

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Standing Committee on Finance met on *Monday, July 18th, 2022 at 7:00 PM* in the *Council Chambers, Brockton City Hall, 45 School Street*, with Councilor Lally presiding, to consider the following:

1. Appointment of City of Brockton School Police Officer Alicia Fernandes of 56 Ford Street Brockton, MA 02301 as a Special Police Officer.

Invited: Alicia Fernandes

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

2. Appointment of Rita Spinola of 27 Vermont Avenue Brockton, MA 02302 to the Women's Commission for a three-year term, ending June 2025.

Invited: Rita Spinola

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

3. Appointment of Scott D. Uhlman of 142 Cashman Road Brockton, MA 02301 as an Alternate Member of the License Commission for a three-year term, ending June 2025.

Invited: Scott D. Uhlman

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

4. Re-Appointment of Sonja Dixon of 55 City Hall Plaza Brockton MA 02301 to the Women's Commission for a three-year term, ending June 2025.

Invited: Sonja Dixon

*Ms. Dixon notes that her apartment number is 507 and tells the council that this is the best way to reach her by mail.

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

5. Ordered: That the City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the total grant funds in the amount of \$250,000.
From: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Community Compact Municipal Fiber Grant Program-FY22 Executive Office for Administration and Finance Grant Program \$250,000
To: City of Brockton Information Technology Department-FY22 Executive Office for Administration and Finance Grant Program Fund \$250,000

(These grant funds will allow for the replacement and upgrade of fiber that connects the two main data centers used for Police, Fire, City Hall, and Emergency Management Services for communication and dispatch.)

Invited: Ted Medeiros, Acting Director

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Councilor Asack asks if there is a match required for the grant, to which Mr. Medeiros tells her that there is a match. He goes on to say that the match is 10%.

*Councilor Asack notes that the city has already spent a decent amount of money on fiber and asks how this will improve what is already here. Mr. Medeiros tells her that these funds will repair and replace the previously outdated and/or damaged existing fiber and cabling that has been in place for about twenty years.

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 City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the total grant funds in the amount of \$50,000

From: 2022 Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) of Massachusetts National Fitness Campaign- FY22 National Fitness Campaign Grant

To: Parks and Recreation Department- FY22 National Fitness Campaign Grant Fund (These grant funds will be used by the Parks and Recreation Department to renovate Tukis Playground into a Fitness Court to meet the differing needs of a shifting community.)

Invited: Tim Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

*Councilor Farwell states that there are some technical adjustments that need to be made to this grant.

*Council President Lally states that the grant comes from a non-profit organization in California, a state with different laws in terms of donations. This was not something that could be reconciled properly with the Massachusetts Procurement Law.

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

7. Ordered: That the City Council hereby declare the City owned parcels located at Petronelli Way and Franklin Street, having parcel identifications of Parcel ID: 109-074 (lot B) and Parcel ID: 109-075 (lot E), as surplus and that the Mayor of Brockton is hereby authorized to transfer the same to the Brockton Redevelopment Authority in furtherance of the Downtown Brockton Urban Development Plan as approved by the Brockton City Council on July 25, 2016 in order to accomplish the modifications to the new road (Marvelous Marvin Hagler Way) and the planned pocket park.

Invited: Robert Jenkins, Executive Director, BRA
Rob May, Director of Planning & Economic Development
Megan Bridges, City Solicitor

*Councilor Asack notes a scrivener's error where "(lot B)" should read "(lot C)". Mr. Jenkins tells her that this is incorrect, and that the order reads properly and correctly.

*Mr. Jenkins tells the City Council that he is no longer that Executive Director of the Brockton Redevelopment Authority. The Interim Executive Director is Dr. Patricia Jackson.

*Councilor Farwell asks if Dr. Jackson is comfortable with this project as well, as she is the new Director, to which Dr. Jackson states that she is comfortable with it. She tells him that she has been working on it with Mr. Jenkins and Mr. May for sometime now.

