

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The Standing Committee on Finance met on *Monday, April 3, 2023 at 7:00 PM* in the *Council Chambers, Brockton City Hall, 45 School Street*, to consider the following:

### Public Hearing:

1. Ordered: That the common necessity and convenience of the inhabitants of the City of Brockton require the laying out and acceptance of **Budd Avenue**, extending from Sheridan Street, easterly 1,166.67 feet, more or less, to Adams Street, and for that purpose it is necessary to take an easement for **Highway Purposes and lay out as a public street or way of said City of Brockton, said easement passing by or over** lands of those persons shown on "EXHIBIT A", attached hereto and parties unknown. Said layout of said street, being 50.00 feet in width is shown more particularly on the following described plan:

1. Land Court Plan **27625A (Sheets 1 and 2)** entitled "Plan of Land in Brockton, Bradford Saivetz, C.E.", dated November 1, 1955, April 5, 1957, and June 13, 1957.

The land taken is more fully described as follows:

All the land within the limits of a private way known as **Budd Avenue**, supposed to belong to parties unknown, being a strip of land 50.00 feet in width, extending from Sheridan Street, easterly, a distance of about 1,166.67 feet, more or less, to Adams Street, as shown on the here-in described plan and to which reference is hereby made for a more particular description. And we have considered and estimated the damages sustained by all persons who have not waived damages in their several estates as follows:

**NO AWARDS.** Exhibit A, Layout and Acceptance and all other attachments are all located in the Clerk's Office for viewing.

Invited: Patrick Hill, Commissioner of DPW

Councilor Thompson

- Discussed drainage issues and the need for the public way to allow for reconstruction and flooding management.
- Inquires whether there are residents in city hall that would like to speak.

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

### Public Hearing Closed

Councilor Thompson, motion to take item 7 out of order due to multiple invited guests having an event to attend.

- 7 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 update the committee on the previous discussion of athletic facilities in the community, funding, and the need for development of fields and upgrades for recreational uses in the City.

Invited: Robert Sullivan, Mayor

Michael Thomas, Superintendent of Schools  
Aldo Petronio, Chief Financial Officer of Schools  
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer  
Kathleen Ehlers, Vice Chair of School Committee  
Tony Rodrigues, Ward 4 School Committee

**Robert Sullivan, Mayor**

- Stated the need to help the next generation of children and provide recreational athletic facilities.
- How can we leverage grant fund to finance projects?
- MSBA approved renovation of Brockton High. It was not feasible to say we can do all fields. City can't afford it.
- Marciano stadium needs funding for renovations, \$1.7M in Billy Polisenso Soccer Fields to fund.
- Last week the city requested \$6.1M from Plymouth County and would like a part of the \$110M that is still available through the county.
- \$1.7M Polisenso fields- multi facility field and can use internal staff to assist.
- Looking at East Middle School.
- Asking local officials to ask Plymouth County for additional funds.

**Councilor Thompson**

- Thanked Mayor and his commitment to updating fields at various schools.
- Polisenso and Maricano field request has been sent to Plymouth County.
- Field will provide additional program and keeping kids safe.

**Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer**

- Former mayor authorized funds by legislative branch \$1.7M is available to borrow at any-time and will try to fulfill needs with available funds and supplement with ARPA funds.
- Treasury has an end day and money needs to be committed by calendar end 2025
- Believes the City has the capacity to spend beyond what the county has to provide and update piping projects, parks, playgrounds and many projects.
- First phase is realistic.

**Councilor Farwell**

- Asked Superintendent Thomas if School Committee has voted on the fields.

**Superintendent Thomas**

- Information was provided but have not presented a vote and felt that the request should go to the council.

**Councilor Farwell**

- Is concerned with turf fields compared to grass and wants a healthy conversation about the health of young people.

**Councilor Minichiello**

- Stated it was good timing for various projects, including the pool, and wants quality programs that other towns and cities have.

- Will support and lobby to get funding for children that have good programs and schools and safe programs with good role models. Sports is a method of leadership.

#### Councilor D'Agostino

- Commented on advocating for additional funds and is a lifetime opportunity.
- City can only borrow a certain number of projects with the High School being the biggest. Looks forward to CFO's future presentation.

