



## Finance Committee Report

### City of Newton In City Council

**Monday, November 14, 2022**

Present: Councilors Grossman (Chair), Gentile, Kalis, Malakie, Oliver, Norton and Humphrey

Absent: Councilor Noel

City staff present: Comptroller Steve Curley, Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux, Deputy Director of Public Works Shawna Sullivan, Police Chief John Carmichael, Fire Chief Greg Gentile, Deputy Fire Chief Michael Bianchi, Director of Planning and Development Barney Heath, Director of IT Joe Mulvey, Senior Financial Analyst Perry Rosenfield, Senior Financial Analyst Connor Roach

#### Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

##### **#499-22      Appropriate \$150,000 from Certified Free Cash**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) from June 30, 2022 Certified Free Cash for the purpose of purchasing the replacement of a 2004 trackless sidewalk clearing tractor.

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 6-0 (Councilor Norton not voting)**

**Note:**      Deputy Commissioner of Public Works Shawna Sullivan stated that this equipment is vital to DPW's snow clearing operations in every storm. The existing machine has a \$40,000 repair cost and is far beyond its useful life.

Councilors asked the following questions:

Q: If the existing piece of equipment would be viable after the \$40,000 repair cost, why make the \$150,000 investment in a new machine?

A: Deputy Commissioner Sullivan stated that the materials required to fix the machine aren't available due to supply chain constraints. She added that even if supply chain issues were to clear up, she believes the equipment is beyond its useful life, and that they've spent approximately \$30,000 to repair it in the past two years.

Q: What is the importance of trackless snow equipment?

A: Deputy Commissioner Sullivan explained that trackless snow equipment is more maneuverable and has a wider plow blade, making it more suitable for sidewalk clearing.

Q: What is DPW's sourcing and purchasing process for this equipment and has the price increased due to the supply chain restraints?

A: Deputy Commissioner Sullivan explained that this type of equipment is generally backordered until at least April 2023 but is available to the City now due to another municipality's cancelled order. She added that this is about a 30% increase in price, which was expected.

Q: How many units does DPW have for clearing sidewalks and how many miles are anticipated clearing this year?

A: Deputy Commissioner Sullivan stated that the DPW has 6 units for clearing. She added that while the DPW is waiting for Safe Routes to School to give feedback on their sidewalk clearing maps, they increased their sidewalk clearing goals by half a mile, bringing the total to 84.5 miles.

Q: Is the equipment being bought out of a state contract?

A: Deputy Commissioner Sullivan was unsure but followed up after the meeting to clarify that the answer is yes, this machine is being purchased through a state contract.

Councilors made the following comments:

A Councilor stated that purchasing equipment off a state contract typically assures that the DPW is getting a competitive price.

Councilor Kalis motioned to approve which passed 6-0 with Councilor Norton not voting.

**Referred to Public Safety & Transportation and Finance Committees**

**#495-22**

**Request to transfer \$55,000 from Financial Services Full Time Salaries**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of fifty-five thousand dollars (\$55,000) from Acct #0111049-511001 Financial Services Full Time Salaries to a Department 111-Non-Lapsing Police Technology Upgrade Account.

**Public Safety & Transportation Committee Approved 8-0 on 11/9/22**

**Action:**

**Finance Approved 7-0**

**Note:** Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux explained that the funding for this item would come from the Financial Services Department. Ms. Lemieux anticipates budgetary savings in this department due to the amount of open positions that have not been filled. She added that while these funds are going into a non-lapsing account, these funds will likely be spent quickly.

IT Director Joe Mulvey stated that due to Police IT turnover in April, it was too late to consider modifying budgets in time for the end of the fiscal year. He added that there were numerous unanticipated investments associated with backing up the Police IT framework. Mr. Mulvey

pointed out that there was also a surprise \$14,000 cost to replace connectivity to Dudley Rd. after the cable was damaged by natural elements. It was noted to the Committee that all funds will go into the police project.

Police Chief John Carmichael stated that when the City IT Department took over, the systems were outdated. He noted that they also brought in a company named Delphi to assist with IT needs, and that Delphi and the City's IT efforts have been of tremendous help. Chief Carmichael concluded by saying that this project is extremely important for the department due to the complexity and sensitivity of police IT.

Councilors asked the following questions:

Q: What is a Department 111 Account?

A: Ms. Lemieux explained that Department 111 is for the City IT Department and there will be no police overtime associated with this project.

Q: Were the operating systems upgrades as well?

