



Public Facilities Committee Report

City of Newton

In City Council

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

Present: Councilors Crossley (Chair), Leary, Norton, Kelley, Gentile, Danberg, Laredo, Lappin, Albright, Downs, Kalis, Krintzman

City Staff Present: Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle, DPW Director of Streets Shane Mark, Chief of Staff Amy Hamel, Director of Utilities Ted Jerdee, City Engineer Lou Taverna, Director of Sustainable Materials Management Waneta Trabert, DPW Director of Finance Jack Cowell, DPW Director of Transportation Jason Sobel, Customer Service Manager Garrett Ross, Chief Operations Officer Jonathan Yeo

#146-19 Eversource petition for a Grant of Location in Walnut Street

EVERSOURCE petitioning for a grant of location to install:

- 30' \pm of 4" conduit in FOSTER STREET from Pole #37/1 southeasterly thence turning southerly to Walnut Street,
- 156' \pm of 4" conduit in WALNUT STREET from the intersection of Foster Street southerly to a proposed manhole
- 21' of "conduit in WALNUT STREET from proposed Manhole #30684 westerly to the property line of 241 Walnut Street.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 6-0 (Danberg, Norton not Voting)**

Note: Eversource Representative Karen Johnson presented the request to install 207' \pm of conduit in Walnut Street and Foster Street for the purpose of undergrounding conduit to provide electric service to the Washington Place Development at 850 Washington Street. Ms. Johnson stated that she is not familiar with the details relative to service changes for a customer on Foster Street but provided her contact information for the customer to follow up.

The Public Hearing was Opened.

Gerard Slattery, 221-227 Walnut Street, questioned whether the proposed work will affect service at 227R Walnut Street.

Ms. Johnson stated that she does not believe that the work will affect any properties to the north of the development on Walnut Street and confirmed that the new service will be underground. Seeing no other member of the public who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed. City Engineer Lou Taverna confirmed that the Engineering Department has no concerns about the request for this grant of location. With that, Councilor Lappin motioned to approve the item which carried unanimously.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**#159-19 Authorization for the MWRA grant/loan program for sewer improvements**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to accept and expend a grant of three million four hundred thirty-five thousand dollars (\$3,435,000) from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and authorization to borrow one million one hundred forty-five thousand dollars (\$1,145,000) as part of the MWRA interest free Phase 12 loan/grant (75%/25%) program for the purpose of funding sewer improvements.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

Note: Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle presented the request to accept and expend \$3,435,000 in grant funding as well a no interest loan of \$1,145,000 as part of the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority grant/loan program for sewer improvements that reduce inflow and infiltration. Director of Utilities Ted Jerdee noted that these funds will be used for the project area that includes parts of Newton Highlands, Upper Falls, Oak Hill and Thompsonville. The proposed work includes relining of 249 sewer manholes and 50,000 feet of sewer main. Mr. Jerdee noted that the area has been inspected and is currently being assessed. After the assessment, the project will be designed. Mr. Jerdee stated that it is anticipated that construction will begin in Fall 2020. He confirmed that the work will be going out to bid in Spring/Summer 2019. Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request. Councilor Lappin motioned to approve the item which carried unanimously. City Engineer Lou Taverna confirmed that Public Works will present an update to the Committee relative to the sewer improvement program.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees**#160-19 Bond authorization for \$2.7 million for water main improvements**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate the sum of three million two hundred thousand dollars (\$3,200,000) from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of providing funding for the continuation of the implementation of the City's Water Main Improvement Plan.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

Note: City Engineer Lou Taverna presented the request to appropriate \$3.2 million dollars from bonded indebtedness for water main improvements. Mr. Taverna explained that the request for funds is the City's portion of funding for the Water Main Improvement Plan and noted that the Council has recently approved a no interest \$1.3 million-dollar loan from the MWRA to fund this rehabilitation work. Mr. Taverna stated that the proposed work includes improvements to mains on Chestnut Street between Beacon and Boylston Street. He noted that the City is in the process of testing at this location to determine pipe condition. Additional work includes rehabilitation of the water main on Ward Street between Waverley and Centre Street. Mr. Taverna noted that the MWRA has a program to replace water main in the vicinity and the City is hoping to work with the MWRA to coordinate additional work. Director of Utilities Ted Jerdee noted that the City has rehabilitated 184 miles out its 300 miles of water mains since

2004. Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request. Councilor Laredo moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#155-19 Transfer of \$75,000 for APS signal installation

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) from Budget Reserve for the purpose of funding Phase 2 of 3 phases of the citywide APS Installation Project.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