*Councilor Thompson states that about two years ago this council approved a sub division for the lots in question. They were all city parking lots and open-air lots. To further push development in downtown Brockton, the decision to sub-divide these lots happened. He goes on to list a number of things that have gone in to furthering development at these lots, and they've all been successful. These changes and orders will continue to make these lots more developable.

*All councilors wished Mr. Jenkins well as he takes a new position not with the City of Brockton, and go on to wish Dr. Patricia Jackson luck in her new position as Interim Executive Director of the Brockton Redevelopment Authority.

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

8. Resolve: **BE IT RESOLVED**, that Members of the Brockton School Committee, Superintendent of Schools Michael Thomas, Mayor of Brockton Robert Sullivan, Chief Financial Officer Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer for the School Department Aldo Petronio, or their designees, be invited to come before the Finance Committee to discuss athletic facilities in the community, funding, and the need for development of fields and upgrades for recreational uses in the City.

Invited: Mayor Robert Sullivan
Michael Thomas, Superintendent of Schools
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer, City of Brockton
Aldo Petronio, Chief Financial Officer, Brockton School Department
Joyce Asack, Vice-Chair, Brockton School Committee
Tony Rodrigues, Brockton School Committee Member
Tim Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

*Councilor Thompson states that he has received a request from the Mayor to postpone this matter because the Mayor himself, Superintendent Carpenter and CFO Clarkson could not be present.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Thompson to report POSTPONED TO THE NEXT AVAILABLE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING IN SEPTEMBER, 2nd by Councilor Rodrigues. Motion carried by a hand vote.

9. Resolve: **BE IT RESOLVED**, that a designee of Neighborhood Health Center be invited to come before the Finance Committee to discuss mental health services offered and upcoming mental health initiatives.

Invited: Sue Joss, CEO of the Brockton Neighborhood Health Center or Designee

*Ms. Joss begins her presentation with an overview of the Health Center. There are four sites, the main site being 63 Main Street, Brockton, MA. Services provided other than behavioral health are primary care for all ages, OB & specialty gynecological services, dental, eye examinations, health education, HIV services, nutritional education, referrals and vaccinations. She goes into a brief description of the Behavioral Health Services offered at BNHC. They offer comprehensive psychosocial assessments, psychiatric evaluations, crisis evaluations, individual therapy, and substance use disorder services.

*Ms. Joss goes on to say that there was already a huge need for behavioral health services before the pandemic, but since the pandemic began in March 2020, there is an even bigger need. Since March 2020, the BNHC has continued to see high levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, isolation and increased reports of suicidal and self-harming thoughts. She notes that most states in the country are not prepared to deal with this crisis. Ms. Joss states that they provided more than 59,000 behavioral health visits in 2021.

*Over the last four years, there has been an upward trend in opioid-related overdose deaths in Brockton. Ms. Joss states that the trends in the drug supply are contributing to these deaths. These deaths do not necessarily mean that people are using more, but they are using things that are so much more lethal. Fentanyl and Xylazine are two drugs that contaminate other drugs that people have been using for quite some time now.

*Ms. Joss notes that there are some things beginning to happen around the country now. At the Federal level, the (988) suicide hotline launched on July 16, 2022.

*On the State level, there is a Behavioral Health Roadmap that is being put into fruition. It is a multi-year blueprint that maps out a treatment plan that allows people to receive a more centralized care service. This is an attempt to make these services equitable and on the same page as other medical services. With this roadmap, there is this idea to connect people with a provider before they're in crisis. There should be routine help for urgent needs, and should be able to potentially catch these issues before they become urgent. The roadmap will allow for expanded access to treatment, as this is a problem it seems that many people face.

*A main project that the state is working on right now is Community Behavioral Health Centers beginning in January 2023.

*Dr. Maria Celli begins with introducing interventions on the Local level. She begins with a list of participants whom the BNHC work with. They call this list the Brockton BH Task Force.

*Dr. Celli zeros-in on what the BNHC currently offers and what they have offered for some time. They offer integrated behavior health services, outpatient services and care management for highest risk patients including an ED specialist.