#### President Nicastro

- Athletics is a component of education and is concerned that information is missing.
- Discussed the difference between artificial turf fields vs real grass.
- Research was done regarding the costs of the fields to rebuild. Grass seed is expensive, along with the cost of water.
- Concerned artificial turf is made with a chemical that emits methane and NFL players are trying to ban due to injuries. Martha's Vineyard has a court order pending and a NH field contaminated. Industry says that it can't be made without these chemicals and no studies have been done to determine if it is safe.

#### Superintendent Thomas

- Mentioned the costs of using sod - 150 yards and drilling a well is \$700K- \$1M for irrigation. It is expensive and takes a longer time to prepare.

#### Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- Mentioned that not all information from media is not always correct.
- Said PFAS chemical is in materials in fire prevention equipment and Teflon.
- Fibers on turf not using PFAS in the product cannot be used.
- No scientific study states that turf fields are not safe.
- Chrome rubber chemicals are there but cannot breakdown when breathing. Can provide additional information and presentations.
- Design natural grass, lots of maintenance, amount of time it has to rest, provides best fit, safety, costs for all clients.

#### President Nicastro

- Quoted FOX news based an increase in injuries due to turf fields.

#### Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- Marciano field put in 2011, warranty is about 8 yrs-15yrs, there needs to be resurfaced.

#### President Nicastro

- Found articles from Players Association and Boston Globe stating injuries from turf field and how a poor city can maintain these fields in the future. In 10 years when they need to be replaced and when fields could cause injuries as wear and tear and children are now being harmed?

#### Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- Only planned what is most effective with fields and future conversations around how to fund repairs years down the road.

Superintendent Thomas

- Original request was to get a design and to show plans and no discussions were on the school side other than providing a design, which would be the next phase of the conversation around safety, long term plans and no discussion on funding has been done.

Councilor D'Agostino

- Why turf versus grass.

Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- Grass can handle 3<sup>rd</sup> of fall and spring and rest in the summer, over used and in the fall, need to build with irrigation, drainage, stormwater plans, time frame to let grass seed and needs 2 years.
- Turf- 3hrs more usage, Lexington has multiple turf fields.

Councilor D'Agostino

- Asked what would Marciano what would it look like as grass field.

Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- Field could be used for certain parts of the year, and then other fields would need to be used while fields rests.

Councilor D'Agostino

- What does \$1M get for a turf field compared to grass?

Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- Irrigation, drainage, equipment adds up for grass fields.

Superintendent Thomas

- High school was grass because 2 other practice fields have been taken away. There is a need for turf to withstand practices, games that practice and play. That is why they switched to turf.

Councilor Thompson

- Asked what was being proposed.

Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- Discussed how the field's turf surface is designed for safety and the importance of using a field pads.
- Precautionary pads help with concussions, 25 yrs of use.

Tony Rodrigues, School Committee

- Advocating for fields for 20 yrs and described usage at Marciano Stadium and stated that the city doesn't have the correct number of fields to accommodate the number of games and how kids feel when the fields are bad compared to other cities and towns.
- City will not get the usage and grass fields have so many programs that it is like playing on dirt.

- Will come and put a presentation together for the council and can't forget about the city.
- Middle School is trying to offer all other sports and needs these facilities constructed.
- Lack of lights at all of the fields and look at the condition of the fields.

President Nicaastro

- Knowledge is power.

Councilor Farwell

- Do you know what companies track injuries on turf fields?

Jonathan, Turf Consultant

- 80% of customers have at least one turf field.

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

Councilor Lally, motion to take item 6 out of order due item 7 being taken for city employees and the invited guests for 6 are businesses and residents.

- 6 Resolve: Be it resolved by the Brockton City Council to invite Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development for the City of Brockton, and area restauranters, to come before the Council to provide an update and discuss their vision of the Sycamore Grove project being proposed by the City of Brockton.

Invited: Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development

Joseph R. Angelo, Owner, Joe Angelo's

Chrismin Charlotte, Owner, Tamboo

Manuel Dasilva, Owner, Preto's Island Cuisine

Manuel Rodrigues, Co-Owner, Cristal

Tony Rodrigues, Co-Owner, Cristal

Councilor Farwell

- Apologies of absence of colleagues and asked if businesses would like to postpone a couple of weeks.
- Move to postpone

Councilor Lally

- Would like to hear from the businesses that are here since we made them listen about turf for an hour.