Note: Commissioner McGonagle presented the request for \$75,000 to fund the upgrading of Audible Pedestrian Signals. The Commissioner noted that the City has committed to upgrading the audible pedestrian signals throughout the city over the course of three years. The Commissioner noted that DPW is working with the City's ADA Coordinator on the replacement plan, which is anticipated to cost \$300,000. He stated that the requested \$75,000 is part of Phase II and noted that the City received a grant for \$50,000. Director of Transportation Jason Sobel confirmed that the replacement of signals will require oversight, but very little staff time. Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request and voted unanimously in favor of a motion to approve the item from Councilor Kelley.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#156-19 Transfer of \$75,000 for equipment to paint pavement markings and crosswalks

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) from Budget Reserve for the purpose of purchasing capital equipment to enable the Transportation Division of the Department of Public Works to paint crosswalks and various pavement markings in-house.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

Note: Commissioner McGonagle presented the request for \$75,000 for equipment to paint pavement markings and crosswalks. The Commissioner stated that there is a two-month lead time and confirmed that the equipment will be available to begin painting in July. The Commissioner noted that two staff positions will be moved from the Highway Division to accomplish additional pavement markings and crosswalks. A Committee member questioned whether this equipment will allow the department to paint colored crosswalks. The Commissioner stated that he witnessed the application of the colored crosswalks, which is easy but noted that the staff is still debating the relative safety of the colored paint; striped crosswalks are more highly visible. Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request and voted unanimously in favor of a motion to approve from Councilor Lappin.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#157-19 Transfer of \$150,000 for street light repairs

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) from Budget Reserve for the purpose of funding street light repairs.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

Note: Commissioner McGonagle presented the request for \$150,000 for the purposes of funding Phase II (year 2 of 3 years) of the City's street light repairs. The Commissioner noted that the City has a backlog of streetlight knockdowns totaling \$450,000. The City is replacing the knocked down street lights over the course of three years. The Commissioner confirmed that the City sees approximately 1-2 streetlight knockdowns each month at a cost of \$10,000 each. Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request and voted unanimously in favor of a motion to approve from Councilor Kelley.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#153-19 **Authorization of a 5-year contract for solid waste collection**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to enter into a contract for solid waste and recycling collection and disposal services for a term of five years.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

Note: Commissioner McGonagle presented the request for authorization to enter into a 5-year contract for solid waste collection. The Chair explained that authorization of the 5-year contract will allow the administration to begin negotiations for a 5-year contract for solid waste removal rather than the standard 3-year lease term. Chief Operations Officer Jonathan Yeo explained that a 5-year lease term will may allow the City to negotiate a better rate than a 3-year lease term.

A Committee member questioned whether it is the intent to go out to bid or negotiate with the current vendor. The Commissioner confirmed that it is the intent to negotiate with the current vendor noting that a change in service provider can be very disruptive to residents. The Commissioner noted that a contract with a new vendor would require significant investment and would not likely achieve cost reductions. Committee members acknowledged that a change in service can be disruptive to residents but encouraged the Commissioner to put the contract out to bid if negotiations are unsuccessful. It was noted that the current vendor worked collaboratively with the City in Summer 2018 to hold down costs to the City when the recyclables market diminished. COO Jonathan Yeo noted that the City is in the process of investigating some strategies to achieve cost savings (i.e. changes to the bulky waste program). A Committee member asked the Commissioner to investigate incentives for reducing the amount of trash generated. Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request and voted unanimously in favor of a motion to approve from Councilor Danberg.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#154-19 **Authorization of a 5-year lease for electric and hybrid vehicles**

HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to enter into a 5-year lease agreement for electric and hybrid vehicles for the purpose of replacing its aging sedan fleet and to

provide reliable transportation to staff, lower maintenance costs, and implement an efficient City Hall vehicle pool program.

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 8-0**

Note: Commissioner McGonagle presented the request for authorization to enter into a 5-year lease agreement to acquire electric vehicles. The Commissioner stated that the 5-year lease will allow the City to replace their aging sedan fleet with electric vehicles. A Committee member noted that it is typically recommended that cars are traded-in or sold at approximately 5 years to maximize their value and questioned whether the City will return to buying vehicles after the 5-year lease term. The Commissioner noted that leasing the vehicles allows the City to take advantage of a federal incentive (\$7,000/per vehicle) that is not available for municipalities purchasing electric vehicles, as well as grant funding. He confirmed that the City's staggered replacement program will allow the City to replace existing electric vehicles at a strategic rate. The Commissioner confirmed that some additional cost savings will be achieved due to the reduced level of required maintenance for electric vehicles. Committee members expressed no concerns relative to the request. Councilor Norton motioned to approve the item which carried unanimously.

The Committee adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Crossley, Chair