

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Standing Committee on Finance met on *Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 Ruth Moore of 1380 Main St. Brockton, MA 02301 to the Women's Commission for a three-year term, ending July 2025.

Invited: Ruth Moore

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Nicaastro to report POSTPONED, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Rodrigues. Motion carried by a hand vote.

2. Appointment of Christina Derome of 315 Sully Road Brockton, MA 02302 to the License Commission for a three-year term, ending July 2025.

Invited: Christina Derome

\*Councilor Lally states that Ms. Derome will not be in attendance tonight.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor D'Agostino to report POSTPONED, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Thompson. Motion carried by a hand vote.

3. Appointment of Adewumi Oluwatoyin of 123 Country Club Lane Brockton, MA 02301 to the Women's Commission for a three-year term, ending July 2025.

Invited: Adewumi Oluwatoyin

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

4. Appointment of Lawrence Jezewski of 36 Sophia Avenue Brockton, MA 02301 to the Elections Commission for a four-year term, ending July 2026.

Invited: Lawrence Jezewski

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

5. Appointment of Sandra Charton of 225 Northern Avenue, Boston, MA 02210 to the position of Director of Human Resources for a three-year term, ending in July 2025.

Invited: Sandra Charton

\*All councilors tell Ms. Charton that they appreciate her willingness thus far and her dedication as Interim Director of Human Resources and look forward to continuing to work alongside her.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Asack to report FAVORABLE, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor D'Agostino. 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: Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Mass DOT)-FY23 Shared Streets and Spaces Program Grant.  
To: Department of Public Works- FY23 Shared Streets and Spaces Program Grant Fund. (These grant funds will be used by the Department of Public Works to purchase snow plows.)

Invited: Patrick Hill, DPW Commissioner  
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

\*Commissioner Hill tells the Council that this grant will be used to purchase sidewalk clearing equipment to accommodate pedestrian traffic.

\*Council Farwell clarifies that these are sidewalk plows and Mr. Hill tells him that that is correct. Councilor Farwell asks if more money will be allocated toward these plows as he assumes that they are expensive. Mr. Hill tells him that with an extra \$15 thousand dollars on top of the grant, they'll be able to retire one of the old sidewalk plows and put a new one into the fleet.

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

7. Ordered: That the City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the total grant funds in the amount of \$5,000.  
From: Plymouth County District Attorney's Office-FY23 Drug Prevention Education and Awareness Program Grant.  
To: Brockton Police Department- FY23 Drug Prevention Education and Awareness Program Grant Fund. (These grant funds will be used by the Brockton Police Department for the care and training of Brockton Police Department's comfort K9 Bonnie, who provides emotional support for the well-being of Drug-Endangered children, students with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), and others that require that service.)

Invited: Brenda Perez, Police Chief, BPD  
Steve Williamson, Captain, BPD  
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

\*Chief Perez states that these funds will be used for additional training for K9 Bonnie.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Asack to report FAVORABLE, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Thompson. 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 \$96,500.00.  
From: The Executive Office of Health and Human Services/Department of Mental Health-FY23 Massachusetts Jail/Arrest Diversion Grant Program  
To: City of Brockton Police Department-FY23 Massachusetts Jail/Arrest Diversion Grant Program  
(These grant funds will be used to pay for Crisis Intervention Team Training and Mental Health First Aid training for Brockton Police Officers. **There is no match requirement.**)  
Invited: Brenda Perez, Police Chief, BPD  
Steve Williamson, Captain, BPD  
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

\*Chief Perez states that this grant trains officers to be Community Crisis Team Members.  
\*Councilor Asack asks if there is anyway that anyone can be sent out with the Police Department to deal with a situation at hand. Chief Perez tells her that that is a long term project that they're looking at.

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

9. Resolve: To invite Chief Brenda Perez of the Brockton Police Department and Chief Brian Nardelli of the Brockton Fire Department and/or their designees, to appear before the Finance Committee of the Brockton City Council to discuss the work of the Fireworks Joint Task Force including, without limitation, number of calls received by its hotline, number of visits to City properties, amount of fireworks confiscated, their opinions of the effectiveness of the task force, reflect on what has been learned and what will be implemented in the future.  
Invited: Brenda Perez, Police Chief, BPD  
Brian Nardelli, Fire Chief, BFD

\*Chief Nardelli states that back on May 27, 2022 Mayor Sullivan created a Firework Task Force. He states that they've visited over 400 residents, have received over 500 calls to the tip line and the Brockton Police Department have confiscated up to \$12,000 worth of fireworks. He states that this taskforce has been quite the success and that they've not had one fire due to fireworks since this has been put into place.

