID. Through the head counts on the busses, while all the space on busses may be sold, they are not filled with riders. Additionally, the newly introduced seat assignment has added some logistical challenges to filling the busses. Mr. Hurley said that the focus now is on how to optimize routes amidst an ongoing shortage of bus drivers, with the athletic routes proving particularly difficult to arrange. Between the staggered start times between the schools, many busses drive two or three routes per day. Under the current daily rate, each bus is operated for about \$105,000 per year. Compared to other districts in the area, Newton charges \$375 a year for bus fees (\$0 for elementary school), while Weston charges nothing and Belmont charges up to \$575. By state law, Newton must provide transportation to students in grades K-6 who live more than 2 miles from their assigned school, and many districts such as Newton provide greater coverage than this. Mr. Hurley said that he looks forward to putting out a bid to meet Newton's needs.

Mr. Hurley said that ideally, these bids are put out before the December break with a contract awarded by the spring. The current vendor has bought space in Waltham to use as a bus lot, though it will not be available for two years. Newton's contract specifies that the vendor must have a bus yard within 2-3 miles of the city.

**Discussion:**

The Council is starting this conversation earlier than it has been before to avoid some of the

difficulties seen in the past regarding the budget process. The hope is that the Mayor will provide additional resources to eliminate or significantly reduce the bus fees. The logistical process associated with seat assignment has a cost so a nominal amount to solely cover this could work could be considered. Councilors stressed that the goal is that the School Department not have to pick and choose what to fund without the bus revenues, but rather to get them extra money so they do not need to charge a bus fee.

Chair Goldman answered that the School Department has spoken with Programs & Services before over school fees in general, so this is something there could be another discussion on. Because of the change at the high school start time, she said more walking and biking to school was anticipated. A survey is also being planned that will help more accurately understand the effect of the changed start time on families which will be useful information to have. Chair Goldman said that when there is another discussion on this topic, people will need to be clear on what revenues will be needed to make up for the reduction in fees.

**How many Newton students are eligible for the bus?**

Typically, those who live within a mile of school do not take the bus, but the City tries to make routes available for them if they wish. Newton tries to avoid bus stops within three quarters of a mile of school, but it does not automatically deny requests for these stops. There is a case currently of trying to fit a student onto a bus that is already at capacity, but the City tries to avoid denying a spot so long as it can make the bus stop. There are probably about 300 or 400 families in need of financial assistance and 505 waivers have been given out in a combination of distance and financial assistance.

**How many other communities besides Weston have no fees?**

There are not many. Bedford may not charge fees, Arlington looked like a distance issue as well. Most districts in the area charge bus fees, ranging from \$200 to \$400 or more, and they also charge beginning at kindergarten.

**Do any communities in Massachusetts use electric busses?**

Mr. Hurley said Cambridge has an electric bus, though Eastern (who is also the vendor for Cambridge) has said that this bus is owned by the city and is not often used due to technical issues. There may be another community in the North Shore area using an electric bus, along with a few in Vermont and Montgomery County, Maryland, but these are still not widely used.

**What is the typical length for a bus contract? Is it possible to switch to electric busses over time?**

Bus contracts are usually five years as they are a major investment for the vendor. Switching to electric busses would be a significant investment as they would require changes to the rest of the infrastructure. Even a partial shift would still be a large cost.

Councilors know that the School Committee has no interest in charging fees. If the Council tells the School Committee to not charge fees, the Council needs to say which expenses it will give up to allow the School Committee to not charge fees.

In some ways this is the wrong conversation. The Council needs to have a big picture conversation of our core values. Bus fees are problematic for multiple reasons as they are a

regressive tax, they interfere with our obligation to educate, and they dissuade people from taking public transit, negating the goals of the Climate Action Plan. These fees are not compatible with our values as a city. Though only a few communities do not charge, Newton needs to lead on this and seek alignment between the Council, administration, and School Committee on this goal.

Regarding the parking, one couple who lives across from the border street lot has complained about being woken up consistently by the busses as they prepare for the day, sometimes as early as 12:30am (memo attached).

