



Public Safety & Transportation Committee Report

City of Newton **In City Council**

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Present: Councilors Auchincloss (Chair), Malakie, Lipof, Bowman, Downs, Markiewicz and Grossman

Absent: Councilor Ciccone

City Staff: Captain Paul Anastasia, Newton Police Department

Others Present: Noel Diaz, Newton Limos Company, LLC. ; Jose Gregorio Cedeno, Bace Limousine Services, LLC. and Ismail Unkoc, Izmo Limo, LLC.

#107-20 Requesting new public auto license

NOEL DIAZ, 9 Elmwood Park, #2, Newtonville, MA 02460 requesting **one (1) new public auto license** for Newton Limos Company, LLC.

Action: **Public Safety & Transportation Approved 7-0**

Note: Docket items #107-20, #108-20 and #129-20 were discussed together. Please refer to docket #129-20 for discussion on these items.

#108-20 Requesting new public auto license

JOSE GREGORIO CEDENO, 9 Elmwood Park, Newtonville, MA 02460 requesting **one (1) new public auto license** for Bace Limousine Services, LLC.

Action: **Public Safety & Transportation Approved 7-0**

Note: Docket items #107-20, #108-20 and #129-20 were discussed together. Please refer to docket #129-20 for discussion on these items.

#129-20 Requesting new public auto license

ISMAIL UNKOC 184 River Street, West Newton, MA 02465 requesting **one (1) new public auto license** for Izmo Limo, LLC.

Action: **Public Safety & Transportation Approved 7-0**

Note: Docket items #107-20, #108-20 and #129-20 were discussed together.

Captain Anastasia, Mr. Diaz, Mr. Cedeno and Mr. Unkoc joined the Committee for discussion on these items.

Captain Anastasia stated Newton Limos Company, LLC and Bace Limousine Services, LLC. were inspected on February 25, and Izmo Limo, LLC. was inspected on February 24; all vehicles passed inspection by City Ordinance requirements.

Chair Auchincloss stated that the City Council will be voting on these actions on March 16, 2020. If approved, Council Orders will be forwarded after the 20-day waiting period.

Without discussion, Councilor Markiewicz made a motion to approve these new public auto license requests. Committee members agreed 7-0.

#75-20 Requesting ordinance amendment to procedure for obtaining licenses
CAPTAIN ANASTASIA, NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT requesting an amendment to **Chapter 19-332 (e) Procedure for obtaining licenses** in the following sentence: ...The committee shall forward its recommendations for approval or denial to the full city council during the month of ~~January~~ December of each year.

Action: **Public Safety & Transportation Approved 7-0**

Note: Docket items #75-20 and #158-20 were discussed together. Please refer to docket #158-20 for discussion on these items.

#158-20 Requesting ordinance amendment to procedure for obtaining licenses for vans
CAPTAIN ANASTASIA, NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT requesting an amendment to **Chapter 19-339 (g) Van licenses. Procedure for renewal of van licenses:** in the following sentence: ...The committee shall forward its recommendations for approval or denial to the full city council during the month of ~~January~~ December of each year.

Action: **Public Safety & Transportation Approved 7-0**

Note: Docket items #75-20 and #158-20 were discussed together.

Captain Anastasia joined the Committee for discussion on this item. He stated that the purpose of these docket items is because at the end of a City Council term (every 2 years) all remaining items are voted out in December. No item can be carried over to January for a City Council vote. If City Council, does not vote on the license requests in December all new material would have to be re-docketed for this Committees consideration and approval then forwarded to City Council for final action.

Without discussion, Councilor Markiewicz made a motion to approve docket #75-20 and Councilor Downs made a motion to approve docket #158-20. Committee members agreed 7-0.

Chairs: Note: The Committee will dedicate time to discussing its priorities for the term, in light of public comment, input from civic groups, and discussion with the administration.

Note: Chair Auchincloss stated that he and the vice-chair had met with the mayor, twice, and that the Committee had an in-depth conversation with the Chief Operating Officer and department leaders. The Committee also received input from the public and various civic groups. The chair wanted the Committee to discuss priorities based on two dimensions: what was most important, and what this Committee was best situated to accomplish.

