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Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

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January 18, 2023 at 5:30 PM

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bridget Matthews-Kane at 5:30 PM. In attendance were Finance Committee members Councilor Bridget Matthews-Kane, Councilor Richard K. Sullivan, Jr. and Councilor Brent Bean. Also in attendance were Airport Manager Christopher Willenborg, Fire Chief Patrick Egloff, Police Captain Stephen Dickinson, City Engineer Allison McMordie, City Assessor Ashlie Brown, Weights and Measures Inspector Dennis Clark, Interim Director of Public Works Francis Cain, Deputy Superintendent Jeff Gamelli, Director of Purchasing Tammy Tefft, Budget Analyst of the Department of Public Works Joanna Williams and Scribe of the Finance Committee Karisa Zerbato.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for acceptance of the meeting minutes from December 13, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if anyone from the public would like to speak during public participation. There were no speakers for public participation.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the acceptance of a grant in the amount of \$137,045.00 from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Jail/Arrest Diversion Program, Mental Health Clinician Co-Response Grant to the Police Department for the salaries of one full-time and one part-time mental health clinician as well as 4 hours a week of police overtime to respond and follow up on police calls that are better handled by mental health care professionals. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Councilor Sullivan asked if there was a city match. Police Captain Stephen Dickinson stated there is no match. Councilor Sullivan asked if there is a plan after the grant runs out. Captain Dickinson stated that the Department of Mental Health has stated this is a revolving annual grant. The Police Department will apply for the grant yearly. Currently the clinicians are working through their company and being paid by BHN but with the acceptance of the grant the clinicians will be paid by DMH instead. Councilor Sullivan asked if the City is currently paying the clinicians out of general funds or are they being paid with a grant for services provided. Captain Dickinson responded that currently BHN is paying for the services provided, the City isn't paying anything. Councilor Sullivan asked if the services will continue just with a different funding source. Captain Dickinson responded yes. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if clinicians are currently responding to calls. Captain Dickinson responded that clinicians have been responding to calls for the past 1 ½-2 years. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if this is a state wide program or is it a competitive grant. Captain Dickinson stated it is a competitive grant. He further added this helps the Police Department choose what clinicians/company they want to utilize. Currently the Police Department is utilizing BHN and the relationship has been successful. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan requesting the acceptance of a grant in the amount of \$50,000.00 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Administration and Finance, Massachusetts Community Compact Best Practices Grant to the Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport to develop a study to evaluate airport infrastructure. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Christopher Willenborg stated the aviation industry is focusing on electrification of aircraft. Next year one of the tenants at the airport is working with BETA Technologies in Burlington, Vermont to install an electric aircraft charging station. This company has an electric aircraft in the FAA aircraft certification process. They are working with a health network to transport organs along the East Coast and Westfield was selected as a location. Mr. Willenborg visited BETA Technologies to learn about their facility. He added that the electrical demands for the chargers is significant. The one unit in Westfield will be able to charge four airplanes at once and use 1 megawatt of power. He further added that the airport infrastructure needs to be looked at and see what will be required to support this. Mr. Willenborg stated he applied for the grant through the MA Community Compact Best Practices Grant Program to conduct a study to evaluate the potential needs at the airfield. Specifically the grant will evaluate the electrical system for the airport wide energy system, solar conceptual design including roof mounted, ground solar, parking lot solar and solar locations on the airfield. Other items that will be looked include energy modeling and energy storage requirements, project costing and solar glare studies. Mr. Willenborg stated the most important item from this grant will be the summary report on the findings for recommended infrastructure. The bill program that was recently passed by Congress will provide money for airports for electrification and resiliency funding. Mr. Willenborg added this project will be completed by summer and there is no local share. Mr. Willenborg stated he has received an estimate from a state vendor for \$52,800.00 for this project. He further stated he has the \$2,800.00 in the airport's budget for the difference if needed. He added he will coordinate with Tammy from Purchasing to verify the state vendor's status. Councilor Sullivan asked if the future cost for construction is known. Mr. Willenborg stated this grant is strictly for planning and at this time the cost estimate for construction is not known. He added this study is looking at the big picture which will help with the overall plan. Councilor Sullivan asked if the airport is working with Westfield Gas and Electric. Mr. Willenborg stated there is a meeting scheduled in two weeks with Westfield Gas and Electric as the municipal utility company needs to be on board. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if the study will help with private installation. Mr. Willenborg responded that it may be beneficial but it will help the City obtain additional grant funding. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if solar falls under resiliency for federal funding. Mr. Willenborg stated yes and he is awaiting for clarification on guidelines. He added that they want the Airport's snow removal equipment to be transitioned to electric. If some of the power to help with these transitions could be generated at the airport it would be ideal. Councilor Bean asked who is ahead of this in the country. Mr. Willenborg stated this is brand new however Burlington, VT is doing test flights with their aircrafts and are probably the farthest along in the Northeast. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the acceptance of a grant in the amount of \$24,920.00 from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and