\*Chief Perez states that since 2020 there has been a 78% reduction in fireworks in the city.

\*Sergeant Cruickshank, head of the Joint Taskforce with the Fire Department, states that the tip line sometimes was used as an active firework line. This was something that wasn't explained to the public as well as it should've been. There were times that there were active calls that weren't listened to until too late. He wants to make it clear that it is a tip line only, not a hotline number.

\*Sergeant Cruickshank goes on to say that as far as next year, he thinks that there needs to be more proactive policing in a way where the homes known for fireworks are warned before the fact. He goes on to say that a problem was the advertisement of fireworks in Massachusetts although it is illegal in this state; he hopes to make these types of advertisements not allowed in the city in the future.

\*Councilor Nicastro asks if working together with the Fire Department was the right thing to do. Sergeant Cruickshank tells her yes, and that having both departments work together is important in many ways. She goes on to ask if Brockton was the only community to do this in the state to which Sergeant Cruickshank states that as far as the taskforce goes he isn't too sure. Chief Nardelli added that many fire chiefs had spoken to him about it and asked how it works.

\*Councilor Nicastro asks if a Taskforce will be made again over Labor Day weekend to which Chief Nardelli states that they could absolutely make that happen.

\*Councilor Thompson notes that the Taskforce contacted about 400 residents, and he asks what brings them to the residence and what was the main goal when they were there. Chief Nardelli states that a lot of times these calls and tips would come through the general business line and a member of each department would go to the home. Sergeant Cruickshank states that they would locate where they are setting the fireworks off, and once they got there ask if they had any other fireworks that needed to be confiscated.

\*Councilor Thompson asks if there is any avenue for a civil fine or if this is only a criminal offense. Sergeant Cruickshank tells him that the Fire Department can issue a citation for illegal use of fireworks. Chief Nardelli states that they did not issue any of these this year.

\*Councilor Asack asks if they feel like anyone else should be a part of this Taskforce, to which Chief Nardelli tells her that it worked very well the way it was.

\*Councilor Farwell states that while this year was much better than the previous years, we still need to do better. He believes that the fine for possession (\$100) isn't enough and that hopefully they can work to increase it. He states that it is heartbreaking to hear about pets, veteran's and ill constituents who cannot sleep because of the fireworks.

\*Councilor D'Agostino states that he appreciates all they do and thinks that the idea of having previous addresses is important.

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

10. Resolve: To have representatives of the Greater Brockton Minority Business Association, GBMBA, appear before the Brockton City Council to help bring awareness to their efforts to assist the minority business community in the city.

Invited: Yves Cajuste, Chairman

Jamie Hodges, Secretary

Maria Monteiro, VP  
Angel Hinostroza, Treasurer

\*Ms. Hodges states that this association was started to assist small minority businesses in the city. She goes on to say that Brockton is one of the only majority minority cities in New England. She states that since November they have been reaching out to businesses who feel as though they have been overlooked due to a language barrier or many other things. To assist small businesses, the association has a Haitian community navigator, a Cape Verdean community navigator and a Hispanic community navigator.

\*Mr. Cajuste states that this organization will offer three scholarships to students who are of a minority group going to college to study business or finance. He goes on to say that this organization intends to contribute to civic life by encouraging members, their families and friends to exercise the right to vote.

\*Ms. Monteiro is a small business owner in the City of Brockton and she tells the council how much of an impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on her business. She goes on to say that through the Cape Verdean Association she was made aware of many grants that were able to help her employees and their families.

\*Councilor Teixeira asks Mr. Cajuste why this organization has been formed now. He asks what the driving force of this organization was. Mr. Cajuste tells him that there was a point where business was down and he was approached by this organization and the Cape Verdean association and knew that it was his time to join a committee. He goes on to say that he asked for this association. He wanted to chair the Greater Brockton Minority Business Association to help those who were in need.

