

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
DATE: MARCH 09, 2022
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: HELD REMOTELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS' MARCH 12, 2020, ORDER SUSPENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN MEETING LAW G. L. C. 30A, SECTION 20 WITH AN EXTENSION SIGNED ON JUNE 16, 2021, AND THE CITY COUNCIL'S VOTE TO WAIVE RULE 21A ON JANUARY 13, 2022

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY, CHAIRMAN (REMOTELY); SCOTT LIMA, VICE CHAIRMAN (REMOTELY); IAN ABREU (REMOTELY); DEREK BAPTISTE (REMOTELY); SHANE BURGO (REMOTELY); NAOMI CARNEY (REMOTELY); HUGH DUNN (REMOTELY); MARIA GIESTA (REMOTELY); RYAN PEREIRA (REMOTELY)

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS BRIAN GOMES; LINDA MORAD

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Councillor Markey called the Finance Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read a Communication from Councillor Morad explaining her absence from this meeting. This Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Giesta. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 9, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to the City Council, submitting AN ORDER pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53A, the City Council hereby accepts a grant of \$64,729,754 through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund from the U.S. Department of Treasury pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act (Ref'd 08/19/2021) (9/20/2021 – tabled, 45 days) (12/13/2021 – tabled) (02/17/2022 – tabled) (2/28/2022 – Remain in Committee) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lima and seconded by Councillor Giesta. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 9, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes. (1, 1a)

Attorney David Gerwatowski, Legal Counsel, was present and addressed the Committee. He informed the Committee that perhaps he did not explain himself correctly or he should have been a little clearer in his explanation. The City Council Rules of Order state all reports of all Committees shall be made to the Council by a majority vote of said Committees. It should say move to report or move to recommend to the City Council.

Councillor Pereira asked the Clerk to read the Order and exhibit A to the Committee, so that everyone is clear what they are voting on. The items were read.

Councillor Pereira was upset that the matter did not move along from the last meeting, and he hoped it would be sent through this time with a favorable vote.

Councillor Carney was very disappointed in what has transpired from the original plan the mayor submitted to the Council was for the ARPA money plus the monies coming from the County, which brought it to a higher total. Councillor Morad decided to look at these numbers and wanted more input from the Council. We met and Councillor Morad averaged everything out and came up with the same figure of \$64,700,000. Public Safety is still at zero, it was the Council's passion to put money in Public Safety. I wanted at least half, \$30,000,000 to go to Water/Wastewater. I felt it would have helped the residents a little bit. I will not vote on the mayor's submission tonight.

Councillor Dunn informed the Committee that he will be voting yes on this matter tonight.

Elise Rapoza informed the Committee that Public Safety is not at zero it is in with the health category.

On motion by Councillor Pereira and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council ADOPTION of the ORDER, that pursuant to M. G. L. Chapter 44, Section 53A, the City Council hereby approves the expenditures as specifically allocated in the attached exhibit A, of \$64,729,754 American Rescue Plan Act grant funds received directly from the U. S. Department of Treasury. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 8, Nays 1, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes; Carney, no.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting AN ORDER, authorizing the Statement of Interest (SOI) Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the following elementary school: Ellen R. Hathaway School, New Bedford (Ref'd 02/24/2022) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lima and seconded by Councillor Abreu. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 9, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes. (2, 2a)

Andrew O'Leary, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operation, New Bedford Public Schools, was present and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Statement of Interest Form for the Ellen R. Hathaway School.


Mr. O'Leary explained that the Statement of Interest (SOI) is an Accelerated Repair Project (ARP) to improve conditions at the Ellen R. Hathaway Elementary School, located at 256 Court Street, New Bedford, MA 02740 for which the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) reimbursement will be 80%, minus non-reimbursable items. The Capital Improvement Program anticipates funding for the local share of the project. The SOI application itself incurs no financial obligation on the part of the City. However, if the MSBA Board votes to allow this project to proceed, then I would anticipate a request for an appropriation during the first half of FY2023 to fund the Feasibility Study associated with this project. This SOI scope of work will be for windows and doors. The ESSER funding will take care of code issues that would have been triggered by the 30% construction cost trigger.

On motion by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Giesta, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council ADOPTION of the ORDER, authorizing the Statement of Interest (SOI) Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the following elementary school: Ellen R. Hathaway, New Bedford. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 9, Nays 0, with Councillors Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Burgo, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes.

Councillor Pereira made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Burgo. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 8, Nays 1, with Councillor Abreu, yes; Baptiste, yes; Carney, yes; Dunn, yes; Giesta, yes; Lima, yes; Markey, yes; Pereira, yes; Burgo, no.

This meeting adjourned @ 7:46 p.m.

ATTEST:



Donna M. Britto,
Assistant Clerk of Committees