

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Standing Committee on Finance met on *Monday, March 7th, 2022 at 7:00 PM* in the *Council Chambers, Brockton City Hall, 45 School Street*, with Councilor Lally presiding, Councilor Farwell absent, to consider the following:

1. Appointment of Marcelin Ulysse, 10 Longworth Avenue, Unit 9, Brockton, MA 02301, as a Constable in the City of Brockton for a term of three (3) years.

Invited: Marcelin Ulysse

*Councilor Thompson states that he is going to recuse himself from this item due to a conflict of interest.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Asack to report POSTPONED TO THE SECOND FINANCE MEETING IN MARCH, 2nd by Councilor Rodrigues. Motion carried by a hand vote.

2. Re-appointment of James C. Doucette, 260 Torrey Street, Brockton, Ma 02301, as a Constable of Brockton for a term of three (3) years.

Invited: James Doucette

*Mr. Doucette states that he has been a Constable in the City of Brockton since 2005. He goes on to say that he is also an employee of the City, but continues to keep the two positions separate.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Asack to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Nicastro. Motion carried by a hand vote.

3. Ordered: That the City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the total grant funds in the amount of \$75,000.
From: Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Department of Conservation and Recreation
To: City of Brockton- Parks and Recreation Department
(These funds will be used for the improvements for Danny Goodwin Playground.)

Invited: Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Superintendent Carpenter states that this grant will improve Danny Goodwin Playground that is located outside of East Junior High. There is no match required.

*Councilor Rodrigues states that there was a discussion several months ago about the possibility of doing something with the fields at this location in terms of creating a soccer field on the complex. He asks if anything has been done in terms of creating plans or some sort of design toward that project. Superintendent Carpenter responds by saying that they are currently working on that, but this grant will be separate from that as these grant funds are specific to the playground itself.

*Councilor Rodrigues asks if it would make sense to lay out all of the work that needs to be done and to have a complete plan before beginning on one section of the complex. He states that if beginning the playground process is “phase one” of the master plan of redoing the entire complex, then the fields would be considered “phase two.”

Superintendent Carpenter states that while yes, it would be beneficial to have complete plans, the sections in which the phases are being done are so separate from each other that completing one phase before another would not affect each other.

*Councilor Rodrigues notes that while this is not part of the order, he asks when “phase two”, the soccer field project at East Junior High, would be ready to move forward. Superintendent Carpenter states that if everything gets taken care of, there is a possibility of starting this project this Fall.

*Councilor Nicastro asks for a brief explanation about what these grant funds will be used for. Superintendent Carpenter states that the funds were fought for and received by State Representative Michelle DuBois. One of the things that she noticed when visiting this playground was the amount of sunlight that the new basketball court that was installed two years ago gets specifically in the area designated for spectators to play. One of the things that she would like to see done is a removable shade structure to be put up in the spring and taken down in the fall to prevent any damage due to the weather of the winter months. He goes on to say that the funds will also go toward some new play equipment and possibly some outdoor exercise equipment.

*Councilor Thompson asks about the synergies between the state delegation and the city when requesting these types of grants. He also goes on to ask if there is a master plan for the Danny Goodwin Playground that can be funded yearly through these types of earmarks through the state. He sums up his question to ask if Superintendent Carpenter himself requests these types of structures from the state, or if Representative DuBois brings these issues to him. Superintendent Carpenter states that this playground in particular has been a project on Representative DuBois’ radar for a while now. He goes on to say that they have systematically been addressing needs there as they arise. He states that Representative DuBois approaches him about what the needs are over there. He continues to say that there have been new swing sets installed there and new play equipment amongst other things, therefore they are approaching the point where there isn’t going to be much of a need for much more in terms of the playground itself.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Asack to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Thompson. Motion carried by a hand vote.

4. Ordered: That the City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the total grant funds in the amount of \$50,000.
From: Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Department of Conservation and Recreation
To: City of Brockton- Parks and Recreation Department
(These funds will be used for the improvements for Gilmore Playground.)
Invited: Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Superintendent Carpenter states that this was put into the budget through Representative Cassidy. He states that this is for Old Gilmore Playground which is located on Spring Street, not at the Gilmore School.