Councilor D'Agostino

- Would like to hear from businesses due to the amount of time they have been waiting.

Councilor Farwell

- Absent councilors will not be able to provide feedback, which fragments the process.

President Nicaastro

- Asked if business owners would like to speak.

Chrismin Charlotte, Tamboo

- Has been in Brockton for 15yrs. Opposes the project as it is based on lack of input from local businesses. This will affect his business in a bad way. It will take away from parking where there is already parking issues,
- Bringing on competing vendors that sell liquors in the back of current businesses
- Needs to be fair to current businesses.
- Would like help with adding decks and features which add value to his restaurant..
- We have invested time, energy and money and this should serve us, at a minimum, not hurt us.
- The idea is to rip out the brick and make a green space and make it better but, better for who? It will not be better for me.

President Nicaastro

- Request to redevelop that area to make a park and owners are concerned because they were not consulted.

Councilor Farwell

- How many opportunities have you had to discuss your concerns with the city?

Chrismin Charlotte, Tamboo

- The business was not part of the original plan but told after.
- The plan was created and then we were asked about it.

Councilor Farwell

- Asked about their involvement, clarified the plan was developed before discussions and the owners were asked after it was decided what the plan would be.
- New vendors will be competition to your business, asked Mr Angelo as well.

Joseph Angelo

- Joe Angelo stated his business was here for 31<sup>st</sup> years.
- 2019 meeting at a school that proposed a plan but no drawings. There were a few meeting but still not much. Then saw the plan online.
- He wants the process to be fair to everyone and not eliminate livelihood,
- Concerned for safety and number of kids at night in the parking garage.
- No parking study has been done so businesses can see the impact.
- Wants to know why there is a need for a concession stand behind the 4 businesses that already do the same thing the concession stand is going to do.
- A lot of room for improvement for everyone

Mr. Rodrigues, Cristal

- Working with Rob May for 14 yrs has been an unpleasant process. Discussed adding more residential space and let Rob May know he wanted to add green space.
- Too much parking being taken when business that are looking to grow
- Asked Rob for businesses to be part of the plan

- Doesn't like the plan and how it will affect the business when take-out service is strong
- Want a more inclusive meeting plans and there is a new business that serves 600 people.
- Stated some ideas for bringing green space in Brockton

#### Councilor Farwell

- Wants colleagues to have opportunity to hear from businesses and appreciated hearing from everyone

#### President Nicaastro

- Stated that Mayor Sullivan will work with businesses

#### Councilor Thompson

- Came on board 2020 and was in support of the project and reached out to property owners to gather information and get feedback
- Some progress has been made with this Sycamore Grove Project:
  - ❖ Develop 8-10 additional parking. Currently has 55, proposal has 25 (losing half spaces) – mentioned the parking garage 435 parking spots and filed a motion to begin looking at cost to make for 24hr parking facility, pay on foot, automated gate, security cameras & lighting.
  - ❖ Worked with traffic commission and removed taxi stand.
  - ❖ VFW parkway, 7-10 parking spaces and see if additional parking on Crescent Street.
  - ❖ Request with parking authority-suggested adding lights and signage in the area directing people to the school parking that is free and provides a lot of parking and green space.
  - ❖ Regarding competition, spoke with committees and is just proposal if it gets established through having operational control and form a non-profit to program Sycamore Grove.
  - ❖ Working with Rodrigues for outdoor dining with a deck for each of the owners, conversations are ongoing, façade program is available as well for façade grants.

#### Councilor Mendes

- Asked if any other business owners wanted to speak.
- Thanked councilor Thompson for his efforts but stated more work needs to be done so that all members have an opportunity to come together.
- Provided an option around competitors.

#### Councilor D'Agostino

- Discussed why he wanted business to talk and have an opportunity to speak.
- Any positive idea if the proposal if passed.
- Asked Mr. Angelo how he felt when PROVA was behind his business.

#### Joseph Angelo

- It was great when PROVA was there. It showed people it could be safe to be downtown. They didn't take parking to put PROVA there.

- Shut down the space for 365 days to hold 20 events? Doesn't make sense that you need to lose parking for the entire year for 20 events.
- Doesn't want to rush to spend the money. It's not free money, it's tax payer's money and doesn't want to waste it. Would like to sit down and discuss more.
- Appreciates the time to talk.

