

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

POST AUDIT & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE REPORT

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2008

Present: Ald. Albright (Chairman), Lennon, Swiston, Harney, Mansfield and Freedman

Absent: Ald. Coletti and Schnipper

Also present: Ald. Lappin

City staff present: A. Nicholas Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings) and Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk)

#33-02 ALD. LIPSITT requesting report on status of implementation of speed zone and truck exclusion ordinances adopted by the Board of Aldermen.

ACTION: **HELD 5-0 (Mansfield not voting)**

NOTE: The Committee reviewed a memo (attached) from the Traffic Engineer, Clint Schuckel, regarding the resolution of speed limit and truck exclusion regulations. The memo included the criteria the state uses for approving speed limits and truck exclusion. Mr. Schuckel also provided a list of locations where the state has not approved the truck exclusion or speed zone regulation. The list also has the traffic engineers recommend course of action, whether it is to conduct a study or rescind the regulation. The Committee felt that the Aldermen should review the list to determine if there are any issues surrounding the recommendation for a particular street.

Ald. Harney asked when the studies for the streets with that recommendation would be done. The studies will be done in March and submitted to the State in April, if they meet the State's criteria. Ald. Harney also stated that he has spoken with State Representative Kay Kahn regarding filing legislation giving municipalities the authority to regulate speed limits particularly on smaller, local roads. The Committee held the item until other Board members have had the opportunity to review and comment on the traffic engineer's list.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE: Please review the follow-up memo from Clint Schuckel, Traffic Engineer, regarding the speed limit and truck exclusion regulations following the report.

#178-04(3) ALD. LAPPIN requesting a report from the Commissioner of Public Buildings regarding why no progress has been made on the implementation of the construction project database approved by the Board of Aldermen on April 20, 2004.

ACTION: **HELD 5-0 (Mansfield not voting)**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell and Ald. Lappin joined the Committee for discussion of this item. The item was discussed at the last meeting and held to allow the Committee and Ald. Lappin an opportunity to see the proposed database. Ald. Lappin had an opportunity to view the draft database and she feels that there is one major field missing. She would like to see a field

within the database denoting who or what caused the problem or during which project stage the problem occurred (i.e. design, manufacture etc). The Commissioner felt that it was important not to create any liability issues by using a company or product name. Ald. Swiston suggested a field titled source that would define the problem as product design, manufacturing and so forth. Ald. Lappin also stated that there are no city projects listed in the database yet. The Committee asked the Commissioner who is responsible for populating the database. The Commissioner responded that the Public buildings Department would be the gatekeeper for the database. The Committee then requested that the Commissioner populate the database with at least five entries before the next Post Audit and Oversight Committee meeting. The Committee also questioned the Commissioner on access to the database. The Commissioner explained that the database would be public record and open to everybody. However, the Commissioner felt that it would be beneficial for the School Department to have access and possibly the ability to add to the database. The Committee requested that the Commissioner come up with a use policy and report to the Committee. With that, Ald. Swiston moved hold for discussion at the next meeting, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUB SAF & TRANS. AND POST AUDIT & OVERSIGHT

26-03 **ALD. COLETTI** requesting discussion with Executive Department and Fire Department regarding status of fire stations, repairs, and capital improvements in light of cuts in capital improvement plan of necessary health and safety repairs to redirect the emphasis on the fire station repair program.

PS&T NAN on 1/21/04

ACTION: **HELD 5-0 (Mansfield not voting)**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell provided the Committee with an update on the life safety repairs at all of the stations and the renovation of Station 4. Ald. Coletti had requested that the Committee discuss the status of the health and safety repairs in particular. Unfortunately, Ald. Coletti was at another meeting and could not contribute to the discussion. The health and safety repairs have begun and these types of repairs will occur at stations 1, 2, 3, 7 and 10. All life safety issues will be addressed at Station 4 during renovation.

Commissioner Parnell addressed the committee regarding the portion of ceiling that collapsed at Station 3 on Saturday during repairs. All work at the station has stopped and the Department of Environmental Protection has been notified. Ald. Lennon explained that many of the firefighters were concerned about possible friable asbestos and air quality due to the collapse. He stated that the air quality tests have come back clean. However, he was disappointed with the lack of communication of those results to the firefighters. The commissioner will share the meeting notes from his meeting with the Health Commissioner, Assistant Fire Chief Proia and Robert DeLuca from the Health Department. The contractor has stopped all work until everything is checked and if there is any type of asbestos, it will be abated. The Public Buildings Department has employed a hygienist, who will look at the stations before work is resumed.

The Commissioner updated the Committee on the progress of the renovations at Station 4. The schematics are almost complete and work on the station should begin in the upcoming months. The firefighters and equipment located at Station 4 will be moved to Station 1 during the renovation. Several Committee members asked if there was a plan for housing equipment and firefighters during the renovation of each station. The Commissioner responded that the Fire

Chief would be better able to provide that information. Ald. Coletti would also like further information regarding when the next fire station will be renovated. Two action items resulted from this discussion. First, Mr. Parnell was asked to bring the scope of work for all fire stations (the \$600K renovations) to the next meeting. In addition, the Fire Chief was asked to bring his operational plan for how Station 4 will continue to operate while the fire personnel are housed at Station 1 during renovation. Ald. Swiston moved hold in order to invite the Fire Chief and Executive Department to the next meeting to discuss the renovation of the stations.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE: The Committee reviewed a spreadsheet of financial items dealt with by the Board in 2007 that was attached to the agenda. There were several items where the funds had not been expended or not fully expended. The Committee asked for additional information on the following items for the next meeting: #230-06(B) NNHS Design Money, #141-07 basketball court Lower Falls Community Center, #120-07 Durant Kenrick Rehabilitation, #229-07 NSHS outstanding items, #192-07 Warren House rehabilitation, #209-07 wireless for elementary schools, #273-07 Rogers Street demolition, #270-07 Hamilton Grove, #257-07(2) Wabasso Street demolition and #305-07 van for library.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan S. Albright, Chairman