*Councilor Nicastro states that she asked Representative Cassidy for these funds to make this specific playground more presentable. She goes on to say that this could be a phased effort. She asks for a summary of what exactly \$50,000 can do for this park.

Superintendent Carpenter states that in the world of parks and playgrounds \$50,000 is not a lot of money. Some things that need to be done over there are; fencing work that could range between \$10,000-\$12,000, a new swing set as the one there now has been there from the mid-80s, and some older climbing structures need to be replaced and modernized. He agreed that this will probably be a phased approach. He continues to say that the most expensive part of any rehabilitation project is surfacing underneath the play equipment. He states that the surfacing could easily eat up the entirety of the grant funds. He states that there are “not so glamorous” things that need to be done at this playground such as the fencing, resealing the existing asphalt area, and permanent trash receptacles.

*Councilor Nicastro states to the Council that next week she will be making a motion to amend this order to reflect that it is for improvements to the Old Gilmore Playground.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Nicastro to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Asack. Motion carried by a hand vote.

5. Ordered: That the following named sum be and the same is hereby transferred as the same

was submitted by the Mayor as follows:

Transfer of: \$15,000

From: Animal Control– Personal Services- Other Than Overtime

To: Animal Control – Personal Services- Overtime

This transfer is necessary to supplement overtime spending due to the department being down an animal control officer position.

Invited: Thomas DeChellis, Director of Animal Control

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Mr. DeChellis states that he is requesting this transfer to be able to finish out the fiscal year as they are currently down to \$193 in the account. He states that this is due to being down an Animal Control Officer which is a position that they recently filled on January 30, 2021. He further stated that COVID hit the Animal Control Department hard as well as other various time off requests amongst the department’s employees.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Asack to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Nicastro. Motion carried by a hand vote.

6. Ordered: That the following named sum be and the same is hereby appropriated as the same

was submitted by the Mayor as follows:

Appropriation of: \$7,000.00

From: ARPA Fund

\$7,000

To: Public Property – Covid Bonus

\$7,000

for purposes of funding the Brockton Building and Construction Trades contract.

This appropriation provides funding for three (3) years (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2022), of a three (3) year contract.

Invited: Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Tiffani Ciasullo states that the Chief Financial Officer is out of the country, therefore as Budget Director for the City of Brockton, she will be the one stepping in and answering questions on his behalf. She states that this is fiscally funded like all of the union contracts that were settled through June 30th.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Rodrigues to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Nicastro. Motion carried by a hand vote.

7. Ordered: That the City of Brockton appropriate the amount of Three Million Six Hundred Thirty-Three Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty-Eight Dollars (\$3,633,858) for the purpose of paying costs of purchasing three fire apparatus, and the payment of costs incidental or related thereto. To meet this appropriation the City Treasurer, with the approval of the Mayor, is authorized to borrow said amount under G.L. c. 44, §7(1), or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the City therefor. Further Ordered: That the City Treasurer is authorized to file an application with The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Municipal Finance Oversight Board to qualify under G.L. c. 44A any and all bonds or notes of the City authorized by this vote, and to provide such information and execute such documents as the Municipal Finance Oversight Board of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts may require.

Invited: Martin Brophy, Treasurer

Brian Nardelli, Fire Chief

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Chief Nardelli states that this was a conversation that began in the fall with the Mayor and the CFO about some of the aging fleet amongst the Brockton Fire Department. He states that they have done a tremendous job at acquiring grants from FEMA, but sometimes when these grants are put into the computer, they don't always come out favorably due to the fact that we do have some fairly new equipment despite having a decent amount of aging equipment. When applying for these grants, the information goes into the computer and is graded and sometimes is never seen by human eyes. Chief Nardelli states that the Fire Department has three pieces of Fire Apparatus that are older than the rest. NFPA 1901 suggests replacing Fire Apparatus within an average department every 15-20 years; but the Brockton Fire Department is no average department given the amount of calls that they respond to yearly. He goes on to say that as the apparatus ages, it gets beat up very badly due to the number of fires and calls.

