

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the standing committee on Finance was held on Monday October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7:00PM in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 45 School St., Brockton, MA. The meeting was called to order at 7:05PM with nine members present and Councilor Rodrigues presiding. Councilors Minichiello and Tavares absent.

President Rodrigues began the meeting by having a moment of silence for Councilor David Teixeira's step mom who passed away this morning.

1. Acceptance of the minutes of the September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting.

Accepted and placed on file.

### Public Hearing:

2. Ordered: That the common necessity and convenience of the inhabitants of the City of Brockton require the laying out and acceptance of **BELL ROCK AVENUE**, extending from the end of the 1970 layout easterly a distance of 120.00 feet to station 3+95.18 and from Granite Street westerly a distance of 240.37 feet to station 6+95.55, 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 42.00 feet in width, is shown more particularly on a plan entitled "Layout and Acceptance Plan of Bell Rock Avenue", dated May 17, 2024, drawn by J.K. Holmgren Engineering, LLC, 1024 Pearl Street, Brockton, MA. 02301, to be recorded herewith and made a part of this taking. The land taken is more fully described as follows: All the land within the limits of a private way known as **Bell Rock Avenue**, supposed to belong to parties unknown, being a strip of land 42.00 feet in width, extending from the end of the 1970 layout easterly, a distance of 120.00 feet and from Granite Street westerly, a distance of 240.37 feet, as shown on the herein described plan, 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.**

Invited: DPW Commissioner Patrick Hill

Commissioner Hill briefly explained the goal of the extension as well as explaining that it is not taking land from other residents nearby.

Rita Spinola of 27 Vermont Avenue raised questions regarding the letter she received. Commissioner Hill and Councilor Lally explained to her that her property would not be touched and that it is more for an awareness notice.

Carolyn Pepler of 41 Bell Rock Avenue wanted to say thank you for the work finally being done on Bell Rock Avenue.

Councilor Lally motioned to recommend favorably. Motion was properly seconded.

Councilor Deroncourt on the motion, asked Commissioner Hill with this acceptance, what the next step would be, referring to pavements and any type of fixes to which Commissioner Hill responded that streets are not prioritized by the way they get accepted and that there is a Pavement Management Program that sets up a guide line as to how and what streets should be paved next. Councilor Lally with a point of information added that making the road public does not come with a time table or a pot of money to pave the road, but it does make it eligible.

### **Public Hearing Closed**

3. Appointment of Mr. Allan Parker, of Bassett Road, Brockton, MA 02301, to serve on the Elections Commission for a four (4) year term, ending September 2028.

Invited: Mr. Allan Parker

Mr. Allan Parker explained his thankfulness for being considered for the position. Councilor Asack motioned to recommend favorably, and that was properly seconded.

On the motion, councilor Nicastro asked Mr. Parker for a little bit of background information. Mr. Parker explained that his family has owned a home care business and that he was served on multiple boards.

4. Appointment of Mr. Iolando Spinola, of 23 Noyes Avenue, 02301, as the City of Brockton's delegate to the Old Colony Planning Council for a one (1) year term, ending in September 2025.

Invited: Mr. Iolando Spinola

Councilor Farwell motioned to recommend favorably. Motion was properly seconded.

On the motion, Councilor Nicastro asked if there could potentially be any conflict of interest between the Old Colony Planning Council and the Planning Board, to which Mr.

Spinola explained that he believes it would actually supplement and amplify the work that is being done.

5. Appointment of Mr. Michael Avilla, of 813 Court Street, Brockton, MA 02302, to the Parks and Recreation Commission for a five (5) year term, ending September 2029.

Invited: Mr. Michael Avilla

Councilor Derenoncourt motioned to recommend item favorably. Motioned was properly seconded.

On the motion, Councilor Nicasastro asked if he could briefly tell us why he is excited to join the Parks and Recreation Commission. Mr. Avilla explained that he believes it is time for him to step up and give back to his community.

6. Ordered: That the City Council authorizes the acceptance and expenditure of the total grant funds in the amount of \$50,000.00.

FROM: MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN WATER TRUST \$50,000

TO: DPW - WATER \$50,000

Invited: DPW Commissioner Patrick Hill  
Chief Financial Officer Troy Clarkson

DPW Commissioner Patrick Hill explained this is a grant to assist in cyber protection.

Councilor Asack motioned to recommend favorably. Motion was properly seconded.

