

Personnel Action Committee

Minutes for meeting date 1/24/2023 Meeting at City Hall, Council Chambers - 5:30 PM

Committee Members - Chair Cindy Harris (present), Councilor Ralph Figy (present) and Councilor James Adams (present).

The Law Department has requested that we ask if anyone is video recording or livestreaming the meeting - None.

Submitting the appointment of Peter Velis, as a member of the Police Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026 replacing, Felix Otero.

Judge Peter Velis is extremely well-respected throughout MA. His reputation in fairness, and his knowledge of the Law, combined with his decade's long work with Enforcement Officers at every level, makes our City most fortunate to add him to our Police Commission. He stated that it is an honor to serve our Community. Our city can be proud of, and have confidence in the Commission which will consist of, when adding Judge Velis, 3 members who still serve our Citizens and work with our Police Department in a most positive manner. He would serve with Attorney Richard Sypek and James Irwin. Councilor Figy stated thanks to Felix Otero for his service and Councilor Adams and Harris extended their thanks, also. Motion to APPROVE, made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend this appointment.

Submitting the appointment of Timothy Reynolds of 24 Woodland Road, as a member of the Board of Assessors for a term to expire in February, 2026, replacing Suzanne Bergeron.

Timothy Reynold is an Attorney and Managing Partner in the law firm Reynolds & Werman in West Springfield. His practice is primarily Real Estate Law, since 2002. Also, since 2007, he formed a company TM Properties for the purpose of acquiring, renting and flipping properties. TM Properties is also a receiver and has worked with the cities of Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke as well as the State Attorney's office in rehabbing distressed properties. He believes his experience with real estate law and a buyer, seller and owner of numerous properties and the various methods used to determine their market value, would be beneficial to our Assessor's Department and Board. He has a law degree from Washington University and a B.S. from Tulane University in Finance. He also was a Westfield YMCA Board Member for 9 years and Board President for 2 years. He stated that he is looking forward to being on this Board. Councilor Figy stated thanks to Suzanne Bergeron for her many years of service, Councilors Adams and Harris extended their thanks, also. Motion made by Councilor Adams to APPROVE the appointment, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend this appointment.

Submitting the appointment of Alexander D. Fagnand of 187 Granville Raod, as a member of the Board of Public Works to expire in February, 2026, replacing Stephen White.

Alex Fagnand was appointed to the Conservation Commission on December 16, 2018 and was reappointed September 3, 2020. Instead of serving another term on that Commission, he and the

Mayor talked and decided that a move to the Board of Public Works would serve our city well. His skills and expertise are very transferable. He is a registered Professional Civil Engineer, working with the Wetlands Protection Act and Stormwater Management Standards, and he is a Licensed Envision Sustainability Professional. He belongs to several professional organizations including the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure and Institute of Transportation Engineers. He has OSHA Construction and Health Knowledge. He is especially knowledgeable in roadway design and construction, MASSDOT project delivery, site design, multi-modal transportation and Complete Streets regulations and Stormwater best management practices. His experience includes multi-modal accommodations, context sensitive design and incorporation of sustainable construction processes and materials. He has done several culvert and stormwater management projects, parking lot studies, building expansion site layouts, worked on FEMA Hazard Mitigation Program Grants from origination through implementation and general utility projects. He brings a blend of practicality and an awareness of the need to serve the residents of Westfield. His demeanor and attitude are positive and an asset to our city. Councilor Figy stated Fagnand is highly qualified. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Figy, 2nd by Councilor Adams. The vote was 3-0 to recommend approval of appointment.

Submitting the appointment of Caleb Vieweg as a member of the Youth Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

The Youth Commission is an important way of gaining insight to our younger population and their views of our city. During the COVID pandemic, this group was unable to meet due to health parameters. The Mayor has now appointed and our Council recently, confirmed Diana McClean to once again lead this group. Because they are minors, because of the dangers, unfortunately, of releasing any information on them, we should trust Advisor McClean to choose those individuals who have shown interest. The ordinance #1585, April 4, 2013, states Advisor/Mayor is to choose but the Council must confirm. The Council should look for a way to totally protect these minors so that we, the Council, don't release any information, not even names on these minors and it stays with the Advisor. To recognize them and their service would be up to the Advisor, the students and their parents or guardians, to decide the release of any private information. Times and safety is much different now, therefore, the Council should examine this ordinance for a way to modify it. The Personnel Action Committee support this appointee and agreed that the Ordinance on Youth Commission should be evaluated. Motion to APPROVE Caleb Vieweg made by Councilor Figy, 2nd by Councilor Adams. The vote was 3-0 to recommend approval of appointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Ronald Cole, 71 Zephyr Drive, as a member of the Water Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Ron Cole is a lifelong resident with over 20 years of experience on the Water Commission. His knowledge is extensive. He has a calm way overseeing the various water concerns. As a resident, he takes his duties on this commission seriously and is genuinely concerned for the safety in all aspects of the Water Systems from maintenance to delivery systems for the citizens. He has served as Chairperson. He has strong managerial background, employed by Pepsi and an MBA in Finance. He was Assistant Ski Coach at WHS and Scout Leader for over 10 years. At his last reappointment, March 5, 2020, Councilor Flaherty highly supported him, Councilor Beltrandi thanked him for his dedication on the water issues, Councilor Burns stated that he spent 8 years on the Water Commission with Cole and