**Regarding the lot owned by Crafts Street Development, it feels like the bus parking is on borrowed time for Eastern. Do we know if Eastern will still be able to get another five years at the site? As parking opportunities shrink, what will we be able to do?**

Mr. Hurley answered that parking is between the vendor and landlord, and the vendor needs contract status before securing parking space. Eastern would probably be able to stay, but there are still some unknowns over the parking. If this lot cannot be used, Eastern has other space in eight other communities it can explore. Electric METCO busses would be a multimillion-dollar effort.

There will likely be friction with neighbors as long as diesel busses are used because of the engine noise and the need to “warm” the engine up prior to driving.

**Eliminating bus fees will also help get more cars off the streets in the morning. There is also the problem of the large gap between student parking opportunities at the high schools. Also, why are we paying for busses for private school students? Bus fees should be isolated and removed from the School Committee budget if need be.**

Chair Goldman responded that the plan going forward needs to be clear, and if increasing bus ridership is a goal, then it needs to be described in more detail. Fees are part of this discussion, but they should be addressed by the survey. A combination of reducing fees and adding busses will help increase ridership, though will require more funding. She said that singling out bus fees without addressing other factors will not solve the issue. Mr. Hurley said to expect some cost increases in the next bus contract due to supply issues and other factors. Some long-range planning on the strategic goals would help with the big picture on fees. It was also clarified that private school students are offered bus services due to state law.

While it would be good to see school fees eliminated, this would impact many areas of operation, such as the likely increases to ridership as pointed out by Chair Goldman. These can be good changes, but they still need to be properly prepared for. There have been other complaints about the bus services such as the time they take to get to school. As has been stated before, it needs to be answered what will replace the lost fee revenue before a decision is made. These remaining questions can be addressed in the upcoming survey Chair Goldman mentioned.

The survey mentioned by Chair Goldman was disrupted by COVID. An earlier survey done in 2014 indicated that a lack of ridership was due more to scheduling than fees. The Council should also look to rethink how Newton’s bus routes are organized. Though we may have missed the window to make changes in time for the current contract, perhaps a three-year option is possible because



five years is an awful long time to wait and not make any changes.

The Long-Range Financial Plan presentation a few weeks ago showed that there are lots of projects in Newton that need to be done, especially with the schools and the roads. The values of all of these projects are important, it is just a concern over where the money is coming from.

The meeting then opened briefly to public comment:

Matt Stanbury, 1518 Beacon Street; Introduced himself as employed by a provider of electric busses. Mr. Stansbury said that electrification is changing significantly as there are many new ways for districts to procure these assets with budget neutrality. He offered himself as a resource for the Council if it pursues this option.

George Kirby, 19 Cummings Road; Mr. Kirby said he was a technical advisor for the Electric Vehicle Task Force. He thought that it would be great for the Council to meet with Mr. Stanbury. He said that electric busses require less warmup time and generate less noise than gas-powered ones and that the lot in Waltham would be great for Eastern to use. He also offered his assistance in this process. Chair Goldman responded that the School Department, not the Council does procurement.

Jenn Martin, 86 Allan Avenue; Ms. Martin said she was representing both the Safe Routes to School Task Force and Transportation Advisory Group. Safe Routes has supported reduced or eliminated bus fees for years. Regardless of the decision, there should be a plan to pick up more students in the one-two mile radius for the middle and high schools, along with a plan to make routes more convenient and appealing. She also said that after school programs should also be considered for increased bus routes as an area of equity concern.

Draft text for a resolution was proposed, and due to the late hour, it was decided that this would be reviewed at a later meeting. It was decided that a new item would be docketed to pass a resolution on school bus fees.

Tonight, some broad goals have been laid out: to establish equity, address CAP goals, to refrain from taking money out of the teaching budget, and the challenge to find a sustainable funding source.

Councilor Bowman moved to Hold for Public Safety & Transportation which carried 6-0 (Councilor Lipof not voting).