Security and the Department of Fire Services (DSF) to the Fire Department to purchase seven sets of structural firefighting gear. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Fire Chief Patrick Egloff stated this is the third year in a row that the City has received funding for this competitive grant. Last year the grant was used for protective equipment and the year before that the grant was used for new meters for the fire engines to test for different gases. This year the grant will be used for seven sets of structural firefighting gear. Chief Egloff added usually this purchase would come out of his supply line in the fire budget however with higher utility costs he is hoping to use that money towards utility costs and use the grant funding to purchase the gear. The grant was for \$24,920.00 which is exactly what is needed to purchase the seven sets of gear. The City received \$80.00 less than the maximum amount the grant allowed. There is no City match for the grant. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for a transfer of \$104,512.43 from Reserve for Future Salary Increases Fund Account #19500000-51999 to the following: \$14,286.41 to the WPMEA Account #11550000-511000 and \$90,226.02 to the Police (Supervisors/Patrol) Accounts #12100000-514300 and #12100000-514200 to cover increases that have been negotiated. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Councilor Matthews-Kane stated the money has already been put into the Future Salary Increases Fund Account as the increases have already been approved. This is a just a transfer. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for a transfer of \$1,263.25 from the Reserve for Future Salary Increases Account #19500000-519999 to the Parks and Recreation FT Salary Account #16300000-511000 for a 2% increase in a PSA. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Bean for the appropriation of \$65,000.00 from Free Cash Account #1000-3590000 to Health Department FT Salary #15100000-511000 to cover the annual salary of a new position of Substance Use Outreach Coordinator. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sullivan.

Prior to the vote, Councilor Matthews-Kane stated that Joe Rouse was unable to attend tonight's meeting. This is to pay a ½ year salary of a Substance Use Outreach Coordinator and marketing/programming for the substance abuse program. This will be eventually reimbursed to the City from opiate settlement money. This is seed money to get it up and running. Councilor Matthews-Kane continued the City of Westfield is going to get 1.3 million dollars from an opiate settlement that will be dispersed by the Attorney General over the next 17 years. This comes out to be approximately \$80,000.00 a year so there will be a stream of funding for the next 17 years. A special revenue account will be set up for the money to go in to but that is being worked on.

A motion was made by Councilor Bean to amend the appropriation of \$65,000.00 to \$40,000.00 from Free Cash Account #1000-3590000 to Health Department FT Salary #15100000-511000. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sullivan.

Councilor Matthews-Kane stated the reduction is due to the salary being for a ½ year, \$32,500.00 will be for the salary and \$7,500.00 for marketing.