A: Mr. Mulvey stated that yes, all new computers will be operating on Windows 11.

Councilors made the following comments:

A Councilor appreciated that the Committee had been kept in the loop on this situation and agrees that this work is overdue, citing the importance of police IT being at modern security standards.

Councilor Humphrey motioned to approve which passed unanimously.

**Referred to Public Safety & Transportation and Finance Committees**

**#483-22 Request to transfer \$800,000 from the June 30, 2022 Certified Free Cash**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of eight-hundred thousand dollars (\$800,000) from June 30,2022 Certified Free Cash to fund the replacement of Fire Engine 7.

**Public Safety & Transportation Committee Approved 8-0 on 11/9/22**  
**Action: Finance Approved as amended to include fire trucks and equipment 7-0**

**Note:** Fire Chief Greg Gentile stated that the department has interviewed 3 companies, all with similar costs, and has selected Bulldog Apparatus with a KME Engine. He added that the department aims to replace their engines every 15 years, and with a lead time of 12-18 months, the department believes that now is the right time to buy this replacement. Chief Gentile added that they are using a cooperative contract with the Houston-Galveston Area Council, which ensures fair pricing. His final note was that once the new Engine 7 is in place, the current Engine 7 will replace their 25-year-old spare apparatus.

Assistant Fire Chief Mike Bianchi stated that this truck was designed with turning radius and maneuverability in mind. The steering system chosen allowed them to make the vehicle smaller without taking off necessary equipment, while also reducing maintenance.

Councilors asked the following questions:

Q: How did the City end up working with an Area Council in Texas?

A: Fire Chief Gentile explained that they've purchased through this cooperative on 3 separate occasions. Both former Fire Chiefs Proia and Luchetti had used this cooperative in the past.

Q: Does the Department have experience with this vendor?

A: Fire Chief Gentile stated that while they do not have any prior experience with this vendor, they did reach out to other municipalities who have, such as Quincy, and they are satisfied.

Q: What is the relationship between Bulldog and KME?

A: Fire Chief Gentile explained that Bulldog is the vendor, and KME is the brand.

Q: How quickly does the Fire Department plan to pay for this truck, given the various time-based options in the proposal?

A: Ms. Lemieux stated that the City has not negotiated a payment option yet. However, given that Bulldog is a new vendor, it's unlikely that the City will pay 100% upfront.

Q: What would be done with any leftover money if the City chooses an aggressive payment option?

A: Ms. Lemieux explained that extra money may be used for fire equipment for the new engine if necessary. Any additional money after the engine is fully equipped would revert to free cash.

Q: How many spare vehicles does the Fire Department have and where are they housed?

A: Fire Chief Gentile stated that the department has a spare ladder truck that lives at Station 10, two spare engine companies that live at Station 2, and a spare engine living at Station 7. All are operable if needed. He added that the NFA recommends retiring an engine after 25 years, which will be the age of the spare engine at the time Engine 7 is in place.

Councilors made the following comments:

A Councilor noted that there had been some concern regarding the language of the item and suggested that the item could be amended to say "...for a fire truck and fire truck equipment".

Councilor Oliver motioned to amend the item to include fire trucks and equipment, which passed unanimously.

Councilor Oliver motioned to approve the item as amended, which passed unanimously.

**498-22      Appropriate \$33,333 from Transportation Mitigation funds**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting approval to spend thirty-three thousand, three hundred thirty-three dollars (\$33,333) in transportation mitigation funds from the 15 Riverdale Avenue development for NewMo operations consistent with the transportation demand management plan set out in Special Permit #01-20 and the approved Request for Determination of Insubstantial Change dated 2/2/22.

**Action:**      **Finance Approved 7-0**

**Note:**      Planning Director Barney Heath requested that the money that was initially set aside for the TMA shuttle operating in Watertown be reappropriated to NewMo. Mr. Heath stated that the TMA shuttle will not operate in Newton, and is not popular among riders, so it would be best to spend that money elsewhere. He added that while they are requesting city funds here, they are constantly looking for other sources of funding, as NewMo is on an upward projection of ridership.

Councilors asked the following questions:

Q: How does the Planning Department envision NewMo progressing with respect to developments and traffic mitigation efforts?

A: Director Heath explained that NewMo is the most successful transportation demand project they have done. Oftentimes multiple people share a vehicle while using NewMo, which helps take cars off the road.

Councilor Oliver motioned to approve.

The Committee adjourned at 7:45 PM

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Rebecca Walker Grossman, Chair**