

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The Standing Committee on Finance met on *Monday, March 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM* in the *Council Chambers, Brockton City Hall, 45 School Street*, to consider the following:

- 1 Ordered: That the City Council authorize the City Clerk to waive the 120-day period under 301 CMR 51.08(B)(1) to permit the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, acting through the Department of Conservation and Recreation, to purchase the subject 8 acres of land (as identified in Exhibit A) located in the City of Brockton. The waiver requires approval by both the City Council and the Mayor.

Invited: Timothy Cruise, City Clerk

Robert Sullivan, Mayor

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Councilor Lally

- This is not a vote to approve or deny. The vote tonight is to allow the state to move forward without waiting 120 days to purchase.

Timothy Cruise, City Clerk

- Shaun Provencher, Land Protection Specialist from The Department of Conservation and Recreation(DCR) was in attendance and spoke on the matter.

Shaun Provencher(DCR)

- This is a private sale of 8 acres of landlocked wetlands bordering Ames Nowell State Park, currently entirely in Abington.
- This is the first time the state has purchased land in Brockton.
- There are regulations on timeframe for closing and would like to have the 120-day regulation waived to 60 days post public notification.

Councilor Thompson

- What is the purpose of purchasing the land? Is there going to be any building or park development?

Shaun Provencher(DCR)

- There will be no development. This is will remain protected as woods and wetlands under article 90.

President Nicasro

- Is there any reason for Brockton not to waive the time frame?

Shaun Provencher(DCR)

- The request is to allow for the property sale to close before the deadline of fiscal year end closing.

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

- 2 Ordered: In accordance with General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 44, recommending that the City Council approve the Tax Increment Exemption Agreement (TIE) between the City and CMK Development Partners, for the property located at 137 Main St.

Invited: John O'Donnell, Chairman, Board of Assessors
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- TIE agreement is to encourage development in the city.
- City will tax at 60% of value, after 10 years 100% will be taxed.

President Nicaastro

- Wanted to clarify the TIE agreement is for residential properties only. i.e. Commercial property on first floor taxed at 100% and residential on upper floors at discount?

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- State yes and that commercial is taxed at full rate.

Councilor Thompson

- Attended the planning board meeting. Merian building, including all 3 lots between existing building and Brockton Beer Company
- Benefit to downtown with increased lighting and a pocket park.

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- 137 Main St will have a base value of \$810,300 with 99 units.

Councilor Farwell

- There are 3 different address on this paperwork. Wants to verify that they don't need to amend the order to not have to come back later.

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- Verified document states 137 and map shows 3 lots. Will verify with law but there is no harm in amending.

Councilor Rodrigues

- Asked about the vision of the property?

Councilor Asack

- Saw plans and is concerned about parking spaces being turned into a park and mentioned that the city would lose parking.

Mr. Cavanaugh

- Local architect firm, BKA, will begin drawing up once final approvals received. There will be a rooftop fitness center, community room with a patio.

Councilor Asack

- Mentioned that you can't amend with the committee but it can go back to full city council.

Councilor Thompson

- Before we make any amendments, he would like to verify with legal counsel.

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

- 3 Ordered: In accordance with General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 44, recommending that the City Council approve the Tax Increment Exemption Agreement (TIE) between the City and 380 Quincy Street LLC, for the property located at 380 Quincy Street.

Invited: John O'Donnell, Chairman, Board of Assessors
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- To clarify on item 2, Mr. O'Donnell, Chairman, Board of Assessors, sent a msg that 137 Main St is one parcel.
- 380 Quincy St. TIE Agreement-fits standard TIE at 60% for 10 yrs.

Councilor Thompson

- Excited about project to replace a barren parking lot. This is a gateway to the east side of Brockton. Will bring value to this side of town.

President Nicaastro

- Clarification on commercial vs residential.