Councilor Humphrey moved Hold for Programs & Services which carried 7-0.

Both Committees adjourned at 10:24pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Brenda Noel, Vice Chair**



October 28, 2021

Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer  
John Lojek, Commissioner of Inspectional Services  
John Carmichael, Jr., Chief of Police

*RE: Following up discussion of #49-20(3) relating to leaf blower enforcement*

Dear COO Yeo, Commissioner Lojek and Chief Carmichael,

Thank you for attending the discussion of the leaf blower enforcement on Wednesday, October 20, in a joint meeting of the Programs & Services and Public Safety & Transportation Committees of the Council. As you know, both Committees voted to hold the above item.

The Programs & Services Committee also agreed to send a letter through the Acting Chair, Vice-Chair Noel, to recommend some ideas for you to consider in enhancing enforcement of this important regulation for the health and welfare of both residents and landscaping personnel. The Committees may request you return after some further experience to see what progress has been made and to discuss possible next steps, if any.

Ultimately the success of the effort will require an unusual cross-cooperation among both Inspectional Services and the Police. That a part-time individual has been hired to help inform landscapers of their obligation, leaving rapid response in the hands of the police, is a welcome sign. (It was disappointing, however, to learn that the new hire is not bilingual, since language barriers are reported as a challenge to enforcement. We hope that he might be aided somehow in this regard to enhance his success in his work.). When the Committees take this item up again, we would welcome having him join us to describe his experience and offer advice after some time on the job. In the meantime, here are some of the ideas, some of which were discussed on Wednesday:

- **Updating the online ordinances:** Currently, the City Ordinances, which are updated in print form every five years, but updated unofficially on a regular basis, have not yet incorporated the provisions passed last May and effective Labor Day this year. President Albright mentioned at the meeting that this is something which the Clerk of the Council might help with, though she and her staff will need the assistance of the Law Department as it should review the updated noise ordinance as a whole.
- **Updating the leaf blower brochure:** The City has prepared a brochure, currently available on the Inspectional Services website, that needs updating to reflect the new rules. We note that it is bilingual, and we believe that effective communication to those using the devices is needed.
- **Enhancing the registration application:** Currently, the application requires leaf-blower operator certification that the operator understands the new rules. It would enhance enforcement if the application itself, as Commissioner Lojek indicated at our meeting, might be expanded to summarize the new rules. The advent of online permitting may lead to a swift click-through without fully understanding the application, so it should acknowledge that these new requirements, at a minimum, may include:
  - Annual registration and sticker display on each vehicle.

## #49-20(3)

- Identifying information (spelled out) on each vehicle, including the responsible person to call.
- Operation of no equipment greater than 65db on the machine in any season.
- Use of electric-only equipment from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
- Operation of leaf-blowers allowed only during certain hours, and not on Sundays or legal holidays (including Monday holidays celebrated in Newton).
- Fines for violations, and suspension of operations in Newton for multiple violations while registered.
- **Making sure large users are aware of the new rules:** These include municipal agencies and large users with their own staff and equipment, such as schools and colleges.
- **Helping our enforcement personnel work together with affected citizens:**
  - Cross-refencing police and ISD enforcement experiences with landscapers (Several of the violators on the police logs are not yet registered).
  - Ensuring tickets follow warnings (Two landscapers have received multiple warnings in the logs provided).
  - A welcoming protocol for citizen complaints (Currently citizens are asked to give not only the address of the violation, but also their name and their phone number. Some citizens might be afraid to disclose their identity without some sense it would be protected).
  - Awareness that there are multiple leaf-blower related rules which might usually show up in the police logs. For example, log references to leaf blowers as being in compliance do not reference whether the landscaper, not just the leaf-blower, complied with such non-equipment related aspects such as hourly limits, registration, visible identification or other requirements of the updated ordinance.
  - Analyzing response times to see whether they impact effective enforcement, as a delay may allow reported violators to leave the premises (This response time analysis recognizes that other public safety matters may take priority).
  - Warnings and tickets to property owners whose landscapers violate the rules and are unregistered at the time.
  - Education that compliant models can look almost identical to non-compliant models (easy to mistake for one another). Landscapers may use a mix of compliant and non-compliant models, so each blower should still be verified by checking its noise rating on the manufacturer's sticker. This mix of equipment will require a check of each machine, not just the one which may be first offered to the inspector, or the officer involved (Please see the photo below from one manufacturer showing machines which may seem identical but are not).
  - ISD adopts a dedicated phone line, webpage, and/or email for complaints and information as it will need to assess a pattern of violations to see when and if a suspension is warranted.
  - Helping our personnel use protective equipment, as may be appropriate, which may also be advisable for those operating the equipment – including City personnel - but

