

**NEWTON**  
**PUBLIC**  
**SCHOOLS**

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**MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** Jeffrey M. Young, Superintendent of Schools  
**FROM:** Mike Cronin, Chief of Operations  
Carol Bock, Director of Capital Planning & Operations  
**DATE:** October 23, 2002  
**RE:** FY03 Use of School Buildings (USB) Update

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The policy changes approved by the School Committee in 2001 have been operational for a year. We have been working closely with the other members of the USB committee, which includes School Committee members Nancy Levine (USB chair), Patty Kellogg and Mark Laredo. We are very pleased with our accomplishments, including review of permit waiver applications and general policy reviews.

Highlights of the 2001 USB policy changes are:

- ◆ A new fee structure for custodial rates, with an hourly rate increase averaging 26% for weekday use and ranging 26-46% higher for weekend use by type of user permit to reduce the actual out-of-pocket costs.
  - A permits – school related or PTO/PTSO
  - B permits – City youth groups; municipal, day care; Newton community groups
  - C permits –Other users including: business users (Newton and non-Newton) and non-Newton community groups
- ◆ C permit users are charged a building rental fee in addition to the custodial overtime fees. Currently a discount given to “long-term” rentals, i.e. three or more consecutive days, weeks or months. We will be reviewing this policy in the coming weeks.

Since July 1, 2002, we approved 358 permits, which is approximately the same number processed at this time last year. We have processed 8 more C permits year-to-date than we did last year. The breakdown is as follows:

- A permits = 263
- B permits = 67
- C permits = 28

These permits account for \$248,830 in revenue. We have collected \$104,317 year-to-date. We are currently reviewing the existing policy of collecting only 50% of the total fee in advance of the actual use of the

building. Nevertheless, these collections made year –to-date outpace our collections at the same time last year (\$30,000), when there were delays due to implementation of the new policies. We are also happy to note that in FY02 the only permit cost not recovered by the USB program was \$400 for one C permit. We applaud Barbara Sauro's tenacity in assuring that all fees get collected.

We currently have \$144,513 in receivables. Bills have gone out to all of the remaining users with balances due. In addition, there will be transfer bill charges to municipal departments such as Parks and Recreation for actual overtime as the events occur.

Over the years, most of the A permit users (school-related) were not charged for overtime and it was covered by Operations' custodial overtime account or no overtime was charged for events earlier than 6:30 p.m. However, some charges will be transfer billed to certain school departments, such as athletics. Because the number of A permits has grown tremendously in recent years, we are working with both high school principals in an attempt to reduce the extensive overtime costs associated with these permits. We are exploring the feasibility of establishing a reasonable budget guideline as well as reviewing the types and number of events, setting priorities, and possibly rescheduling events to reduce overtime.

Although there was initial dissatisfaction expressed by the C permit holders regarding the new building rental fee in addition to the overtime fee, in FY02 there were only four applications for a waiver or reduction of fees. The new USB committee chaired by School Committee member Nancy Levine reviewed these applications and subsequently the School Committee upheld the fees.

We are currently reviewing the policies regarding the use of secondary school auditoriums, specifically the use of stage lighting and school personnel to operate the lighting and other equipment. We are working with the principals on this matter and hope to present the School Committee with a recommendation this fall.

Cc: Barbara Sauro, Operations Dept.