highly recommended him and Councilor Sullivan spoke in favor of his reappointment sharing the information that Cole would fly home from a business trip in order to attend a Commission meeting and thanked him for his dedication and service. Councilor Figy said it was great that Ron wants to serve again. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Phillip McEwan, 153 Western Avenue, as a member of the Planning Board for a term to expire in February, 2027.

Phil McEwan was Chair of this Board for many years. He has a vast knowledge of every aspect of procedure regarding this Board as well as historical data that can only come with being on this Board for 30 plus years. We thank him for his dedication to our city with his long service. The knowledge he brings to this Board not only benefits this group, but all of our citizens benefit, as he provides insight for balancing all matters before this Board while analyzing facts and laws, but always keeping citizens in mind. As the Ward 3 member, he looks forward to continuing serving our city. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Robert Florak, 171 City View Road as a member of the Conservation Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Robert Florak is a local business owner with more than 30 years of experience of running and maintaining a successful landscaping company. As president of Cobble Mountain Landscaping and Nursery in Westfield, he oversees employees from all walks of life, marketing and advertising, budgets and sales productions, ensuring plant designs and materials are suitable for the environment. He is a Stone Mason, has a Hoister's license and is a licensed pesticide applier always respecting the land in his decisions. His background includes Law Enforcement education and Degree, and continued training and accreditation in regulations and product updates in regards to his business. He is a past member of the Advisory Boards at Westfield and then named Westfield Vocational High School and volunteered in Westfield Youth Sports. He is a member of the MA Nursery & Landscaping Assoc. and National Association of the Self-Employed. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Sophia Bitzas, 354 Falley Drive, as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Sofia Bitzas has been a member of the ZBA since 2015. She has a Law degree and is director of an engineering firm. She continues to acquire more knowledge of permitting and its effects that are required for design and compliance as she feels it is helpful to understand all aspects of a project in order to assess what relief, if any, can be granted. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. Vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Jennifer Gilbert, 65 Prospect Street, as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, moving from second to first alternate, for a term to expire February, 2025.

Jennifer is a registered Civil Engineer in MA employed by Tighe and Bond in Westfield for approximately 13 years. She graduated from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and belongs to the American Society of Civil Engineers. Her projects and Transportation projects with DOT coordination. At her initial appointment it was stated that there would be no conflict of interest issues as she had discussed it with her supervisor. Also, Councilor Figy said her credentials speak for themselves and Councilor Sullivan stated she was highly qualified. Councilor Figy reiterated that her credentials were great. Motion to APPROVE made by councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Scott LaBombard, 626 Western Ave as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Scott LaBombard was initially appointed in 2018. He has been a leader in Westfield Babe Ruth and also served on the Westfield Little League Board as Treasurer and Player Agenda. Serving as President of Little League he was instrumental in gifting the city a new scoreboard. He is very familiar with the Parks Programs and Services. He is concerned with keeping our youth active and engaged in positive programs. He is a valuable member of this commission and an active participant. At his 202 reappointment, Councilor Flaherty spoke in favor saying that LaBombard goes above and beyond for this Commission. Councilor Morganelli also spoke in favor, and he was unanimously reappointed. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Peter Lurgio, 51 Overlook Drive as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Peter Lurgio was appointed to fill a position in 2022 after Robert Veronesi passed away. He has worked for the Westfield Public Schools for over 29 years and works daily with Middle School students who thrive from their connection to the activities that the Parks and Rec Department provides. Prior to being an administrator for the past 19 years, he was a physical education teacher emphasizing the benefits of physical activity every day. He also has been involved in the Parks Department running soccer camps for Westfield's youth for 20 years. He adds that his own children benefitted so much from our city's programs. He would like to continue being on this commission. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Vincent Olinski, 34 ½ Noble Avenue as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Vinny Olinski is a lifelong resident. He was employed at the Westfield YMCA before being Director of the Holyoke YMCA. He has a B. A. in Physical Education from UMASS. He has helped foster a positive lifestyle for the YMCA members and young people in general especially through sports. He is very charismatic, well-known and well-liked throughout the community. He has been on the Commission over 30 years and is important to the Commission with his wealth of knowledge of Westfield, in general, in

sports, recreation and history of the parks. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Richard E. Clark, Jr., 456 Russellville Road as a member of the Traffic Commission for a term to expire in March, 2026.

