

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Wednesday, December 17, 2008

Present: Ald. Linsky (Chair), Danberg, Fischman, Ciccone, Swiston and Harney

Absent: Ald. Coletti and Vance

Also Present: Ald. Parker

City Staff: Captain Matthew Cummings (Newton Police Department)

#295-08 MOHD NIDAL, 101 Blue Jay Court, Wilmington, MA 01887, requesting the renewal of **one (1) van license** to operate King's Shuttle & Limousine Service between Logan Airport and the Sheraton and Marriott hotels in Newton. [08-05-08 @ 12:44 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0**

NOTE: Ald. Linsky indicated this item was held on December 3, 2008 because the Committee was awaiting additional paperwork from Mr. Nidal. Mr. Nidal did not attend this evening's meeting but provided the Committee with a copy of his State Vehicle Inspection Report, attached to report, since these vans are not inspected by the Police Department but instead are inspected by the State.

The Committee did not have any concerns after reviewing the provided material.

Ald. Swiston made the motion for approval.

TO BE DISCUSSED JOINTLY WITH PUBLIC FACILITIES

REFERRED TO PUB FAC. AND PUB SAF & TRANS. COMMITTEES

#35-04 ALD. SAMUELSON AND DANBERG requesting an ordinance amendment to Section 26-8 of the City of Newton Revised Ordinances, 2001 to require all property owners or residents to remove snow from sidewalks abutting their property.

(Public Hearing held on 11-17-04 and 2-6-08)

PUBLIC FACILITIES HELD 8-0 on 2-6-08

ACTION: **HELD 6-0**

NOTE: This item was discussed in a joint meeting with the Public Facilities Committee. Details of this discussion can be found in the December 17, 2008 Public Facilities Committee Report.

Ald. Danberg made the motion to hold.

ITEM RECOMMITTED TO PUB. SAFETY & TRANS. COMM. BY FINANCE COMM.**on 12-08-08****REFERRED TO PUB.SAFETY/TRANS. & FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#80-08 ALD. SALVUCCI & DANBERG requesting creation of a parking permit program for employees of Newton businesses to allow long-term parking in municipal parking lots. [1-23-08 @ 1:15 PM]

FINANCE APPROVED 4-1-1 (Ald. Freedman opposed, Lennon abstaining) on 12-8-08 with a motion to refer back to Public Safety & Transportation Committee

ACTION: HELD 6-0

NOTE: Captain Matthew Cummings, Newton Police Department and Ald. Parker joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Committee members reviewed the concerns provided by the Finance Committee, Ald. Lennon and Ald. Parker, attached to report.

The Committee reviewed the concerns raised by the Finance Committee. Committee members received and reviewed a memorandum prepared by Marie Lawlor, Assistant City Solicitor (attached). Ms. Lawlor's memorandum indicated she reviewed the concerns expressed by the Finance Committee, Ald. Lennon, and Ald. Parker and believed these concerns represented policy and not legal issues. She further recommended substitution of certain terms found in the present draft ordinance (e.g. 'permits' rather than 'agreements' and 'section' rather than 'regulations').

In regard to those concerns relating to the administration of the pilot program, Committee Chair Linsky noted that the Treasury Department was first chosen to be the administrator of this pilot program, but given that the department is presently understaffed there was a need to look at other departments. The Finance Committee had suggested the administration be regulated by the City Clerk's office. In consultation with City Clerk David Olson, and Chief Administrative Officer Sandy Pooler there was a further suggestion that the Police Department administer this program since they do some related work.

Captain Cummings informed the Committee the Police Department would be willing to take over the administration aspect in respect to the issuance of permits and collection of fees but not in respect to the determination of permit holders, including the holding of any lottery or appeals.

Captain Cummings indicated the Police Department preferred to issue windshield stickers rather than placards, which are easy to duplicate. However, the sticker will not have the ability to be transferred from vehicle to vehicle as a placard could be.