*Chief Nardelli states that the first of the three pieces of apparatus that he is trying to replace is Squad A, out of 42 Pleasant Street. They are one of the busiest Squad

companies in the country when looking at National Run Surveys; they have in excess of 4,500 runs per year. The next is Ladder Company 2 out of Campello which has over 2,000 runs per year. The last of the three is Ladder Company 4, which also goes on over 2,000 runs yearly. Ladder Company 4 used to be Ladder Company 1 which would go on over 4,000 runs per year until they moved the truck to Company 4 to relieve the strain and wear and tear on the truck.

*Chief Nardelli states that Squad A was purchased through grant funds in 2003. This piece of apparatus does not have an operating generator anymore, and it's had multiple motor upgrades and multiple frame upgrades. It's been in two major motor vehicle accidents that were at no fault of the department. He goes on to talk about Ladder Company 2, which is a 2006 Mid Mount Aerial Truck with a bucket. The City of Brockton specifically needs a truck like this due to the size of the city and the size of the buildings within the city. He states that this apparatus is in dire straits and even though it was certified for use last year by the NFPA 1901, he is not sure that it will continue to be moving forward. He states that the frame of this specific Aerial is beginning to wear and rust due to ever changing New England weather amongst other things. He moves to the third piece of apparatus, Ladder Company 4, which is a 1995 truck. Ladder Company 4 is the oldest piece of apparatus in the fleet. He states that the motor has been replaced four times, there has been a major frame rebuild, two transmissions replaced and a major aerial repair. He states that the mechanics that work on these trucks are outstanding, and keep the truck going and make sure that the trucks pass every test. He goes on to say that even though this is the case now, the mechanics may come to a point where they can no longer make miracles happen.

*When speaking to Allegiance Fire Apparatus, Chief Nardelli explored his options as fire apparatus isn't cheap. He states that when purchasing through federal grants, they have to pay in installments, where as using a bond, they are able to pay upfront. Because of the ability to pay upfront, the department was able to save \$108,000 on the overall cost of all of the vehicles. The trade in value of the two aerial trucks that they are no longer using is approximately \$75,000. Squad A would be traded in for about \$5,000. He states that they also received \$30,000 off for buying three pieces of fire apparatus at the same time.

*In talks with the CFO and Budget Director over a number of months, Chief Nardelli hopes to make some sort of fund to have money to purchase apparatus and to be able to pay the bond. He states that this is necessary because they are going to have to buy fire apparatus as it goes. He states that he would like to put a line item into the budget to pay the bond on a regular basis. Until July 2023, there is EMS money that will be available to pay some of this bond as well.

*Chief Nardelli reiterates that purchasing the apparatus upfront gets the department great savings.

*Councilor Mendes asks Ms. Ciasullo, the Budget Director, if the city could use some of the ARPA money for instances like this to which Ms. Ciasullo replies that ARPA money is for pandemic specific funds.

*Councilor Mendes asks to clarify if the money is from grant funds or if it is just a bond and Chief Nardelli clarifies that it is just a bond. She goes on to ask for an itemized list of all of the outstanding debts for the city before Monday to be sure that the city can afford the bond. Ms. Ciasullo tells the council that she will email that to them as soon as she can.

*Councilor Minichiello asks how the new apparatus would improve service to the public in life or death situations to which Chief Nardelli replies that in the newer fire apparatus they are customizable. He goes on to say that one of the advantages of replacing Ladder 2 is that it is much larger than any other apparatus. Due to the size of the truck, it has been hard to navigate such a congested city with many parked cars and narrow streets. The average truck is seven feet shorter. Being able to better navigate the city will decrease the response times to the emergencies. In terms of replacing Squad A, the new apparatus will have custom compartments with different pull outs instead of the standard engine that they have now. Squad A is a specialty piece of apparatus used around the entire city. Customizing the apparatus and making them more efficient is the most important thing to do.

*Chief Nardelli states that the build-out time for the three apparatus are 18 months due to the shortage of raw material.

*Councilor Minichiello asks how the new apparatus will improve the health and safety of our firefighters. Chief Nardelli states that there are seatbelt technologies now that alert the firefighters when they don't have their seatbelts on. He also goes on to say that given the clean cab theories that the department is moving toward now in terms of keeping carcinogens out of the cabs, there are compartments that their gear goes into in these new apparatuses. He finishes to say that the alloy frames that the new apparatus are built on are much safer than the prior frames structurally.

