

# BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

January 10, 2017

Convened: 7:00 P.M.

Present: David Billips- Director  
Fran Cain- Assistant Director  
Casey Berube, Deputy Superintendent  
John Sullivan, Chairman  
Jack Campaniello, Secretary  
Tom Pereira, Vice Chairman  
Mark Cressotti, City Engineer- Absent  
Joanna Williams- Budge Analysts- Absent  
Hannah Larkham- Principal Clerk



1. Public Hearing held on Banner Application for Westfield State University

Present were Frank Mills, 47 Overlook Dr, Thomas Smith, 211 Apremont Highway Holyoke, Kevin Queenin, 61 Overlook Dr, Matthew Roman, Daniel Desrocherr, Westfield News, Councilor Ralph Figy, Councilor Mary O'Connell, Councilor Brent Bean

John Sullivan read the City Ordinance and the notice that was placed in the Westfield Evening News. Brent Bean spoke on behalf of Westfield State University. He is looking for approval of banners that the college is requesting. They recognized that the past two to three years they have not been in compliance with the City Ordinance and the banners fell to the wayside. Currently the college has banners located on Western Ave and Thomas St in front Lansdowne Place. They are looking to have 12 banners located on poles along Western Ave and two located on poles along Thomas St. Brent has received approval from Verizon to have the banners placed on their poles. The marketing department at Westfield State will be taking care of and overseeing the banners. In prior year agreements the banners were to be removed for three months while the college was closed. Brent is opposed to this agreement because it is cost prohibited. It would cost the college \$3,000 each time their contracted vendor came out to take down and put up the banners. He brought some letters from residents that were opposed and in favor.

Councilor Ralph Figy spoke in favor of the banners in the downtown area. As a retired guidance counselor, he has seen a lot of school campuses and likes to see the support from their city that they are a part of the community. Not many people know that Lansdowne Place in downtown is a Westfield State building that houses their students. He believes the banners don't take away the characteristic or the appearance of Lansdowne, but enlightens the area.

Matthew Roman spoke in favor of the banners throughout the city. He believes the banners enhance the city. He doesn't believe the banners are an issue.

Kevin Queenin spoke in favor of the banners. Kevin has lived in the Western Ave neighborhood nearly 40 years and believes the banners are a positive feature that represents a collegiate environment.

Councilor Mary O'Connell spoke against the banners. She presented to the Commission letters from residents who are opposed and in favor of the banners. Mary stated that the last time the University appeared in front of the Commission was in 2011 where they were permitted nine banners along Western Ave. Mary is only concerned about the banners that are hung on Western Ave. She does not care how many they post in the downtown area as that is not her area of concern. The agreement that was made in 2011 stated that the banners be removed December through March and they have never been removed. She tried reaching out to the marketing department at Westfield State and they would not work with Mary on this issue. Mary has spoken to Brent about the old agreement of removing the banners and she is okay with them staying up all year round. She understands the University's point of view and would agree with keeping them up. Mary is looking for the University to get written permission from Verizon and for the college to pay the filing fee and advertising fee. She would also like the college to remove and replace the old torn and damaged banners that are currently still up, especially the one that is located on Main St in front of Clemenza's. She is looking for approval of only nine banners like stated in the 2011 permit. Mary asked the Commission if they will be voting tonight on the banners and Jack Campaniello stated they will wait until next meeting so they can review everything that was brought to them.

Frank Mills spoke against the banners. He believes that the Western Ave neighborhood is predominately a residential area and is no place the University. Frank stated that we should not be rewarding the college with this request when they have been out of compliance for over the past 12 months. He also believes that if both the college and the Commission grant the extension in numbers of banners it is shows bad faith to the residents of that neighborhood.

The Chairman asked if there was anyone who wanted to speak in favor or opposed to the request from the University. No one came forward. It was then decided the vote would be made at the next scheduled meeting.

The public hearing was closed at 7:28 PM

Reading of minutes of the December 13, 2016 meetings waived and accepted.

2. Vote to appoint Secretary & Chairman of the Board of Public Works

Tom Pereira motioned to appoint Jack Campaniello as Secretary of the Board of Public Works. It was voted 3-0. Jack Campaniello motioned to appoint John Sullivan as Chairman of the Board of Public Works. It was voted 3-0.

3. Public Participation:

Matt Roman- Matt wanted to comment on how well the snow removal has been going.

4. City Councilor Communications: None

5. Department of Public Works- David Billips

The new Snow Ops program is functioning well. Casey mentioned how the invoice process is much better than in years past. The department now calls in the vendors and calls them out. We then send them an invoice that says how many hours they worked and what they will be paid for. This gives the department more control and a chance to pay them out a lot quicker. It also allows us to manage our budget closer and better. We also recently created a Snow Ops office at the Ponders Hollow Rd garage with large TV monitors that allow us to watch the weather and also the GPS that is in each contracted truck. This way we can monitor where they are and if they are on track. John stated that putting the salt down before the storm starts shows to be effective. Dave said by using only salt we are saving money and it helps with the removal of snow. By putting it down before the snow, the vehicles driving will help spread the salt across the whole street and when the snow starts to come down it will melt it and help with the plowing process. The new snow thrower is up and running. Year to date, the vendor plowing expenditure is \$133,266. This does include the schools vendors as we have taken responsibility of them this year. Two years ago we spent close to \$870,000 on our vendors and last year was just \$130,000.

The infrared pothole patcher is out weather permitting. We send it out when it's not wet, so all those pot holes that cause trouble in the winter months can be filled in year round.

Tree removal is ongoing again with weather permitting. There is still money in the account that allows us to call the vendor back even in the winter.

The Stormwater Coordinator and Park & Rec Deputy Superintendent have been posted internally. We will most likely post outside as well. There are several other positions that have been posted internally which will have interviews. The ones with no interest, we will pull names from a Labor List. We will need to fill them before the budget season approaches because we will lose them.

6. City Engineer- Mark Cressotti

The City Council has discussed how they will take care of The Columbia Greenway Rail Trail. It is in talks of it being under transportation or the Parks & Rec department, but no decision has been made yet.

7. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 PM

  
Secretary