

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

Monday, May 18, 2009

Present: Ald. Albright, Brandel, Ciccone, Coletti, Danberg, Fischman, Freedman, Gentile, Harney, Hess-Mahan, Johnson, Lappin, Lennon, Linsky, Mansfield, Merrill, Parker, Salvucci, Sangiolo, Schnipper, Swiston, Vance, Yates and Baker.

**Resolution 10 - #70-09(4)** Resolution requesting the Mayor fund \$53,200 for senior transportation services including medical visits within 2 miles of the city, visits to houses of worship and visits to long term care facilities. Possible funding source - 2009 free cash and/or other sources.

**APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE TO BE SUBMITTED AS A RESOLUTION OUTSIDE THE BUDGET PROCESS**

**NOTE:** Ald. Lappin presented Resolution #10 – A resolution asking the Mayor to include \$53,200 in additional funding for senior transportation services from free cash. Ald. Lappin provided a brief history of senior transportation, noting that during the last budget cycle a similar resolution was passed and forwarded to the Mayor which he did not act upon. She acknowledged that Ald. Sangiolo had suggestions for other ways of funding the transportation services, and other pots of money that could be used. However it is not clear that those funds can be used. Residents are all hurting during these economic times, and the seniors are hurting the most. They are on fixed incomes and their savings are not what they were. This is basic services – being able to go to a doctor, to church or temple, or visit a loved one in a long term care facility. The Senior Center is using some grant money for this next year and that is why the amount that has been asked for is less than last year. Ald. Lappin is looking for the money to come out of 2009 free cash. The Mayor has just used free cash for the schools, and she is aware of the issues with the state. However, it would be remiss not to have it included in the budget as it is worth the money.

It was noted that unless the Mayor's Office can deal with this resolution tonight, the Board would not be able to approve the budget tonight. The suggestion was made to deal with it as a resolution outside the budget process. Ald. Lappin stated that she did not want to hold up the budget.

Ald. Sangiolo stated that she was in favor of reinstating the transportation funding that was cut in last year's budget, but was not in favor of using free cash. Ald. Sangiolo referred to page six of the Programs & Services Budget Report where Ouida Young was looking at several special permits that might be still open for translation. She did not know what else to do to give them the incentive to move forward. Newton Wellesley Hospital has made a verbal commitment to fund the transportation. The City should move forward more aggressively on this issue.

Ald. Lappin stated that it did not matter where the money came from the services should be restored. Ald. Johnson noted that there are other places to look and the City has not exhausted that. She believes that the Senior Center will continue to look for ways to fund it. She noted that the Law Department was developing a special permit spreadsheet which would be sent to the Committee Clerk when it was completed. She would prefer to wait on the resolution and continue to look at the private sector and the special permits for funds.

Ald. Lappin stated that she would like to pass the resolution and hopes that it will not take another year to make something happen. Ald. Harney noted that his senior constituents are not asking for much, but do need these transportation services.

Ald. Parker suggested that the source of the funds be changed to free cash and/or other sources and Ald. Lappin agreed. Ald. Salvucci asked about the availability of transportation vouchers for senior citizens and asked if that program has stopped? It was stated that due to the cuts last year the service to locations outside the City were reduced. Ald. Sangiolo noted that there are other services and agencies that provide the transportation services outside the city, but also feels that the cuts should be restored with other sources of funding.

It was noted that this budget did not have the funds available to include this request. Ald. Freedman suggested that the item was important, but should not be a budget resolution, but rather a resolution outside the budget process. Ald. Lappin amended her resolution to be a regular resolution to the Mayor.

The item was approved by the Committee of the Whole by voice vote as amended and as a resolution outside the budget process.

Resolution #10  
Senior Services

Resolution requesting the Mayor fund \$53,200 for senior transportation services including medical visits within 2 miles of the city, visits to houses of worship and visits to long term care facilities.

Possible funding source - 2009 free cash and/or other sources

Offered by Ald. Lappin

**Approved by Voice Vote in Committee of the Whole and referred to full Board to submit as a resolution outside Budget process.**

**David A. Olson**

---

From: **Barbara Model <bhmodel@comcast.net>**  
To: **dolson@newtonma.gov**  
Subject: **Taxi Voucher for Seniors**  
Date sent: **Wed, 27 May 2009 12:22:59 -0400**

Dear Mr. Olson;

Please restore senior rides to medical visits outside of Newton, long-term care facilities, and houses of worship.

As a citizen of Newton for over 50 years (I am now 91 years old), I believe this is a vital need for my fellow seniors.

Newton has many long terms residents who no longer drive. These small services help seniors to keep up their necessary activities.

Thank you very much,

Ann Model

7 Dexter Road, Newtonville

**David A. Olson**

---

**From: "MARK GOTTESMAN" <markgott@verizon.net>  
To: <dolson@newtonma.gov>  
Subject: senior rides  
Date sent: Thu, 28 May 2009 16:00:01 -0400**

Dear Mr. Olson and the Board of Aldermen,  
I am writing to encourage the Board of Alderman to restore in full the senior rides program for medical visits outside the City, to long-term care facilities, and to houses of worship. While I would not need to take advantage of such services myself, I personally know of many in our community who are facing increasing isolation and further dependency on family and friends because of limited transportation options and severe financial pressures. Our representatives often speak of Newton as a "community". This is an easy and relatively inexpensive way to add substance to the verbiage. Thank you.