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- All residential

Councilor Asack

- In the area often. Thinks the building is a beautiful addition to the east side and will move things along in that area. Start of a lot of good things.
- When is groundbreaking

Michael Mathers Sr., Owner of Property

- Reiterated all the towns that will see this property as they enter the city.
- Hoping to break ground as soon as possible. Was slated to be done pre-pandemic but costs have increased. Longtime resident without large funds. Cant's give exact date.

Councilor Asack

- Understand circumstance, hopefully soon before prices increase further.
- Appreciates investing in Brockton from longtime family residents.

President Nicaastro

- Will there be groundbreaking in 2023?

Michael Mathers Sr., Owner of Property

- Yes, would have preferred to already have done so.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Thompson to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Asack. 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 \$51,480.00.

From: The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-FY22 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

To: Emergency Management Agency- FY22 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Fund

(The Emergency Management Agency will use this funding to purchase a vehicle trailer, light tower and generator.)

Invited: Stephan Hooke Jr, Director of Brockton Emergency Management
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Steve Hooke Jr, Brockton Emergency Management Agency (BEMA)

- Vehicle trailer, portable light tower and portable generator

Councilor Asack

- Do we currently have generators? Is this specific to emergency management? Will this be used for specific things, others be able to use?

Steve Hooke Jr, BEMA

- Yes, many sizes and types for different operations. Will be stored at DPW and will be used for various things.

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

- 5 Ordered: That the City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the grant (Congressionally Directed Spending) in the amount of \$3,000,000.

From: U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)- FY23 Community Project Funding Grant

To: The Finance Department- FY23 Community Project Funding Grant Fund

(The grant (Congressionally Directed Spending) funds will be used to upgrade the Lawrence R. Cosgrove Memorial Pool.)

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

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- This is the official step in the earmark we have been hearing so much about to accept the \$3M for the pool.
- Project is on its way. It frees up some ARPA money that had been slated for the pool to use elsewhere.
- Ready to go out to bid.

President Nicastro

- Would like an update.

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- Mentioned that it would be out to bid by end of month.
- Pool will not be opened for 2023.
- The pool will become ADA compliant. All bathrooms updated. Lap area, shade protection.
 - Pool is 57 yrs. old so will need to replumb entire pool.
 -

Councilor Rodrigues

- Heavily involved in the takeover of the pool from the DCR. Costs were \$1.5M from dilapidated land to what we have now.
- Concerned that informing of the funds we would not get as much bang for the buck and may end up costing more.
- Wants the new pool to be the same as the West sides Manning Pool.
- Hopes the plans are not the final project, wants something to dazzle.

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- This is why we have brought in an experienced project manager, Dan Pallotta, that understands public construction.

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- The design company that was chosen was in part because they have an employee there that is specifically dedicated to pool design, has designed pools throughout New England. It will be a pool that dazzles.

Councilor Rodrigues

- Mentioned that West Side was designed specifically to not just be water in a hole and He would like to see a shaded area that was not part of the project. A picnic area and area with playground equipment would be great. Having concessions so people could buy food along with a bathhouse, showers. Basically, wants top of the line ensure it gets replicated.
- Stated that he was a certified pool operator.
- Don't want to just rebuild the Cosgrove pool
- Cosgrove pool served this city for 57 yrs. but it's just a pool. Doesn't want to just rebuild the pool.
- Has incorporated some of the features of Manning pool, entrance to water allows parents to monitor various age children vs separate baby pool.
- Manning pool was ripped out. Asked if they like the outside area to be a mini park?
- Stated that with the fence, it looks like Plymouth County House of Corrections.
- He wants to ensure it has the features the citizens of the middle of the city deserve.

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- The Cosgrove pool will also be ripped out with some of same features as Manning pool.
- There will be a nice landscaped walkway from parking lot to bathhouse with picnic tables and people will be pleased when completed.