Richard Clark was appointed in 2018 and reappointed in 2020. He is the Business Representative on this Commission. Owing and operating Whip City Cleaners since 1989, he also was actively involved as Board Member at the Boys and Girls Club. At that club he was charged with being the Property Management Committee representative. The Mayor supports this reappointment as Clark is very familiar with the downtown area and traffic situation, there, and throughout the city. On his initial appointment, Councilor Beltrandi spoke in support of this appointment. Motion made by Councilor Adams to approve, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Joseph Gadbois, 20 Deer Path Lane to the Traffic Commission for a term to expire March 20, 2024.

Joseph Gadbois was appointed May 2020. He has a B. S. in Civil Engineering and recently retired 2018. His work experience consists of being the Resident Engineer and Construction Supervisor on numerous projects for Mass DOT. Notable projects were the reconstruction of Boston Road in Springfield, I91 over East Street Bridge Replacement in Easthampton, Twin Bridge Replacement on Route 20 in Westfield, and the construction of Main and Broad Streets in Westfield. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Elizabeth Boucher, 150 Hillside Road, Unit 6, as a member of the Council on Aging for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Elizabeth Boucher has been on the Board of Directors since March 2011 and been the Secretary, Council on Aging, Director Tina Gorman stated at Boucher's last reappointment on 2020 that she is thoughtful in her assessment of issues brought before the Board balancing practicality with empathy, and highly recommended her reappointment. Boucher was involved in writing the Senior Center's Political Activity Policy and researched and presented information to the full Board for them to decide on a policy. She created the Seniors' Novel Book Group, facilitating that group and bringing in guest authors to speak. She has lived her whole life except for 6 years for Air Force Deployment. She was on other City Commissions before this one and was a Benefits Manager for the Westfield School System. At her last reappointment Councilor Figy, who is the Center's liaison along with Councilor Adams said she was a great Secretary and fully supports the reappointment. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Alice M. Dawicki, 159 Holyoke road as a member of the License Commission for a term to expire in February, 2029.

Alice Dawicki was first appointed in 2013 and then reappointed. She worked for Mass Mutual as the Director of Operations, Retirement Services which included supervising a 17 member service team and servicing 401 (K) plans. This involved adhering to procedures and policies. She worked with the Department of Labor and Internal Revenue Service and Mass Mutual Law Department to follow compliance. She managed a \$1.6 million budget and was responsible for producing \$10 million in gross revenue. As a lifelong resident, she also owned a small business in Westfield, Soup's On. She believes her experience in leadership as well as experience in weighing facts appropriately when making decisions, produces a positive effect and results for our citizens. Motion to approve made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Cindy Gaylord, 35 butternut Road as a member of the Historical Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Cindy Gaylord, first appointed in 2010, is Chair of the Commission and is passionate about preserving, restoring and promoting the education of Westfield History. The list is long regarding this Commission's contribution to Westfield. She has been involved in many activities including: the creation of Historical Walking Tours on downtown, created a historic downtown trip for 5th graders, created a Historical Scavenger Hunt for the Westfield Schools, creator of the Historical Ghost Tours, organized gravestone cleanings at the Old Burying Ground, was a guide for walking tours downtown, was Westfield 350th Celebration/Historic Education Committee Co-Chair, worked on restoring the Old Burying Ground and the One Room School House and is the member of the Community Preservation Committee. Preserving Historical documents and restoration of historical buildings are top priorities. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Carlene Bannish, 72 Laro Road as a member of the Historical Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Carlene Bannish, first appointed in 2014, is an active member and has been Secretary and Treasurer of the Commission. She attends all functions and events. She created the Whipping Around Westfield App, helped organize and run the Historic Cemetery Ghost Tours of Downtown, was a 350th Anniversary subcommittee member and volunteer, and worked on the restoration of the Old Burying Ground and the One Room School House. As a teacher, she has contributed much to this Commission and looks forward to continuing. Chair Gaylord highly recommends her. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote is 3-0 to recommend reappointment

