

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
OCTOBER 10, 2017 AT 7:24 PM  
COMMITTEE ROOM  
WOBURN CITY HALL**

Voting Members present: Chair Michael Concannon, Alderman Michael Anderson,  
Alderman Richard Gately, Alderman Edward Tedesco  
Absent: Alderman Lindsay Higgins

Non-Voting Members present: Alderman Joanne Campbell, Alderman Mark Gaffney, Alderman  
Darlene Mercer-Bruen.  
Absent: President Richard Haggerty

Also present: Mayor Scott Galvin, Recreation Director Rory Lindstrom

**On the order to transfer \$125,000 from Fire/BLS Ambulance Account to Fire Ambulance Salary Account:** Chairman Concannon said Fire Chief Stephen Adgate conferred with him prior to the meeting and said the transfer is a standard procedure and will ensure the Chief has sufficient funds in the ambulance salary account. Motion made by Alderman Anderson and seconded by Alderman Tedesco to recommend the transfer “ought to pass;” approved, 4-0, with Alderman Higgins absent.

**On the loan order of \$1,000,000 for construction of a playground at the former Clapp Elementary School site:** Mayor Scott Galvin said there has been a lot of miscommunication about his position on the demolition of the school building. He said he has never said he is not going to take down the building. Mayor Galvin said Alderman Campbell continues to tell people he is not going to take down the building, and that’s not the case. Mayor Galvin said the money in the loan order will be spent on creating a nice park at the Clapp School site, which he said will be a great project. He said if the council fails to approve the loan order, the city will go to plan B and leave a slope at the site with no playground. Mayor Galvin said there are no nefarious plans because the building isn’t coming down by October 15, and he told Alderman Campbell she is not supposed to deal directly with the city’s department heads. Alderman Campbell said she only speaks the truth, and she has always conducted herself with honesty and integrity, and her yes is a yes and her no is a no. She said he was very disappointed in the mayor’s response that he is not going to demolish the school by the October 15 deadline. Alderman Campbell said the Mayor stopped the city’s Purchasing Agent from procuring a bid for the demolition of the school. She said if the school is not down by October 15, the city will be in violation of the law, after the state Legislature went to bat for the city to accommodate the Boys & Girls Club, which was a fabulous tenant, but now it is time for the city to keep its promise to the neighborhood and abide by the law. Chairman Concannon said the issue in front of the committee is the bond for the playground, but added the removal of the school building by the October 15 deadline is law, and asked Mayor Galvin on behalf of the city and the Council whether there will be an effort to demolish the building. Mayor Galvin reiterated there has never been a statement on his part that he does not intend to remove the building. Mayor Galvin said the City Council does not have the authority to tell department heads what to do. He said the city intends to move forward and put a park at the site, and that if the Council does not approve the loan order, there will be a slope there

and not a playground. Mayor Galvin said the park will have a splash area, a basketball court, and a lot of open space. He said the Recreation Commission supports the playground and that the city has applied for a federal grant of \$300,000 to offset the costs. If the federal grant is not obtained, the city can also apply for a state grant which could bring the price down by about \$600,000. Recreation Director Rory Lindstrom said the federal grant has been deemed to be in Tier 2 status and that the granting authority liked the project, but there were others that were preferred more. If the state grant is approved, the city must decline the federal grant, and vice-versa, Director Lindstrom said. Director Lindstrom said three neighborhood meetings have been held and comments from neighbors were incorporated into the plans for the playground. Alderman Campbell said the plans that are reversed from the version the residents saw, and said she was thankful the city will be moving forward with a special permit, which requires a public hearing. Mayor Galvin said there were some very slight revisions to the plans, mostly the removal of some benches and a walking trail around the perimeter of the field. Alderman Campbell said the biggest concern was the location of the basketball court in a very tight area, and said there are neighbors who want the court in another location. Other than that, Alderman Campbell said, the plans for the park look beautiful. Director Lindstrom said the field can accommodate small groups but there is not enough room for organized sports, and that the Recreation Commission has no plans to permit the field for youth sports. Director Lindstrom said the basketball court will be regulation size, and there will be a Pickleball court. Alderman Campbell said she thought the basketball court would be junior-sized. Director Lindstrom said there will not be men's leagues at the basketball court, and there will be no tennis courts. Director Lindstrom explained Pickleball is like a ping-pong version of tennis that is becoming more popular with people over the age of 50. Alderman Anderson asked if the city is wedded to the splash park. Director Lindstrom said the water facility is more of a spray feature than a true splash park. The system does not use chlorinated water, like the splash park planned for Leland Park. Alderman Gately said his concern is the lack of a comfort station for people who will use the park. Mayor Galvin replied bathrooms are not required. Alderman Gately said there should be some sort of rest room facilities. Mayor Galvin said rest rooms would drive the neighbors crazy. Alderman Gately reiterated a \$1 million playground requires a comfort station, and urged the mayor to at least get a cost estimate. Alderman Campbell said rest rooms are something extra that the city really doesn't need, since most of the people who use the park will be from the neighborhood. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said she hopes people outside the neighborhood will use the park, considering the cost. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said \$1 million is a lot to spend on a park, but noted the city usually has success obtaining grants to offset the costs. She also said she is concerned the city isn't going to meet the October 15 deadline for the demolition of the building. Mayor Galvin said there is no intention of breaking the law, and the city will not be in any legal difficulty if it does not tear down the building by that date. Mayor Galvin said if the council considers the park to be too expensive, the building will be torn down and the city will be done with it, but he added the last thing anyone wants is to leave a hole in the ground. He said he is annoyed people are trying to turn this process into a negative. Alderman Gately said what the council voted for was to take the building down. Mayor Galvin responded that if the council does not want the park, there will not be a park. Mayor Galvin noted he does not want to turn the Clapp School site into another Tarky School site, noting the Tarby School was torn down 25 years ago and there is still nothing in its place. Mayor Galvin something else should have been planned for the Tarky site. Chairman Concannon asked Mayor Galvin when he planned to move forward with the demolition. Mayor Galvin responded if the council approves the loan order at

its meeting on Tuesday, October 17, he can begin construction work on the park on Thursday. Alderman Campbell reiterated the neighbors would like to see the building come down, and the city could start demolishing it right away. She added the residents deserve a park, and added she doesn't understand why the city can't start the demolition process right away. Alderman Anderson acknowledged the building will not be down by October 15, and asked if the bids for demolition of the building and construction of the park could be combined, for a lower price. Rosa DiTucci, 82 Arlington Road, said the city has acquired plenty of bonds for money that was never spent. She said the agreement with the city was that the Clapp School building would come down by October 15, a date to which the council committed. She said the demolition is a definite, and the park is a maybe. Mrs. DiTucci said she hopes the plans for the park undergo the special permit process, as the neighbors were not in 100 percent agreement about the configuration of the playground, which for some of the residents will be an attractive nuisance. Mayor Galvin urged the Committee to not add language to the bond in regard to grant funding, and said the city will move forward with the project whether or not the city obtains a grant. Alderman Concannon told Mayor Galvin anything he can do to start the demolition of the building would be appreciated. Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Anderson that the bond authorization "ought to pass;" approved, 4-0, by roll call vote: Alderman Anderson – yes; Alderman Gately -yes; Alderman Higgins – absent; Alderman Tedesco – yes; Chairman Concannon – yes.

Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Anderson to adjourn, all in favor, 4-0, with Alderman Higgins absent. Adjourned: 8:03 p.m

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon Vincent  
Clerk of Committees