Councilor Minichiello

- Excited for the kids of the city and appreciates Councilor Rodrigues concerns. This city used to have 4 pools so we want to maximize the value and it's long overdue.
- Long lines waiting their turn to use. Asked how many users does Cosgrove hold now and how many will the new project hold.

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- Currently 250 people, not in pool, in the complex.
- Footprint won't change much and is based on deck size. State regulations.
- Salisbury Brook prohibits increasing the deck size more than we currently have.

Councilor Minichiello

- Asked if we can review to increase size for more utilization and not just standing in line to wait for their turn.

Councilor Mendes

- What are we planning for the increased demand at the Manning Pool?

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- The capacity is 200. Working on a plan. No specifics at this time and conversations are taking place.
- Stated that there could be an agreement with the YMCA or the high school with inside pools.

Councilor Lally

- Remarked about size of pool and received clarification on size of new design.
- Discussed with Councilor Asack restoration on a Montello pool. It is in high demand.
- Reiterated Councilor Minichiello's point on expanding the destination. Add other things to do in the future. The area is next to a school so, an effort can be made in the future to add a playground with state, school, federal or other city funds.
- As it is now many people will be happy with this.

Councilor Farwell

- Clarification on whether it has gone out to design and engineering and construction manager. How is the manager paid?

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- Design, yes. Construction, No. City has hired Dan Pellotta, an employee of the city that is overseeing all construction projects at City hall, War Memorial the pool. There is an advantage of saving significant monies on project management fees paying a salaried employee.

Councilor Farwell

- Concerned with the time management with the number of projects.

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- Looking at an additional staff to be at sites on a daily basis.

Councilor Farwell

- Disappointed with design presented. Lacks information. Parking plans for families in motor vehicles.

Councilor Thompson

- Clarification on current depth to new depth. Old pool is huge and intimidating More user friendly. As they get older will get a lot of use.
- Will there be programs to add swim lessons etc.?

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- The lifeguards are from the YMCA, which have had programs in the past with swim lessons, worked with Brockton Public Schools to have special needs programs a couple days a week.
- The one non school even in the past few years was the Mark O'Reilly swim meet.
- The pool will be 25-meter lap pool and activities will continue at new facility.

Councilor Thompson

- With the discussions of concessions. There is a new food truck ordinance. Can there be any agreements made?

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- There are many ice cream trucks currently that come through.
- The bathhouse is currently small. Here is not plans for concessions, however people are allowed to bring food.

President Nicastro

- Would like a more detailed plan with picnic tables next to Salisbury Park.
- Can we extend the hours of the Manning pool with the increased demand?
- Can children be bussed from Cosgrove to Manning? There will be children with no ride?
- Where will the O'Reilly meet take place this summer?

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- Concerns regarding capacity and stranded without return if at capacity.
- Not sure whether they will hold it at the Manning pool at this time.

President Nicastro

- Senator Warren indicated she would return for the ribbon cutting, to keep a nice pool in mind.

Councilor Rodrigues

- Concerned we are not utilizing the space appropriately to make a better design. There is room to the east and south of the current layout to expand. Was concerned about spending a lot of money to keep the same footprint size and not have more amenities like the west side.
- Doesn't want it to look like the prison it currently looks like.

Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks

- State regulations for fences is 8 ft and the appearance will be addressed as part of the project.

Councilor Rodrigues

- It looks like the courtyard at the Plymouth County House of Corrections. Mentioned that he didn't want to bring race into it but those kids standing in line outside those fences reminds me of kids standing in line at a prison.
- I want something with all the bells and whistles that is appealing to the children so that it doesn't look like a compound. He would like to expand beyond existing fence, making it a destination on the east side of Brockton. This design is not good for the money.

Councilor Minichiello

- There is a lot of land at the Plouffe School and this is the time to explore what can be done with the land before we start this. It's an improvement but we can do better.

Councilor Farwell

- Verifying the Park's Commission has approved all these changes thus far.
- Displeased with the minimal map and information given to approve \$3M. Would like to postpone for further review.