Submitting the reappointment of Kathleen Palmer, 608 Pochassic Road as a member of the Historical Commission for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Kathleen Palmer was appointed in 2021 and at that time Councilor Flaherty informed the Council that she was a great person and does so much for the Commission that he thought she was already on it! Councilor Allie stated she gives 100% and is very involved. She has a vast knowledge of the history of Westfield and has shared that with citizens in many ways over many years. She brought Historical

Productions into the Public Schools and presented them to the Public at the 350th celebration. Before she ever was appointed she has very involved in all the events of this Commission, including Ghost Tours. She is a lifelong resident of Westfield, a teacher for 40 years, conducted theater for the Parks & Rec Department and productions at the Westfield Woman's Club. She is interested in protecting, preserving and promoting Westfield's history for generations to come. Chair Gaylord highly recommends her. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Linda Saltus, 17 Hillside Road as a member of the Board of Registrars for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Linda Saltus was appointed to the Board of Registrars September 2014. She is a registered Republican which meets the requirements of this Board. She worked in government for over 30 years including working for Governor Weld and State Rep Pierce. Westfield is fortunate to have someone with this background and experience on this Board. She is an active member and well-versed in the Help America Vote Act, supported and participated in the first time Early Voting in 2016. City Clerk, Kaitlyn Bruce recommends her, as did former City Clerk, Karen Fanion. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Daniel Smith, 15 Hamilton Way, as a member of the Board of Registrars for a term to expire in February, 2026.

Dan Smith is a registered Democrat which meets the requirements of this Board, being first appointed in 2005. Smith is well respected and known by many citizens. A lifelong resident he has been on many Boards and Commissions. He has many degrees in higher education including on Honorary Doctorate Degree from Westfield State. Councilor Figy stated at Smith's last reappointment "Westfield is lucky to have someone of Dan's caliber working for it.", referring to him being a popular educator, and having a long history of being a member of various State and Municipal Boards. The previous Chair/City Clerk recommended him as does our City Clerk, Kaitlyn Bruce. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Stanley Strzempko, 31 Ridge Trail Road as a member of the Board of Health for a term to expire February, 2026.

Dr. Strzempko served on the Board of Health from 1998 to 2015 when he had to leave due to his professional responsibilities. When he had to leave due to his professional responsibilities, Dr. Mitchell then served. He was able to come back to serve September, 2020, when Dr. Mitchell had to leave for professional obligations. He was reappointed until 2023 and now is looking forward to continuing to serve on this Board. He believes his background and experience is an asset to this Board, and he knows all the workings of the Health Department, the employees of the Department and understands all the issues they are facing now. He has been the Westfield School Physician, the Medical Director for the boys and Girls club and Medical Consultant for the Student Health Services at Westfield State, and

President of Westfield Emergency Physicians, P. C. He states he loves our city and would like to continue to help our citizens. The Health Department supports his reappointment and the Health Department Director stated at Dr.'s last reappointment that he is an invaluable asset to this Board. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Submitting the reappointment of Juanita Carnes, 57 Holland Avenue as a member of the Board of Health for a term to expire in February, 2024.

Juanita Carnes has been on this Board and Chair nearly 30 years. She worked as a Registered Nurse at Noble Hospital. She continued her education attaining a Master's Degree and Post Masters becoming a Nurse Practitioner working in the Noble Hospital Emergency Ward. She currently works for Urgent Care located in Northampton and Connecticut. Her work is involved with Public Health. She states during the Pandemic that like many communities, decisions to protect citizens was of deep concern, although some disagreed with them. The Health Director supports her continuing on, and adds that she is well-versed in the Department's inspection services programs such as housing, restaurants and recreational camps. She took the lead on vaping issues in schools and advises the Board on immunizations, communicable diseases and flu outbreaks. She rarely misses a Board meeting and is actively involved in the Health Department issues. Councilor Figy stated his appreciation for her writing a weekly article on Health issues in the Westfield News newspaper. Motion to APPROVE made by Councilor Adams, 2nd by Councilor Figy. The vote was 3-0 to recommend reappointment.

Motion to approve minutes for this meeting, 1/24/2023 made by councilor Figy, 2nd by Councilor Adams. The vote was 3-0 to approve minutes for 1/24/2023 meeting.

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Figy, 2nd by Councilor Adams. The vote was 3-0 to adjourn.

Adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Harris, Chair on January 25, 2023.