On the motion, Councilor Farwell asked for more information regarding the cyber security. Commissioner Hill explained that it is just enhancing the cyber security regarding those attempting to hack into the city's water chemical usage, and other type of levels.

Motion was properly 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 \$119,370.00.

FROM: MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH \$119,370.00

TO: POLICE DEPARTMENT \$119,370.00

Invited: Chief Financial Officer Troy Clarkson  
Police Chief Brenda Perez and/or Designee(s)

BPD Grant Writer Lugenia Lopes began by stating that this grant has already been presented in front of the council before and that it is actually an increase to the funding.

Councilor Nicastro asked what the grant money would be used for, to which Lugenia Lopes explained that it is for two of the BPD partner programs, and that all the funds directly support sexual assault and domestic violence victims.

Councilor Farwell asked the Clerk if he would feel more comfortable with a change of language to which Mr. Clerk Cruise responded that he believes it is fine as is.

Councilor Asack asked about a match with the city for the grant to which Lugenia Lopes responded that there is not.

Councilor Lally motioned to recommend favorably, motion properly seconded and carried by a hand vote.

8. Ordered: In accordance with the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 44, recommending that the City Council approve the expenditure of \$31,889.50.

FROM: DPW WATER- PURCHASE OF SERVICE \$31,889.50

TO: WEST GROUP LAW \$31,889.50  
(Postponed from Finance Committee Meeting 9/16/24)

Invited: City Solicitor Megan Bridges  
Chief Financial Officer Troy Clarkson  
DPW Commissioner Patrick Hill

Clerk Cruise began by stating the Chief Financial Officer has requested that this item be tabled as he will come back with a different funding source.

Councilor Farwell motioned to table the item which was properly seconded and carried by a hand vote.

9. Resolved: To have Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Priya Tahiliani appear before a committee of the Brockton City Council to discuss the methods and policies of the Brockton School Department regarding CORI checks on employees that may have direct contact with the students of the Brockton Public Schools.

Invited: Superintendent of Schools Priya Tahiliani and any staff members as needed

President Rodrigues stated that there was word from the Superintendent that she would not be able to make it to the meeting to speak on these items at this time.

Councilor Asack motioned to postpone to the next Finance Committee Meeting. Motion was properly seconded and carried by a hand vote.

- 10. Resolve:** Be it resolved by the Brockton City Council to invite Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer, to appear before the Finance Committee to discuss and provide an update on the current status of the FY25 budget and setting of the tax rate.

Invited: Chief Financial Officer Troy Clarkson  
Honorable Mayor Robert F. Sullivan

CFO Troy Clarkson began by providing an updated explanation on the current status of the FY25 budget.

Councilor Thompson asked if the City of Brockton has an internal calendar regarding reporting requirements, and that shows us what to meet for certain targeted time frames to which CFO Clarkson responded by stating the Department of Revenue does help, but that there is no calendar and that he views specific dates as arbitrary. Councilor Thompson explained that he believes a date circled on the calendar is more of a mind focusing technique.

Councilor Thompson then asked if we have any accounts in deficit to which CFO Clarkson explained that there are no deficits on the city side.

CFO Troy Clarkson then went on to explain that with where the budgets were not too long ago from the deficit, the city finishing in surplus in both the city and school budget should be viewed as a positive.

Councilor Thompson then asked if we have submitted all of our reimbursement grants to which CFO Troy Clarkson responded that yes, they have, and also explained that there are many other grants/departments that receive them as well, outside of School, Police, and Fire. CFO Clarkson also went on to explain that the free cash amount will be reduced.

Councilor Thompson later on asked if, while overseeing the city and school budget, if there is anything that's causing alarming red flags to which CFO Clarkson responded by stating yes.

Councilor Farwell stated that he shares comments from CFO Clarkson, that the Mayor's and his meeting in Boston snatched the City of Brockton from the jaws of bankruptcy. Councilor Farwell then highlighted that part of CFO Troy Clarkson's job description

includes overseeing the financial planning and operation for all departments, including the school department.

Councilor Farwell asked if they have voted to transfer money within the FY25 budget or if they are just operating on what was given based on the Councilor's votes on July 1<sup>st</sup> to which CFO Clarkson explained that the answer to that question today is no, however they are working on a process in which the school committee will be asked to vote transfers on a regular basis so that the accountability and transparency that has not been there will be in the near future.