*Councilor Nicastro clarifies that the Squad A engine is 19 years old, the Ladder Company 2 engine is 16 years old, and the Ladder Company 4 engine is 27 years old, to which Chief Nardelli agrees. She goes on to ask what the term of the loans are, to which Chief Nardelli replies 15-20 years. Councilor Nicastro brings up the point that the loans may last longer than the actual engines given the engines mentioned previously. Chief Nardelli states that he understands what she is saying, but because the apparatus is being built differently and much more durable, fire departments nationwide are getting many more years out of their fire apparatus.

*Councilor Nicastro asks how long until the order is delivered from the date it is placed, Chief Nardelli states that it could take up to 18 months.

*Councilor Nicastro notes that approval of this order to spend these funds in this way is contingent on a line item in the next fiscal year budget. She asks Chief Nardelli to speak on this fact. Chief Nardelli states that the City of Brockton has never had a replacement policy in effect, and wants to make that happen. He goes on to say that every time the department needs a piece of fire apparatus, it must go before Council and then everyone needs to work together quickly to find out how they're going to pay for it. With adding a line item into the budget, it will pay for the apparatus going forward. He states that even after this bond is paid off, and as long as this line item stays in the budget, they will be able to continue to replace their fleet as needed. He states that this will hopefully set the department up for the future.

*Councilor Nicastro notes specifically that there was a letter provided to the Council from the CFO that the city can, in fact, afford this borrowing.

*Councilor Tavares asks Ms. Ciasullo how much long-term debt the city has right now to which Ms. Ciasullo states that she doesn't have those figures in front of her at the moment, but those figures will be included in the email that she sends to the Councilors with the outstanding debts.

*Councilor D'Agostino asks Ms. Ciasullo if they have decided on the 15- or 20-year option to pay off the debt to which she replies that they have not decided that yet, but they will be narrowing it down in the coming months after looking over the budget again in the near future.

*Councilor D'Agostino asks if there is a capital needs plan in the works that is being looked at citywide, not just for the fire department. Ms. Ciasullo responds that there is a plan, and that by ordinance the CFO is required to submit a 6-year capital plan to the Council. She goes on to say that they are on track to submit that to them by the end of this fiscal year.

*Councilor Thompson reiterates the point that Chief Nardelli brought up that as our equipment becomes newer, we are less likely to get grants. He clarifies that with the newness of the apparatus items that we're acquiring, the grants will be few and far between and that we will have to purchase these from our own funds. Chief Nardelli states that yes, while we will not be getting grants for new apparatus, we will still be getting grants for smaller equipment such as radios and other tools needed. Chief Nardelli goes on to say that as far as our apparatus goes, despite getting a few new trucks, we still have other trucks aging.

*Councilor Teixeira asks how a truck that is 27 years old holds up with the safety standards of today. Chief Nardelli states that the older trucks are still safe, but to a different standard of safety. They still have seatbelts and the equipment it needs. Trucks must meet yearly requirements and testing, and they do.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Rodrigues to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Asack. Motion carried by a hand vote.

8. Ordered: That the City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the total grant funds in the amount of \$5,605.00.

From: The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security/Office of Grants and Research-FY22 Community Safety Projects Grant Program

To: City of Brockton Police Department -FY22 Community Safety Projects Grant Program.

Invited: Steven Williamson, Interim Chief of Police

Michelle St. James, Grant Coordinator BPD

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Ms. St. James states that the Community Safety Projects Grant has a focus of improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and/or child passenger safety through non-enforcement means. She goes on to say that they will be doing two events that are a combination of child passenger safety and instruction of youth in the rules of the road for both being a pedestrian and riding a bike. With funds from this grant, they will be able to buy bicycle lights to give to kids.

*Councilor Nicastro asks for clarification if these funds needed to be spent by June 30th, to which Ms. St. James says no, they have until September 15th to spend these funds according to the terms.

*Councilor Asack asks if the program is collaborating with the public schools. Ms. St. James states that for this specific grant they are looking to collaborate with Old Colony Y and the Boys and Girls Club.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Asack to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor D'Agostino. Motion carried by a hand vote.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:01pm.