*Dr. Celli goes on to speak about some organizations that work with the BNHC. She starts with BAMSI. BAMSI is an agency that offers a lot in the City of Brockton. They offer a helpline, an outpatient center, CSA, EI and COPE (HIV, HCV, STI testing). She goes on to talk about CCBC, an organization that currently holds a contract with the state for emergency services, such as crisis response. They are located at Brockton Hospital. The last organization Dr. Celli notes is High Point Treatment Services and Affiliates, who offers behavioral health and substance abuse health services for the City of Brockton. They also offer detox opportunities, crisis stabilization and a behavioral health community partnership.

*Dr. Celli moves to talk about the future and things to look out for in Brockton. As previously stated, there will be Community Behavioral Health Centers beginning to pop-up around the state. Brockton will have their own site. This site will be led By High Point Treatment Center in collaboration with CCBC and CFS. This site will be opening in January of 2023. They will offer outpatient therapy and psychiatry for adults and pediatrics, a mobile crisis team, an ED diversion/walk – in for urgent services, and crisis stabilization beds.

*Another upcoming project coming October of 2022 is an inpatient unit at Boston Medical Center.

*Dr. Celli continues on to speak about a program called TEAM UP for children. The purpose of TEAM UP is to build capacity in CHC's to deliver high quality, evidence - based integrated BH to children and families.

*BNHC is working toward developing a school-based health center in the City of Brockton. Dr. Celli goes on to say that the mission will be to create a trusted medical home for the students of Brockton High School. A few services that will be provided are annual physicals, sports physicals, lab work, urgent care visits, immunizations, STI screening and treatment, urgent and short-term behavioral health assessments and counseling and assessments for substance use disorder.

*Councilor Farwell notes that the demand for services is very high. He questions how much of a delay there is in terms of booking appointments. He goes on to ask how able the BNHC is to handle multiple inquiries daily given the staff level. Dr. Celli tells him that any patient can see a clinical social worker the same day that they call. He goes on to ask about if the situation is serious, and if it requires a follow-up, how long the patient waits to be seen. Dr. Celli tells him that a follow-up is immediate. Ms. Joss tells him that if it is serious enough to be admitted to a hospital, the patient would be transported

immediately to the ED where they could wait days for a psychiatric bed to open. She goes on to say that she hopes the 24/7 crisis beds in the plan alleviates some of these wait times.

*Councilor Farwell notes that revenue is incredibly important. He goes on to assume that the BNHC is keeping their head above water with a significant revenue stream. Ms. Joss tells him that things are looking up and good in terms of revenue. The roadmap that the state put out has information about financial help to community health centers. She goes on to say that they are in better shape financially than they were before the pandemic started.

*Councilor D'Agostino asks what the relationship is like between the BNHC and the Brockton Police Department as a decent amount of calls BPD goes on are in regard to mental health. Dr. Celli states that there is no clinician that rides along with the police department. She goes on to say that they collaborate with the BPD frequently for medical reasons or other circumstances, but tries not to elevate the situation to that point as best as they can.

*Councilor D'Agostino refers to the Federal Suicide Hotline phone number (988) and asks just how that works. Ms. Joss notes how new it is, and recognizes that she may not know the process in its entirety. She goes on to say that when someone calls, they will be routed through the already in place suicide hotline in the state that they are calling from. She states that she will have more information as it rolls out.

*Councilor Rodrigues refer to the number of people that have overdosed in Brockton and in the surrounding hospitals. He goes on to ask how these numbers compare to the cities of equal size. Ms. Joss tells him that Brockton's rates are considerably higher than the state-wide average. She goes on to say that when comparing Brockton to the subset of gateway cities, Brockton is in the upper third, but not at the top. She concludes that the city is high on the list with the some of the highest numbers.

*The PowerPoint shown by the Brockton Neighborhood Health Center is available through the City of Brockton's City Clerk Office.

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

Meeting Adjourned: 8:23pm