



# Public Facilities Committee Budget Report

## City of Newton In City Council

Thursday, May 4, 2023

Present: Councilors Leary (Chair), Crossley, Kelley Laredo and Kalis

Absent: Councilors Gentile, Danberg and Norton

Also Present: Councilors Downs, Albright, Ryan, Humphrey and Malakie

City staff present: Jim McGonagle, Commissioner of Public Works, Shawna Sullivan, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works and Jonathan Yeo Chief Operating Officer

## **Department of Public Works Budget**

**Note:** Jim McGonagle, Commissioner of Public Works presented the budget for the Department of Public Works, including the utility division. He presented the attached PowerPoint. It was noted that the Commissioner has recently given the Committee an update on the Transportation Network Improvement Plan and the Sustainable Materials Management division. The PowerPoint discussed the following topics:

- Streets and Sidewalks
- Transportation
- Sustainable Materials Management
- Transportation Network Improvement Plan
- Engineering
- Fleet Management
- Utilities-Stormwater
- Utilities-Water
- Utilities-Sewer

Commissioner McGonagle thanked his team for the work they have done for the City. He noted that there have been no additions to the team including a new Director of Streets, Bernie MacDonald. They are also actively recruiting to fill the additional open positions.

### **Q&A**

Q: What will the department be doing about the increased cost to remove the sediment from the City Hall ponds?

A: Commissioner McGonagle that the biggest cost is the disposal of the sediment which they are now trying to do in house. They also need to find a location and test the sediment. The DEP will be notified because they are required to know where this sits. The plan is to do this in the Fall.

Q: When will the citizens monitoring of the water usage begin?

A: Commissioner McGonagle explained that this will be apart of the water meter replacement program which is expected to begin in the fall. The replacements need to get done first since there is a significant number of meters that aren't sending the City reads. There needs to be a new meter before the resident can start monitoring. The installation will take approximately 18 months.

Q: Who is the contractor for the water meter project?

A: Commissioner McGonagle explained that one company is providing the meters and the transponders. Bay State Winn will be installing the meters.

Q: When is the paving of Ward and Waverly going to be fully funded?

A: Commissioner McGonagle explained that there are 2 phases to this project. The Waverly portion is complete. They are working on the first portion of Ward now that will be paved this fall. The paving schedule is on the DPW's website.

Q: What are the 197 new water services?

A; Commissioner McGonagle explained that these include full replacements as well.

Q: Has the department found the reason for water loss at the Waban Hill Revisor?

A: There have been divers in there that have found leaks. But this is not a major source of water leakage in the City; this has more to do with the water meters.

Q: Can DPW look into ways to use less paving in the City to be able to reach the City's climate goals?

A: Commissioner McGonagle that they are trying to do this through the intersection projects in the city. This includes of getting rid of slip lanes.

## Comments

Councilors raised concerns regarding the water meter system but were glad to see the meters are being replaced. They also expressed support of the citizens monitoring program.

A councilor expressed their support for the addition of bike lanes on Commonwealth Ave.

A concern was raised regarding the amount of salt that is being used on sidewalks.

The committee thanked Commissioner McGonagle and his team for their work.

The Committee took a straw vote to accept the Department of Public Work's proposed Budget of \$98,387,521, the Supplemental CIP and the CIP which passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Alison Leary, Chair**