The motions passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan asked if \$32,500.00 is ½ year's salary. Councilor Matthews-Kane stated the job range is \$50,000.00-\$65,000.00 so the \$32,500.00 is half of the upper part of the salary range.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the appropriation of \$32,255.24 from Free Cash Account #1000-3590000 to the Assessors Purchase of Services Account #11410000-520000 to purchase MobileAssessor. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, City Assessor Ashlie Brown stated that after being in the position for just about a year, the office has looked at what is working and what can be improved. One area that can be improved upon is data collection. Ms. Brown further stated there is 14,000 parcels in Westfield and by law they have to be physically visited once every ten years. There are three people that do these visits as the work is not vendored out which comes out to visiting over 100 parcels a month. Currently when visiting the parcels staff brings all the paperwork to the locations and make changes/corrections on the paperwork. Upon returning to the office the information is plugged into the computer and pictures on the camera are uploaded. Right now all the data is double entered as it is collected first and then inputted in the computer. Ms. Brown continued MobileAssessor is a software program that would take everything to an IPAD. Ms. Brown further continued with this program corrections can be made and uploaded to the cloud immediately. Pictures can also be uploaded to the cloud. Double data entry would be eliminated and accuracy would be increased. Currently there is no safety protocols when out in the field or visiting houses, MobileAssessor would allow us to find where someone is, how long they have been there and if the car has moved. The money being requested is for the upfront cost of the program. After that it is around \$5,500.00 yearly that would be added into the Assessor's budget for Purchase of Services to maintain the software. Councilor Sullivan asked if this is something that has been used before. Ms. Brown responded no and that this software is fairly new, it started out in bigger areas like Worcester and Salem. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the appropriation of \$13,202.25 from Free Cash Account #1000-3590000 to Weights and Measures Accounts as follows: \$10,202.25 to Vehicle Account #12440000-585001, \$2,500.00 to Supplies Account #12440000-540000 and \$500.00 to Purchase of Services Account #12440000-520000 for purchasing a new truck for the Department as well as gas and maintenance fees that were not originally budgeted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Weights & Measures Inspector Dennis Clark stated last year \$45,000.00 was appropriated to order and purchase a new truck. The City had a contract with Ford Motor for \$33,796.75 however the order was not fulfilled. Additional money is needed to purchase a truck as the price of the vehicle has increased. Director of Purchasing Tammy Tefft added that Ford Motor stopped the last half of year orders for vehicles. Marcotte Ford kept hoping that Ford Motor would put the vehicle on the line but it didn't. Marcotte Ford notified the City in October the order would not be fulfilled. She continued unfortunately only the contract value is the amount that can be carried over. Councilor Matthews-Kane questioned as to why the full amount that was budgeted previously can't be carried over. Tammy responded that at the end of the fiscal year the only amount that can be carried over is a legitimate bill. The purchase order gets cut and the remaining balance moves to free cash. She added this is the same appropriation and that it just needs to be pulled into Fiscal Year '23 so the money can be used. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the appropriation of \$6,480.13 from Free Cash Account #10000-3590000 to City Clerks Purchase of Service Account #11160000-520000 to reinstall a window between the Clerk's Office and Licensing Office. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Councilor Sullivan stated he would reach out to the City Clerk's Office to obtain additional information. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan to submit a bond order in the amount of \$2,500,000.00 for HVAC Upgrades to the Blower Sludge Processing Building at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Deputy Superintendent Jeff Gamelli stated the Blower Sludge Building was constructed 20 years ago. HVAC is housed on the roof of this building. The building is located in the floodway floodplain at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. This separate building houses regular equipment as well as ancillary equipment. The main electrical service that feeds the entire Wastewater Plant is located in this building. The existing air handling unit that cools the electrical room produces tremendous heat and is completely defunct. All the HVAC equipment on the roof is no longer supported. All of the refrigerant is outdated and no longer available as there is a push for eco-friendly refrigerant. It also houses all the chemical storage equipment, pumps, polymer systems, waste activated sludge processing and a generator that runs the whole plant when there is a power outage. Mr. Gamelli further stated that in the basement of the building there is ancillary blowers, pumps, odor control fans and effluent flushing water system. Mr. Gamelli continued that in 2015 during an energy efficiency upgrade aeration blowers in this building were replaced as well. All of this equipment in the building needs to be properly dehumidified, heated and cooled to complete the treatment process. Sludge storage tanks are also located within this building. Mr. Gamelli stated there is four air handling units on that roof that need to be replaced along with the exhaust fans that vent the odorous spaces and sludge storage tanks. Mr. Gamelli further stated the roof is 20 years old and needs to be replaced. In addition the following work will be completed replacement of the HVAC equipment including air handling units and exhaust fans, replacement of exhaust fan for the aerator system,

replacement of cabinet unit heaters, integration of a Siemens building management system, replacement of a generator room motorized damper, installation of a heat trace system on the fire protection service piping, replacement of the roof along with insulation and new HVAC equipment on the roof. Councilor Sullivan asked if any of the issues that the City is dealing with have they been directed or required by DEP or any other regulatory agency. Mr. Gamelli stated that they have not because the issues have not been brought to their attention however if the issues were brought up he added he thinks they would. Councilor Sullivan asked if the roof is going to be bid out as an alternate. Mr. Gamelli stated it could be if need be if the funding isn't available to support the roof expense. Councilor Sullivan added that if all this work is going to be completed it is important to replace the roof as well at the same time. If the base bid is significantly higher than what is projected, hopefully there could be capacity to add the needed money quickly so the roof can be completed. Councilor Bean how long the bond is for. Mr. Gamelli stated the bond is for 18-20 years. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan exited the meeting at 6:05 PM.