Mark Gottesman  
43 Stearns Street  
Newton Centre

**David A. Olson**

---

Date sent: **Thu, 28 May 2009 08:41:29 -0400**  
Subject: **Sr. Transportation**  
From: **Thelma Marcus <tsmcookie@comcast.net>**  
To: **<dolson@newtonma.gov>**

Please restore senior rides to medical visits outside Newton, long-time care institutions and houses of worship. Thank you for your consideration.

Thelma Marcus  
101 Craftsland Road  
Chestnut Hill, Ma 02467

**David A. Olson**

---

Send reply to: **"Norm Zimbel" <nzimbel@rcn.com>**  
From: **"Norm Zimbel" <nzimbel@rcn.com>**  
To: **<dolson@newtonma.gov>**  
Subject: **Senior Rides**  
Date sent: **Thu, 28 May 2009 16:49:08 -0400**

Dear Mr. Olson,

I am writing to petition the Board of Aldermen  
on behalf of The Greater Boston Interfaith  
Organization

in support of a Newton voucher system to  
provide Newton seniors with affordable  
and reliable  
system transportation within Newton and to  
surrounding communities. We

believe that a restored  
voucher system should include rides to:

- 1.) Medical appointments up to 2  
miles outside Newton
- 2.) Visit a  
loved one in a long term care  
facility
- 3.) Houses of worship

Please bring this matter to the attention of  
the Board of Aldermen before June 1, 2009.

Thank you,  
Norman Zimbel



Doris Letchook  
183 Oak St., Apt. 201C  
Newton U.F., MA 02464

#70-09(4)

5/26/09

David Olson City Clerk  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton Centre, Ma. 02459

Dear David Olson and Aldermen of the  
City of Newton

In the June 1, 2009 meeting of  
the Board of Aldermen, I urge you  
to support the full restoration  
of the Senior rides program  
involving rides to medical  
visits outside of Newton, visits to  
family and friends in long term care  
facilities and visits to House of Worship.

I personally find my regular  
visits to my House of Worship in-  
creasingly difficult without the  
city's services.

Thank you for your attention

Doris C. Letchook (age 85)

**David A. Olson**

---

From: "Elizabeth Connolly" <econolly@srsmedical.com>  
To: <dolson@newtonma.gov>  
Copies to: <charris@comcast.net>  
Subject: **Please restore funding for Senior Rides Programming**  
Date sent: **Fri, 29 May 2009 10:46:44 -0500**

(Please forward this email to all the aldermen.)

I'm a resident of Ward 5, and a member of Temple Shalom of Newton, and I'm strongly in support of the Senior Rides Program. This letter is to ask you to vote June 1 to restore complete funding for this important program.

When a senior citizen loses the ability to drive, this can be the beginning of their inability to remain independent in their own home. The

Senior Rides Program takes advantage of the community-minded spirit of the owners of Veteran's Taxi to provide affordable and reliable transportation to in-town medical appointments, the Senior Center and grocery shopping.

Full restoral would add back funding for medical appointments a short distance out of town, visiting long-care facilities, and houses of worship.

Our own congregation, started in the 50s, now has many seniors who can no longer drive. Restoral of full funding would give them the ability to worship with us without the embarrassment and loss of dignity of

relying  
on others for rides. The \$55,000 to restore the funding is a small  
amount  
in our city budget but a huge benefit to our senior citizens.

So, please vote Monday June 1 to restore full funding to the Senior  
Rides  
program. Thank you for your attention!

Elizabeth Connolly

95 Longfellow Rd.

**David A. Olson**

---

From: "Silen, Ruth" <ruthsilen@lasell.edu>  
To: "dolson@newtonma.gov" <dolson@newtonma.gov>  
Date sent: Fri, 29 May 2009 09:13:28 -0400  
Subject: **Newton Seniors**

Dear Mr. Olson,

We urge the aldermen to support full restoration of the city's senior rides program.

As a retired physician/surgeon and a retired social worker, we have worked for many years with the older population. Now that we are senior citizens ourselves, we realize the importance of these services even more than we did previously.

Our thanks for your supporting these measures.

Sincerely,  
William and Ruth Silen

**David A. Olson**

---

Subject: **senior transportation**  
Date sent: **Fri, 29 May 2009 07:39:57 -0500**  
From: **"James Wessler" <James.Wessler@alz.org>**  
To: **<dolson@newtonma.gov>**

Please share this with my Aldermen,

I am writing to ask you to reinstate senior rides to medical visits outside of Newton, long-term care facilities, and houses of worship.

The

Veterans Taxi discount program is critical to giving Newton Seniors dependable and affordable transportation not only within the current limited program in Newton but to what we hope in the future will include:

medical appointments, visits to loved ones at area nursing homes/assisted

living residences and to houses of worship. The amount of funds needed is

quite small and it will make a big difference to access to a better quality of living for Newton's older residents. Thank you.

Jim Wessler  
28 Central St.  
Auburndale, MA 02466

Please support full restoration of  
the city's senior brides program  
it is so beneficial for so many folks!  
Many Thanks.  
Vera Burtman

#70-09(4)

VERA H. BURTMAN  
280 BOYLSTON STREET, APT. 514  
CHESTNUT HILL, MA 02467-1905

BOSTON MA 021

MAY 2009 8PM 147



David Olson City Clerk  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton Ctr, Ma 02459

02459+1449