Councilor Rodrigues

- Stated that he is not against this, and that this is money coming in to the city. This is not a decision whether or not to accept the money. I just think prior to the final acceptance we should have the superintendent show us what the final project will look like.

Councilor Asack

- Do we have a timeline on when the approval is needed in order to not lose funds?

Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

- Final design will be done in a few weeks.
- Wants to provide update on all ARPA funded projects.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Thompson to report FAVORABLE, 2nd by Councilor Lally. 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 \$2,000,000.00.

From: The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-FY23 Healthy Homes Production Grant Program (HUD)

To: Brockton Redevelopment Authority-FY23 Healthy Homes Production Grant Program Fund

(The Brockton Redevelopment Authority agency intends on using these funds to provide financial assistance for moderate to low income families to improve their living space such as: lead mediation, asbestos, air quality, mercury, asthma, mold and mildew.)

This grant requires a 10% match that will be funded from the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).

Invited: Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Dr. Patricia Jackson, Interim Executive Director,
Brockton Redevelopment Authority (BRA)

Dr. Patricia Jackson, Interim Executive Director, Brockton Redevelopment Authority (BRA)

- Invites Cindy Kong, Director of Programs and Operation, BRA to speak on behalf.

Cindy Kong, Director of Programs and Operation, BRA

- Administer Lead CBDG funding. We will be addressing mold, mildew, asbestos and air quality based on the age of homes focusing on low to moderate income families.

Councilor Minichiello

- What does provide financial assistance mean? Funding, providing a service, giving a loan?

Cindy Kong, BRA

- There is a construction process with procurement, it's a case by case scenario based on the hazards identified. Contractors will go mitigate. There is a restriction on the property for 5 years. It goes down 20% each year and after 5 years its free.

Dr. Patricia Jackson, BRA

- The contractors are going in and mediating issues that can lead to issues in these homes.
- There are limited things we can do with HUD ad equipment tracking.

Councilor Minichiello

- Who is providing checks and balances?

Dr. Patricia Jackson, BRA

- Procurement process with HUD. Checklists completed by certified board approved inspectors to quality standards as always provided.

Councilor Rodrigues

- What programs are being cut to fund this difference?

Dr. Patricia Jackson, BRA

- Some projects are over budgeted and have surplus. Some projects are completed and no longer need to be budgeted for.

Councilor Rodrigues

- What are the current projects being funded by CBDG?

Dr. Patricia Jackson, BRA

- Commercial Rehab, development projects, façade, public facilities.

Councilor Rodrigues

- In the past these funds have been used to purchase fire trucks and police cars. We have a demanding police dept and public safety equipment purchases should be made with some of the unallocated funds.

- We are shortchanging some programs. Do you allocate certain funds for certain programs?

Dr. Patricia Jackson, BRA

- May not be. They only provide funds when asked. They have not asked for the funds.
- The previous project at the pool could request funds and could 100% be supported.

Cindy Kong, BRA

- This is a multi-year project and are spread over 3 years.

Councilor Tavares

- Is there assistance to apply for the program with the language barriers within the community?
- When you say low income, do you mean multi families, single families, anyone can apply? Timeline for work to be done?

Dr. Patricia Jackson, BRA

- Multiple languages spoken at BRA, assistance with filling out the online applications.
- It's a process between the approval process and contractors so I can't give a finite timeline for each case.

President Nicaastro

- There is a technical discrepancy in the order. Funds should be allocated to the city of Brockton, not the BRA. Therefore, recommendation to table and have resubmitted. Request Councilor Farwell to withdraw motion and table.

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

- 7 Resolve: Be it resolved by the Brockton City Council to invite representative from MassINC Gateway Cities Innovation Institute to come before the City Council to make a presentation and discuss their findings relative to the Gateway Cities report on Social Infrastructure featuring the City of Brockton.