A motion was made by Councilor Bean for the appropriation of \$1,239,100.00 from the Department of Public Works, Water Division's Undesignated Fund account #6800-359000 to the Department of Public Works, Water Division, as follows: \$583,000 to Purchase of Service account #68004500-520000, \$409,500 to Supplies account #68004500-540000, \$235,000 to Equipment/Vehicles account #68004500-585001, \$6,000 to Additional Small Equipment account #68004500-585500, \$5,600 to Replacement Equipment account #68004500-587000. The motion was seconded by Councilor Matthews-Kane.

Prior to the vote, Acting Director of Public Works Fran Cain stated this is money that comes back once receipts are settled. This backfills purchase orders to keep the Department running through the rest of the year including the purchase of service supplies and additional/replacement equipment. The \$1,239,100.00 is less than the total of \$2,317,512.00 that is undesignated. The remaining balance of \$1,078,412.00 will go back into the account and can go into the budget for next year. One bigger ticket item in the amount for \$235,000.00 is for the purchase of a Freightliner non-CDL dump truck. Councilor Bean asked what the total amount in the account is. Mr. Cain stated \$2,300,512.00. Councilor Bean asked for a breakdown of what comes out of the Purchases of Services Account. Mr. Cain provided a handout with the breakdowns. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked why the truck is getting bought outright. Mr. Cain stated financially it makes sense. If payments are made it would cost around an additional \$40,000.00. The motion passed 2-0 with Councilor Bean and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Bean for the appropriation of \$1,200,000.00 from the Department of Public Works, Wastewater Division's Undesignated Fund Account #6700-359000 to the Department of Public Works, Wastewater Division, as follows: \$975,000.00 to Purchase of Service Account #67004400-520000, \$175,000.00 to Supplies Account #67004400-540000, \$50,000.00 to Replacement Equipment Account #67004400-587000. The motion was seconded by Councilor Matthews-Kane.

Prior to the vote, Deputy Superintendent Jeff Gamelli stated for Purchase of Services \$75,000.00 is needed for Westfield Gas and Electric, \$175,000.00 is needed to pay Syngaro for sludge hauling and disposal, \$125,000.00 is needed to pay Univar for sodium hydroxide and \$50,000.00 is needed to pay Holland for sodium aluminate. There is a request for \$250,000.00 to pave Pine Ridge Drive. This was a sewer extension project from three years ago and there was never enough funding to complete the paving project correctly. Mr. Gamelli stated Councilor Beltrandi is contributing \$100,000.00 from ARPA funding to this project as this is a \$350,000.00 project. \$250,000.00 is a federal grant with 20% match for the \$1,000,000.00 grant that was just awarded towards the operations building. A primary sludge pump needs to be replaced for \$25,000.00 and a generator needs to be replaced for \$25,000.00 at the Long Pond Road pump station. In addition there is pipe painting in the gallery in the amount of \$50,000.00 along with \$200,000.00 for pump station upgrades at Laura Drive. The balance of the retained earnings is \$1,566,625.00. After these expenses the balance would be \$366,625.00. This is a little lower than what is liked but a lot of things will be able to get done. Mr. Cain added in house talent will be used to decommission the old generator and install the new generator which will save significant costs. Mr. Gamelli stated this was just done at the New Broad pump station. Mr. Cain further added using these efficiencies save money. Councilor Bean asked if every house is hooked up to sewer on Pine Ridge Drive. Mr. Gamelli and Mr. Cain stated no. Councilor Bean asked if three years from now someone wants to connect to sewer will the City have to rip up the road. Mr. Cain responded that he hopes not. Allison McMordie stated there are exceptions if there is an emergency but a road can't be cut into just because someone wants to. Councilor Bean asked if a notice could be sent out to people letting them know that road is going to be paved. Ms. McMordie stated she is unsure what the design is with the main. Mr. Cain stated sometimes things that you think are there aren't and this is where it becomes problematic. Councilor Bean asked if the plans can be checked. Ms. McMordie confirmed. Councilor Bean stated he could walk house to house and distribute flyers. Mr. Cain stated a digital sign could be put up with the information. Ms. McMordie stated a newspaper ad could be also placed. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if there is any other sections of town that had a sewer extension and the road needs to be paved. The response by Mr. Gamelli and Mr. Cain was usually it is done at the time. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked then why wasn't this one done. Mr. Gamelli stated there was pressure to complete the job even though there wasn't enough funding to complete it correctly. Councilor Matthews-Kane expressed that it sounds like there is a policy but she is concerned about it being applied equally as there are streets in her ward that have been clearly cut into and doesn't know by whom. Ms. McMordie and Mr. Cain stated that it was Westfield Gas and Electric. Councilor Bean stated this isn't just happening downtown, it is happening all over town including on Munger Hill Road and Wildflower. Mr. Cain added typically if sewer is done the road would be repaved. The motion passed 2-0 with Councilor Bean and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