Councilor Downs stated that public comment and emails received broke down into the following categories:

- 1) Transit
- 2) Walking
- 3) Biking

Comments from the public regarding transit:

- Coordinate shuttles.
- Use data from NewMO to determine the demands.
- Publicize shuttles, schedules, services, costs and to ensure that the Riverside project does not compromise future regional rail.
- Bus lines and rail lines.
- Shorter headways and stops.
- School buses.
- Better parking demand management including geographic hotspots.

Comments and suggestions from Committee members regarding transit:

- Regarding the Riverside project, it was stated that this Committee has an opportunity to push forward to determine that regional rail makes a place for the station including a different platform and a different entry. It was stated that the Mayor is fully confident that site design would allow options in order to be completely effective.
- Suggestions were made to include MBTA and Transit Matters discussions during Land Use Committee meetings to understand projects.
- Regarding school buses, it was stated that Councilors Bowman and Downs are members of the School Transportation Working Group. It is necessary to optimize school buses making it easier for parents to pay in small installments and this should be implemented in the next school year. Due to an increase in rent, it is necessary to find bus parking. It is necessary to integrate bus parking with more transportation in the City. This Committee can assist with these and create a discussion docket item.

Comments from the public regarding walking:

- Green Newton and Safe Routes to School have been working on a sidewalk priority plan. This Committee can create a discussion docket item to join the Public Facilities Committee.

- Vision Zero seeks to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries nationwide while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all, it relates to zero crashes and zero injuries. Vision Zero uses a set of tools including funding. If a Vision Zero program is adopted, Safe Routes to School and TAG would be included.
- TAG has created a lighting plan. Currently, the status is unknown on the prioritization and implementation of this program.
- Snow clearance and shrub clearance.
- School access and crossing guards.
- Enforce sidewalk parking.
- Abolish parking minimums.

Comments, suggestions and questions from Committee members regarding walking:

- Regarding crossing guards, what department is responsible and can make changes, what is encompassed in the job description, what other roles can a crossing guard take, who is responsible for supervising, etc. It is necessary to determine crossing guard locations and how are locations determined. It was asked how the structure of the crossing guard position can change to fill and compensate their roles. Methodology is a problem. Structural intersections are challenges where engineering problems exist. If an intersection is dangerous, warranting a crossing guard then an engineering solution is necessary when a crossing guard is not present. Crossing guards is a latent demand. It was stated that Vision Zero would not be used to prioritize intersections. A suggestion was made to create a working group between the Administration, City Council, Police Department and Safe Routes to School.
- Vision Zero is a commitment to be safer and is data backed by conducting analysis on crash locations and near misses. Vision Zero begins with "SAFETY FIRST" over everything else.
- It is necessary that this Committee receive regular updates on road safety. We should know and understand vehicular, pedestrian and crash locations and the types of crashes through the Police Department and Ms. Freedman, Director of Transportation Planning Department.
- Does Vision Zero assist with better road designs to get more people walking?
- It was asked if Vision Zero could be used during the appeals process, special permits or traffic deliberations to help City Council make determinations?
- Newton could adopt Vision Zero because we support moving towards this, indicating the City is putting safety first.

Comments from the public regarding biking:

- Green Newton and Bike Newton have requested a low stress mobility network along with bike lanes on high-speed streets. This is a strategy to get to a network with fewer dollars to prioritize gaps that are preventing cyclists to use side streets that connect to main streets. Green Newton and Bike Newton would like to see the streets mapped using a Waze app. to assist you. A priority is to make Commonwealth Avenue Carriage Way into a two-way bike lane travel. Mr. Sobel, Director of Transportation is working on this.
- Additional bike parking is necessary at schools.
- The Administration is working on implementing blue bikes.

- There is a lack of understanding and communication around transportation issues. For example, residents cannot find traffic calming on the City's web site which is on the Department Public Works, Traffic Council and the Planning Department web pages. It is necessary to coordinate this issue, which may be an Administration issue.

Comments from Committee members regarding biking:

- Transparency is necessary.
- Regarding street paving, criteria is imperative on how streets are ranked.

Summary of priorities:

- Neighborhood parking plans.
- Buses.
- Abolish parking minimums.
- Safe Routes to School.
- Crossing guards.
- Vision-Zero.
- Prioritizing connectors for cycling.
- Low-stress mobility network.
- Better constituent interface for traffic calming.