Councilor Thompson motioned to recommend favorably. Motion was properly seconded and carried by a hand vote.

11. Resolve: WHEREAS, The city is evaluating options for the development of the Fairgrounds Property composed of 66 acres of land bordering neighborhoods and roadways, and,

WHEREAS, The City Council will eventually consider and approve zoning changes which are appropriate, given the residential and commercial areas currently existing in this location;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

Mr. Rob May, Director of Planning and Economic Development, be invited to a meeting of the council to provide an overview of issues and considerations for zoning changes and successful development of the Fairgrounds Property.

Invited: Director of Planning and Economic Development Rob May

Director Rob May began by briefly discussing some of the ongoing doings regarding the Fairgrounds.

Councilor Farwell explained how beneficial the Fairgrounds Property can be for the city if done properly.

Councilor Thompson asked if Mr. May believes that the community agreement is needed prior to accepting an overlay district to which Mr. May responded yes.

Councilor Thompson then mentioned how there are obvious projects that the city would be against, and that he believes that there is discussions that need to be have regarding what the city does not want to have such as certain industrial uses.

Councilor Thompson asked on the timeframe for a community agreement to which Mr. May responded by stating he has an outline of an agreement that he has shared with the developer and their attorney, as well as the mayor and city attorney, and is hoping that once a draft is agreed upon internally, that they will present it to the developers.

Councilor Thompson explained that ultimately the decision needs to be methodical and done with an informed approach.

Councilor Farwell explained that although a land use agreement is negotiable, that he doesn't believe a public negotiation is what is best, and that the negotiations should be done by Mr. May, the Mayor, and the City Solicitor.

Councilor Derenoncourt expressed the significance that this project can have on the future of Brockton, and compared it to Dedham's Legacy Place, as something that can bring in revenue and be a positive addition to the city for not only our own residents, but also others who would come which in turn only benefits the city's future growth.

Councilor Nicastro stated that she doesn't necessarily see this to be a Legacy Place type of project, but that she does believe there can still be commercial success with this project. Councilor Nicastro also stated that the professionals and experts should decide what they think is best, and the city should then go from there.

Councilor Griffin expressed his desire to make this project successful and how he believes it can ignite the development for the City significant if done properly.

Councilor Farwell motioned to recommend favorably. Motion was properly seconded and carried by a hand vote.

- 12. Resolve:** Be it resolved by the Brockton City Council to invite Troy Clarkson, Chief Financial Officer, Priya Tahiliani, Superintendent of the School Department, and Jennifer Perez, Director of Transportation for Brockton Public Schools to appear before the Finance Committee to discuss and provide an update on the current status of the transportation budget and general update for the transportation department.

Invited: Chief Financial Officer Troy Clarkson  
Superintendent Priya Tahiliani  
Director of Transportation Jennifer Perez

Councilor Farwell motioned to postpone the item to the next Finance Committee Meeting. Motion was properly seconded and carried by a hand vote.

- 13. Resolve:** WHEREAS, There are specific issues impacting upon the safety and welfare of the residents of the city which require appropriate interventions to prevent, reduce or eliminate the occurrence of these incidents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED:

To invite Megan Bridges, City Solicitor, and Brenda Perez, Chief of Police and her designated staff, to appear before the Finance Committee to discuss and schedule an Executive Session as permitted by MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto, and to discuss strategy with respect to litigation (McNulty v. City of Brockton, et al).

Executive Session: To discuss matter relating to active litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares, M.G.L.c. 30A, Sec. 21(a)(3), and to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto, .G.L.c. 30A, Sec. 21(a)(4).

Invited: City Solicitor Megan Bridges  
Police Chief Brenda Perez or Designee(s)

Councilor Farwell stated a mistake when initially filing the resolve to which he explained a new one will be created.

Councilor Farwell motioned to table the item which was properly seconded, and carried by a hand vote.

Councilors Recognition:

Councilor Asack mentioned the Greening the Gateway Cities program and how it has recently expanded to the entire city.

Councilor Farwell stated that there is an upcoming Ordinance Committee Meeting that will take place on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6pm.

Councilor Nicastro stated that the Brockton Beautification Committee have decided to have a spooky fall clean-up on Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> from 9 until 12, and will be based at the Recycle Depot at Oakhill Way.

President Rodrigues briefly reminded all that the following week's City Council Meeting will not be on Monday but Tuesday because of the upcoming Holiday.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:45pm.