The Committee reviewed a number of issues, including:

- whether spaces should not be converted from meters to permits in locations that currently have over 85% occupancy rate – specifically, whether the number of parking spaces on Pelham and Pleasant Streets lots should be increased and whether the number of parking

spaces on Cypress Street should be decreased or eliminated and whether some of the villages, such as Auburndale, had too many spaces allocated whether the permits would be meter-specific or merely lot-specific;

- whether the permits would be transferable and/or vehicle-specific;
- whether participating businesses would be limited to a set number of permits; and
- whether the permits would be issued on a 'first-come, first-served' basis.

Captain Cummings indicated, permit information specifying location and vehicle identification could be downloaded on to the Traffic Control Officers handheld computers.

Captain Cummings also suggested issuing these permits annually and pre-paying for the year. Employers will have the capability to pay for these permits online before the Police Department issues a packet containing information and permits. Each permit will cost the employer \$960.00.

Committee members indicated the parking permit program should include:

- a well publicized application period and set deadline
- permits issued through a lottery rather than a 'first come, first served' basis
- one application per business with a maximum of two parking spaces per business
- establishment of a waiting list
- enforcement of tickets by Traffic Control Officers with tow restrictions in place
- meter spaces will be hooded, numbered and indicate tow restricted
- pilot to consist of no more than eleven designated locations, including up to 175 parking spaces
- City Clerk Department will administer the lottery and procedures for the issuance of these permits
- Executive Department will handle any appeals.

The Committee chose to hold this item so that the city's Traffic Engineer could review the concerns expressed and recommendations offered, including the capacity and demand in the eleven locations previously selected by the Traffic Engineer.

Ald. Danberg made the motion to hold.

#456-08 ALD. DANBERG, LINSKY, ALBRIGHT, PARKER CICCONE, HARNEY AND HESS-MAHAN requesting a discussion of impacts resulting from the proposed Mass Turnpike Toll increases, including reinstatement of tolls at interchanges located within the City of Newton, and appropriate response from State and Local officials. [11-14-08 @ 11:58 AM]

ACTION: **HELD 6-0**

NOTE: Ald. Linsky informed the Committee a representative from the MBTA will be attending the next Committee meeting on January 7, 2009. He also indicated he hopes to receive an update from Representative Kay Khan's office on their efforts.

Ald. Harney informed the Committee he attended the "Stop the Pike Hike" meeting. Ald. Harney indicated approximately two hundred people attended including representative and senators from the area. A rally was held outside and public comments were heard.

Ald. Harney stated the consensus at the meeting, was to freeze all toll increases. Some representatives and senators suggested at the meeting to make any toll increase as small as possible, others suggested raising the gas tax rather than raising the tolls. He also indicated that commuters expressed their anger because the increase will put a burden on the Western, MA commuters.

On November 26, 2008, State Representative David Linsky announced that he and over fifteen co-signers have filed a bill, which would eliminate the Newton-Weston and Allston-Brighton toll plazas, eliminate the tolls at the Ted Williams, Callahan, and Sumner tunnels, and eliminate the toll on the Tobin Bridge.

Ald. Linsky made the recommendation to Committee members to generate a question list to be addressed to Representative Kay Khan.

Ald. Ciccone made the motion to hold.

REFERRED TO PUB. SAFETY & TRANS. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#455-05 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of
(21-05.2) \$6,000 from the Riverside Traffic Mitigation Fund for the purpose of funding the
 installation of a radar-controlled speed limit sign at the intersection of Concord
 and Grove Streets. (#65-05)

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 6-0**

NOTE: Ald. Harney briefed the Committee indicating this item was studied through the Lower Falls Improvement Association, a speed sign was among the recommendations that came out of the study. Ald. Harney also indicated that the city's Traffic Engineer stated previously he was not in favor of installing a radar-controlled speed limit sign anywhere in the City other than in a school zone and had instead recommended the re-stretching of the bridge over the highway, installing road lane markings, installing raised crosswalks at the intersection of Grove and Cornell Streets, re-constructing the intersection at Hagar Street and the re-construction of the intersection where Grove meets Concord Street.

Ald. Harney made the motion No Action Necessary.

At approximately, 10:10 pm Ald. Ciccone moved for adjournment, which was approved 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen M. Linsky, Chairman