Committee members choices on priorities:

- Better constituent interface for traffic calming. It is necessary to make traffic calming easier to find on the website. Explain the process, how rankings are conducted, how can constituents make a request and explain the status making traffic calming more transparent. It is important to place an updated traffic calming list on the website.
- Neighborhood parking plan for the Newton South High School area.
- Vision-Zero. Adopt a date to assist with better making decisions and to address safety issues. To assist with crossing guard issues, it is necessary for children to walk, bike and travel alone to school safely.
- Abolish parking minimums.

#128-20 Resolution to the State Legislature to support funding for transportation
COUNCILORS DOWNS, AUCHINCLOSS AND BOWMAN requesting a RESOLUTION to the STATE LEGISLATURE supporting additional funding for CLEAN, EQUITABLE transportation.

Action: **Public Safety & Transportation Approved 6-0, Councilor Lipof not voting**

Note: Committee members were provided with a Resolution, attached to this report.

Councilor Downs stated that the House will be voting on a transportation funding bill that would release money and raise additional funds for transit issues, Chapter 90 and other items that would help with better transit issues, drivers and buses. She then said that she created this Resolution hoping to be more effective than a letter. Perhaps the House may vote on this before Newton City Council has a chance to vote, probably not the Senate. The Transportation for Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) put this Resolution template together. It will be stronger to join with colleagues across the state with one statement.

Committee members questions and answers:

- Does this committee want to request certain funding mechanisms?
- Does this Committee want to add additional detail to this resolution?
- Is this Resolution based on other community letters?
- Are other communities submitting Resolutions?
- Should this committee suggest how they raise the money? Gas tax and the Climate Action Plan are very broad-based.
- Does this Committee want to capture electrical vehicles in the resolution? The Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) puts a price on carbon that is related to transportation. There is a proposal for local municipalities to have their own funding source to use for transportation initiatives, not a local gas tax. It would be preferable in Newton, to use vehicle miles traveled.
- Housing conversations are difficult in the City, it is necessary to have better transportation in the City to help with housing.

Without further discussion, Councilor Bowman made a motion to approve this Resolution. Committee members agreed 6-0, Councilor Lipof not voting.

At approximately, 9:40 p.m. Councilor Downs made a motion to adjourn. Committee members agreed 6-0, Councilor Lipof not voting.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacob D. Auchincloss, Chair

Councilors Downs, Auchincloss and Bowman.

RECEIVED

RESOLUTION

2020 FEB -3 AM 8:57

Whereas, the City of Newton is underserved by the region's transportation network with inaccessible train stations, infrequent heavy rail and north-south bus service, and a line nearly at capacity, underfunded roadway maintenance, congested roads, and carbon emissions and tailpipe pollution that threaten our climate and air quality and public health, and

Whereas, the Massachusetts Municipal Association 2020 Annual Meeting overwhelmingly supported a Resolution supporting a local-state-federal partnership to address the Commonwealth's transportation system needs and challenges, identifying many solutions while calling upon the legislature to enact bold transportation finance legislation before the end of the 2019-2020 legislative session, and

Whereas, it being a duty of government at all levels to ensure that we have a modern, well-functioning transportation system; therefore

The Newton City Council urges the State Legislature to pursue solutions, including additional revenue to fund State of Good Repair on our roads, bridges and public transportation network, additional transit capacity, clean transportation, equitable access and improved transportation choices for disadvantaged populations, and transformative investments to ensure our regional economic competitiveness.

The Newton City Council urges the legislature to properly fund the Chapter 90 program to ensure that our local roads are well maintained; to make the city's public transit infrastructure fully accessible, modern and high-capacity; to provide transportation alternatives that do not continually add automobile traffic to the City's crowded roadway network; and to support infrastructure investments that protect vulnerable road users.

The Newton City Council urges the legislature to raise dedicated revenue for transportation, through increases to the state motor fuels tax, which is constitutionally protected for transportation yet has increased by only 14% since 1991, while MBTA fares have more than doubled in the same period of time; through increased and appropriate fees on ride-share service to help expand public transit capacity; through congestion pricing pilots that deliver demonstrable benefits to users of our crowded roads; through support of the Transportation and Climate Initiative, to lower greenhouse gas emissions and invest in clean and equitable transportation; through providing cities and towns with the authority to bring local and regional transportation investments to the ballot, as is common in jurisdictions throughout the United States, and through offsetting policies that protect lower income and vulnerable populations.

The Newton City Council urges its legislative delegation, and all Representatives and Senators to enact the foregoing provisions during the current legislative session in the

interests of City residents, workforce, and visitors, to help safeguard our prosperity and well-being.