Invited: Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development
Andre Leroux, MassINC Gateway Hubs Project Director

Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development

- Explained social infrastructure and their asset to the community.

Andre Leroux, MassINC Gateway Hubs Project Director

- We show how a city like Brockton can become the hub they once were.
- Brockton is one of 5 case studies in the state.
- How do we create connected communities? Sports facilities, community rooms, parks and playgrounds.
- Can you pass the stroll test with things to just walk through for 2 hours?
- 46% of the downtown is dedicated to parking. 1/3 of all developable land is parking.
- Need active edges to your civic spaces

Councilor Asack

- Brockton is unique. It is not a bike community.
- I do respect the studies but the parking we do have isn't situated to be able to walk to restaurants. Not enough activity in the downtown.
- Where is study of Main St going 2 ways.

Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development

- Warren Ave will be open to 2 way once public safety building is complete then we will work on Main St.

Andre Leroux, MassINC Gateway Hubs Project Director

- Great opportunity based on street landscape.
- Need amenities to attract people and increase foot traffic.

Councilor Asack

- Wants to see more retail.

Councilor Thompson

- Missing the social infrastructure currently. Focused on building the structure vs the social aspect. What is the identity of downtown?
- Food courts, festivals, experiment with programs.
- Board for downtown business owners.
- He would like to maximize the parking that the City has and talked about making Adams garage 24 hrs.
- When in Boston we walk from garage past businesses, parks and statues to the location. There are places of historical significance here that can be the same.
- We have to start...we haven't started yet.

Andre Leroux, MassINC Gateway Hubs Project Director

- Need complimentary businesses to utilize the parking we do have at off hours. Events and family activities that are after the 9-5 hours that city hall plaza uses the parking.
- Look to existing residents to create a theme for the downtown and build entrepreneurship, incorporate black owned business in the downtown.

Councilor Farwell

- Asked who directed your company and to do this study? Were public meetings held?
- Do you know whether the Cape Verdean, Haitian communities were consulted with?
- Any discussions with the Mayor or City Council?

Andre Leroux, MassINC Gateway Hubs Project Director

- Stated there was joint by walk Boston and MassInc.
- During covid there were zoom videos, in person walk through with the pictures uploaded to the website.
- State that they never met with Mayor or City Council.

Councilor Farwell

- Mentioned that the City was in early stage planning to develop commuter rail station.

Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development

- City did not engage MassInc and they did on their own and presented to city. Not affiliated with city or this department.

- He stated that the City in the process of building new public safety building which would allow for development at that site, and was working with MassEcon to do a study under 'Ready 100' for urban renewal plan and action strategy. It has been identified as a predevelopment parcel.

Councilor Farwell

- Mr. May is stating 'we' are working on a plan but who is we if he just stated he did not speak to the Mayor or to Council. Who is we?
- It is important the we have a sense of what is going on.
- As a matter of professional courtesy, Council could have known.
- Either we represent the citizens of this city or we have not done our job.

Councilor Rodrigues

- PowerPoint printed copy that was presented was difficult to decipher and not in color.
- Asked for clarification regarding where the study was looking at and stating there was no need after 5 pm. He mentioned that restaurants I personally goes to a few times a week are opened after 5pm.

Andre Leroux, MassINC Gateway Hubs Project Director

- Stated the study one looked at properties directly surrounding city hall plaza, not the entire downtown.
- He stated that his company was only exploring the edges of civic spaces and was not making a judgement on the city but providing guidance for how to create that edge to fill in with food trucks etc.

Councilor Rodrigues

- Greater Brockton Minority Business Association states they will not come to Brockton after 5pm because it is unsafe.
- Studies are geared toward user's necessities not necessarily the truth.
- Hurting what we are trying to do.
- Not putting our money where our mouth is.

President Nicastro

- Grateful for the presentation. All gateway cities have strengths and weaknesses and it is great to compare and contrast the differences.

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