often rarely seen. See <https://www.stihlusa.com/information/how-to-guides/leaf-blower-safety-tips/>

We are sure that there are other ideas to help the enforcement effort succeed, and we look forward to continuing the conversation with you.

Sincerely,



Councilor Brenda Noel,  
Vice Chair, Programs and Services Committee

CC: City Council  
Mayor Ruthanne Fuller  
Alissa Ocasio Giuliani, City Solicitor



BR 500

65db



BR 600

75db



BR 700

75db



BR 700 X

75db

**Nathan Giacalone**

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**From:** Bill Humphrey  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 20, 2021 12:06 PM  
**To:** Nathan Giacalone  
**Cc:** Brenda Noel  
**Subject:** draft resolution text on school buses for tonight

Hi Nathan – I was asked to put this draft text together in case we decide to use it during the meeting tonight. I'm sending it to you not necessarily for advanced distribution (not enough time realistically I assume) but so you have it on hand for your notes:

**Resolved: that the sense of the Council is that the Mayor should make available additional funding to the Newton Public Schools for the purposes of school bus pass fees being eliminated or significantly reduced to promote equity, advance our climate action goals, and reduce congestion in Newton.**

Sincerely,  
Bill Humphrey  
Newton Ward 5 Councilor  
712 Chestnut St Newton MA 02468  
617-862-2045

**Nathan Giacalone**

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**From:** Marc C. Laredo  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 20, 2021 4:26 PM  
**To:** Nathan Giacalone; City Council  
**Subject:** Re: School Bus Draft Resolution

Colleagues,

During our budget deliberations in June, there was considerable opposition to bus fees but also concern that it was too late in the budget process to do anything about it. As I have stated on multiple occasions, I think that bus fees are wrong for a number of reasons, including that they penalize certain students for redistricting decisions that are made by the school system (students closer to school do not need a bus while those further away do) and they are completely inconsistent with the goals of our Climate Action Plan. Moreover, simply reducing them is not enough.

In advance of tonight's meeting on bus fees, I respectfully suggest that if it is the will of the City Council that we should not have school bus fees, then that has to be stated firmly and unequivocally. Moreover, the Council should affirmatively state that it will not support a school budget that has bus fees in it. Unless the City Council issues a firm, clear directive, we are likely to be in exactly the same situation during our next budget deliberations as we were this year.

While you are welcome to reply to me individually, please do not reply all because of the open meeting law. I ask that this email be made part of our record.

Thanks,

Marc

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**From:** Nathan Giacalone <[ngiacalone@newtonma.gov](mailto:ngiacalone@newtonma.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 20, 2021 2:47 PM  
**To:** City Council <[citycouncil@newtonma.gov](mailto:citycouncil@newtonma.gov)>  
**Subject:** School Bus Draft Resolution

Good afternoon Councilors,

Please see the draft resolution text below provided by Councilor Humphrey for item #271-21 which will be discussed jointly between Programs & Services and Public Safety & Transportation tonight. Please let me know if there are any questions.

**Resolved: that the sense of the Council is that the Mayor should make available additional funding to the Newton Public Schools for the purposes of school bus pass fees being eliminated or significantly reduced to promote equity, advance our climate action goals, and reduce congestion in Newton.**

Best,  
Nathan

**Nathan Giacalone  
Committee Clerk  
Office of the City Council  
617-796-1212**