After the vote, Mr. Cain stated maybe the City could come up with a unit of measure where Westfield Gas and Electric could pay the City and it could be applied towards paving. Ms. McMordie added they make the deterioration of the roads worse. Councilor Bean stated he thinks they are governed by rules they have to follow. Mr. Cain further stated that may be correct however they are digging into the City's roads. Councilor Bean asked if the City's rule is curb to curb. Mr. Cain confirmed. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked how the City could make this happen. Ms. McMordie asked if they have to apply for permits. Mr. Cain stated permits are

supposed to be issued and were done in the past but are not necessarily done now. Councilor Bean expressed his concerns with Mill Street. Mr. Cain is hoping the City and Westfield and Gas and Electric can work together and meet in the middle.

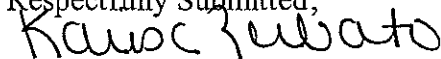
A motion was made by Councilor Bean for the appropriation of \$91,500.00 from Free Cash to the City Engineer Department Purchase of Service Account #14110000-520000 to fund a field review for the Franklin Avenue Elementary School Project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Matthews-Kane.

Prior to the vote City Engineer Allison McMordie stated this elementary school project was in the Engineer Department when she started. The entrance of the school is being changed from Franklin Avenue to Franklin Street. She further stated there are three new entry points. One is designated for busses, one is designated for drop off and emergency vehicles and the final one for being one way out. This will change the traffic patterns on Franklin Street. This expansion project is also picking up children from Abner Gibbs, thus increasing traffic in the area. McMahan did a preliminary review of the area and it warrants a signal. The review from McMahan proposed signaling and new pedestrian crossings along with other safety recommendations. Councilor Bean asked if this was on Franklin Avenue. Ms. McMordie responded Franklin Street. Ms. McMordie stated this area won't be safe without signaling or better pedestrian crossings. This request for free cash will be used for McMahan to look at it further. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if this is for the study and plan. Ms. McMordie stated this is for the full design, drawings, specs and assistance up to construction. Councilor Matthews-Kane stated there was concern over the initial traffic study being done at the height of Covid when most people were staying home. Ms. McMordie stated McMahan did a newer traffic count and an even more recent traffic count may be added in. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if Franklin Street is a state highway. Ms. McMordie stated at the curve near the store is where it changes over. The motion passed 2-0 with Councilor Bean and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Bean to remove from Committee with no action and place on file a letter regarding the request of the Mayor to transfer \$1.1 Million from Free Cash, CDBG, ARPA, or other appropriate funding source to Westfield G&E to establish a one-time voucher program for low income households. The motion was seconded by Councilor Matthews-Kane. The motion passed 2-0 with Councilor Bean and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Bean to adjourn at 6:38 PM. The motion was seconded by Councilor Matthews-Kane. The motion passed 2-0 with Councilor Bean and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karisa Zerbato, Finance Committee Scribe