



*In Honor of Anthony J. "Sal" Salvucci
"Our Dear Friend"
September 16, 1933 – April 4, 2014*

NEWS, NOTES & REMINDERS – AUGUST 29, 2014

NEWS & NOTES

- **Full Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 2nd – We will be meeting again at the Education Center on Walnut Street as the Chamber is still being completed. We will begin our meeting at our regularly scheduled time of 7:45p.m.**

At the end of our brief first call we will be honoring the service of Candace Havens and Art Cabral. We will also be honoring Jayne Colino on an award that she received. Lastly, we will be congratulating the Newton South High School Debate Team. After first call we will enter into a *Committee of the Whole* to discuss three items related the Zervas School project. Information has been supplied in your packet regarding these three items. Once completed with the Committee of the Whole, we will reconvene the full Board meeting and take up a postponed Land Use Committee item and discuss the three Zervas-related items if the Board is ready. Any questions, please let me know.

An Invitation from Mayor Warren

- **Open House for Newtonville Pet – All Board members are invited to attend.** Please join Mayor Warren this **Wednesday, September 3rd from 6:00p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** for a special open house for Newtonville Pet, which is closing after 18 years in business at 330 Walnut Street. Residents and customers will have an opportunity to stop by Newtonville Pet and say thank you and good-bye to owners Steve and Margaret Cohen. We hope you will be able to make it.
- **Public Facilities Committee – The committee will be meeting on Wednesday, September 3rd at 7:00p.m.** in Room 209.
- **Public Safety and Transportation Committee – The committee will be meeting on Wednesday, September 3rd at 7:45p.m.** in Room 202.

- **Programs and Services Committee** – The committee will be meeting on **Wednesday, September 3rd at 7:45p.m.** in Room 222.
- **Zoning and Planning Committee** – The committee will be holding a special meeting on **Thursday, September 4th at 7:45p.m.** in Room 202.

An Invitation from Mayor Warren

- **Mayor's Summer Reading Challenge** – *All Board members are invited to attend.* In June, Mayor Warren launched the Mayor's Summer Reading Challenge, a new initiative to encourage Newton kids and teens to continue reading during summer vacation. Research shows that continued summer reading helps maintain skills, bolsters student achievement throughout the school year and develops a lifelong love of reading. The goal was to get kids reading this summer and, as of August 14th, there are 801 registered readers who have collectively read 5,637 hours – more than halfway to the goal of 8,000 hours. To recognize the hard work of Newton's summer readers, there will be an Ice Cream Celebration on **Saturday, September 6th from 2:00-4:00 p.m.** at the Newton Free Library. All registered summer readers will receive coupons and vouchers for use at local businesses and there will be free ice cream generously donated by Cabot's Ice Cream. We would like to invite you to join the celebration and help scoop ice cream for our summer readers and their families. This promises to be a great event with a large turnout and I hope you will be able to join us. If you are available to scoop ice cream, please let me know by *Wednesday, August 27th*. We look forward to seeing you at the Mayor's Summer Reading Challenge Ice Cream Celebration.

An Invitation from the Newton 9-11 Committee

- **Annual Newton 9-11 Memorial Commemoration** – *All Board members are invited to attend.* The Newton 9-11 Committee & City of Newton cordially invite you to our Annual 9-11 Commemoration on **Thursday, September 11th from 6:00p.m. to 6:30p.m.** at the Memorial on the front lawn of the Newton Fire Department Headquarters (1164 Centre Street). We will remember the residents we lost.

REMINDERS

- **None at this time**

WORKING GROUP UPDATES

- **Fire Station #3 / Headquarters Working Group** – Please refer to the email with a very larger attachment of information submitted by *Alderman Vicki Danberg on July 31st*. There were also some questions answered by DRC Chair Arthur Cohen. We will insure this information is part of the building project file online.
- **Upper Falls Greenway Working Group** – *Submitted by Alderman Brian Yates* – Unfortunately, as the end of summer of approaches, the Upper Falls Greenway is still not completed. Although the steel rails have been removed and sold, a large number of the wooden ties are still collected on the Greenway. Iron Horse, the company carrying out the task, is having a difficult time finding a disposal site for the ties. An overlook over the Charles River has been built but no railings have been installed. There is still significant intrusion into the right of way from vehicles in the parking lot on the end of Chestnut Street. A nice buffer for plantings inside beds of ties has been built at the rear of the

Biltmore parking lot. After the ties and other debris have been cleared, Iron Horse will still need to level the grade of the Greenway and cover it with stone dust. The Parks and Recreation Department will then add signs and seating.

- **Plastic Bag Working Group** – *Submitted by Alderman Alison Leary* – Members include, Dori Zaleznik, Rob Garrity, Nancy Hyde, Chris Steele, Marie Lawlor and Alison Leary. The Plastic Bag Working Group was formed in the early spring to discuss the details of the proposed plastic bag reduction ordinance, and how it might impact Newton’s small businesses and retailers. The months of March, April and May were spent canvassing select Village Centers in teams of 2 and 3 to talk directly to members of the business community and to learn what kinds of bags were being used.

The following locations were covered:

- Village of Newtonville-South of Pike-Chris Steel & Alison Leary -March 25
- Village of Newton Centre –Nancy Hyde and Alison Leary- April 9
- Village of West Newton-Chris Steele & Alison Leary-April 18
- Village of Newton Highlands & Waban- Chris Steele, Rob Garrity & Alison Leary-May 6th
- Village of Nonantum-Alison Leary- May 13

The result of our canvassing showed that a plastic bag ban at point of sale would have little to no impact on the vast majority of small businesses in Newton. Many don't use the targeted bags; they use paper, thicker plastic bags with logos and/or already have many customers bringing their own bags. Many small businesses are also well under the 3,500 sq ft threshold. Many businesses were supportive of the effort to reduce plastic bag use. This included, Newtonville Books and Rosenfeld’s Bakery in Newton Centre, Natural Sense in Newtonville and Harris Cyclery, and the Coney Island Café in W. Newton. The Newton Needham Chamber of Commerce is also a supporter. A few businesses were opposed. They included. Center Ski & Bike in W. Newton, Bread & Chocolate and Green Planet Kids in Newton Highlands. Reasons given included; “wrong approach”, “it was Unfriendly” or just an unnecessary overreach. Note that Newton’s plastic bag ordinance has an exemption for bags thicker than 3 ml, and for retail space under 3,500 sq ft (for comparison Brookline's exemption is 2,500 sq ft.) It also includes a 6 month phase in period that would allow businesses to use up inventory. The targeted bags include the very thin, lightweight bags given out at point of sale at most supermarkets, pharmacies and convenience stores. It does not impact thicker, heavier bags such as those used by many specialty retailers that make up most of Newton’s small businesses. It also does not impact dry cleaning businesses and take out restaurants. It will also not impact produce and deli bags that protect food. The committee discussed a voluntary program, however evidence from other communities shows that voluntary programs don't work well and don't result in significant declines in plastic bag use. The Committee agreed that an educational and outreach plan should also be in place to help consumers and businesses transition away from the targeted bags. Discussions are ongoing about a re-usable bag campaign with a city logo such as "Sustainable Newton” that could be distributed at City events such as the fall Harvest Fair, Green Decade events, Farmer’s Markets, as well as by local retailers. Discussions are ongoing with other communities in Massachusetts who are also considering action on plastic bags. This includes; Watertown, Wellesley, Newburyport, Medford, Cambridge and Somerville. Communities that have already have passed bans include; Brookline, Great Barrington, Manchester, and Nantucket.