\*Councilor Teixeira wholeheartedly respects and appreciates everything that this organization is doing for the city and their constituents. He notes that we should make it well know that there is help for everyone out there.

\*Councilor Minichiello reiterates the fact that this organization is for all businesses in Brockton, and is here to help everyone, not just minorities.

\*Councilor Asack asks how small business get involved with the association to which Mr. Cajuste tells her that they have a website ([WWW.GBMBA.org](http://WWW.GBMBA.org)).

\*Mr. Cajuste states that the minority groups that they are looking to help are not just ethnic minority groups. They are also reaching out to women business owners, LGTBQ+ business owners and veterans.

\*Mr. Cajuste also tells Councilor Asack that they applied for air time on BCA as well. He states that they are planning to have a weekly show on BCA in different languages. By March 2023 he projects to have 300 members.

\*Councilor Rodrigues notes that the SBA grant Ms. Hodges spoke about really put Brockton on the map as this organization was one of the only community-based organizations to get this grant.

\*In the nine months that this organization has been together, they have helped small businesses apply for nearly \$7,000,000 worth of grants and loans.

\*Councilor Nicastro refers to the \$1 million dollar grant to the Cape Verdean Association and asks if it is fair to say that the GBMBA is a small business benefitting from this

grant. Mr. Cajuste states that on top of all of the assistance they get from associations throughout the city, they also give assistance to everyone else.

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

11. Resolve: To have representatives of Moms Demand Action organization appear before the Brockton City Council to help bring awareness to their campaign to educate the public on gun safety.

Invited: Kathleen Berry

\*Ms. Berry states that the most important thing to know is that this organization is not “anti-gun”, in fact, they respect responsible gun ownership and wish to promote public safety. What they are against, is the gun violence in this country which takes over 40,000 lives per year. In short, this organization is a group of concerned people committed to working together strategically to build a culture of gun safety and keep guns away from dangerous people. There are over 8 million members now nationwide.

\*Ms. Berry goes on to say that they advocate with politicians and policy makers to enact evidence-based lifesaving laws. She goes on to say that they advocated both federally and on a state level to address the fast-going gun safety problem in the country; ghost guns.

\*Paula St. James talks about the work being done on the federal and state level by this organization. She states that they are working to get federal laws consistent across the country.

\*Ms. Berry states that another important advocacy of theirs is more local. She states that gun violence can be solved by passing laws.

\*Ms. Berry notes the importance of securing firearms, and not just hiding them. She talks about how important it is to be smart about firearms.

\*Julia Sheehan talks about her concern as a teacher in America and how she appreciates why students are taught how to combat an active shooter, but notes that these are not the lessons that she wants to teach. She states that it doesn't need to be this way.

\*Ms. Berry states that gun violence costs Massachusetts 3.5 billion dollars each year.

\*Councilor Asack asks how people at home can have access to this information as well.

Ms. Berry tells her that there is a website people can access called [WWW.Besmartforkids.org](http://WWW.Besmartforkids.org). Law enforcement is a good tool to use to ask questions about safe gun storage and use.

\*Councilor Asack asks why the color for the movement is orange to which Ms. Berry states that orange became the color for gun violence prevention after a young girl in Chicago was killed in gang gunfire. She goes on to say that her friends chose the color because this is the color that hunters wear in the woods to protect themselves. They wear this color to be seen. She states that the public wants to be seen and not caught in the crossfire of two rival gangs.

\*Councilor Farwell states how important gun violence prevention is even though we don't read about it in our daily lives. He also notes that toy guns look so realistic that kids can get confused – he states how unfortunate it is. He talks about how important this work is and how important the message of this organization is.

\*Councilor Minichiello asks if they've talked to anyone in the Brockton Public School system about potential resources that this organization could provide to them. Ms. Berry states that this is the next step that they would like to take in Brockton. They are currently working with 15 other school districts as well.

\*Councilor D'Agostino states that he's glad that this organization is doing things at the federal level as the responsibility aspect of being a gun owner seems to get lost at the federal level.

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

Meeting Adjourned: 9:05pm