Chrismin Charlotte, Tamboo

- Doesn't want negatives to outweigh the positives.
- When PROVA occurred, a façade was put on his business without permission, sheds placed behind property without permission.
- Project should fit in with what the business have done and put work in to building.
- PROVA was short term.
- Businesses are being pushed aside.
- Project should fit in with the business vs the business fitting into the project.

President Nicastro

- Would like to postpone agenda item.

Councilor Lally

- Agrees with postponing for other councilors and Rob May to attend.

Having considered the same, motion by Councilor Farwell to report POSTPONE, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Minichiello. Motion carried by a hand vote.

2. Ordered: That the following petition be approved and submitted to the Great and General Court for approval under Clause (1) of Section 8 of Article 2, as amended, of the Amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to the end that legislation be adopted precisely as follows, except for clerical or editorial changes of form only.

**AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES IN THE CITY OF BROCKTON.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of section twenty-six B of chapter one hundred and eleven of the General Laws to the contrary, the city of Brockton may appoint a commissioner of public health who has control over the health and human services department, and who shall either: (1) be the holder of a graduate degree in medicine, public health, public administration or a related field with a least two years full time administrative experience in the organization, management or delivery of public health or health care services, or (2) have an equivalent combination of education and experience in health or health care.

Invited: Megan Bridges, City Solicitor  
Robert Sullivan, Mayor  
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

President Nicastro

- Shannon Resnick standing in for Megan Bridges.

Shannon Resnick

- Order to adopt petition vs ordinance explanation.
- Body adopted a state statute that moves Board of Health to Commission on Health.
- Strict language on who can be Commissioner of Health.

Councilor Thompson

- Asked if home rule petition was previously approved?

Shannon Resnick

- Order is in ordinance now.

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

- 3 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 \$36,126.11

From: Human Resources- Employee Benefits- Contractual Union Costs

To: Public Property - Personal Services Other Than Overtime

for purposes of funding the Brockton Building and Construction Trades contract. This provides funding for the first year of a three (3) year contract (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2025).

Invited: Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Karen Preval, City Auditor

- Union contracts are settled. Using funds already appropriated to cover these expenditures.
- Funds are requested to be transferred to cover this fiscal year of the settled union contract.

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

- 4 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 \$50,000

From: Human Resources- Employee Benefits- Contractual Union Costs

To: DPW- Water Enterprise	\$5,000
DPW- Sewer Enterprise	\$5,000
Library	\$5,000
Cemetery	\$5,000
DPW- Highway	\$5,000
DPW- Maintenance	\$5,000

DPW- Refuse Enterprise	\$5,000
Parking Authority	\$5,000
Parks and Recreation	\$5,000
Public Property	\$5,000

for purposes of funding the Public Employees’ Local Union 1162, Water & Sewer contract, Laborer’s Local Union 1162 contract, and Library SEIU, Local 888 Union’s contract without detrimental impact on the continuous provision of the existing level of municipal services. This provides funding for the first year of a three (3) year contract (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2025).

Invited: Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer  
Shannon Resnick, Legislative Counsel

Shannon Resnick

- Not typical of legislative counsel to speak on contract negotiations but the funds were already budgeted and wanted the council to still be able to vote on the appropriation.

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

- 5 Ordered: That in accordance with G.L.c. 44, §53A, the City hereby accepts, as a gift from the Estate of Francis X. McDonnell, by and through its attorney, John F. Creedon, Esq. and submitted to the City Council by Mayor Robert F. Sullivan, subject under the said statute for approval by the City Council of Brockton as follows:

1. The sum of (\$350,000.00) three hundred and fifty thousand dollars to be used by the City of Brockton Parks and Recreation Commission under the direction of the Mayor for (a) improvements to the DW Field Park, inclusive of the Golf Course; and (b) to acquire and place a park bench bearing a plaque with the name and in memory of the said Francis X. McDonnell, Golf Professional.

Invited: Attorney John F. Creedon  
Timothy Carpenter, Superintendent of Parks  
Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer

Attorney Creedon

- Surprised someone offering money to the city would be last on the agenda.
- Discussed the history and life of Mr. Francis McDonnell and explained his activities working and playing at DW Field and wanted to donate funds to pay for park benches and beatification in that area.
- He stated that additional funds would be coming.

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