

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
2-10-2022 AT 5:30 PM
ZOOM

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 Mayor Michael McCabe, Westfield Police Chief Lawrence Valliere, Westfield Captain Jerome Pitoniak, City Auditor Vicki Moro, City Purchaser Tammy Tefft, Director of Facilities Bryan Forrette, IT Director Lenore Bernashe, City Treasurer Matt Barnes, Westfield Animal Control Officer Margaret Terkelsen, Personnel Director Robert Bishop, First Assistant City Solicitor Shanna Reed, Airport Director Christopher Willenborg, Westfield Fire Captain Patrick Kane, Westfield Public School Superintendent Stefan Czapowski, Interim Superintendent of the Public Works Department Francis Cain, Budget Analysis of the Public Works Department Joanna Williams, School Business Manager Shannon Barry, IT Support Staff Peter Cowles and Scribe of the Finance Committee Marisa Colon. Chair Matthews-Kane recognized Travis Lucia, Councilor Kristen Mello, Councilor Figy and Councilor Nicholas Morganelli, who were also in attendance.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean, to APPROVE the acceptance of the Finance Committee minutes from January 31, 2022. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Chair Matthews-Kane asked if anyone from the public would like to speak during public participation. Travis Lucia is the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 1111 President in Westfield. He stated that he would like to speak in support of agenda item #13 (\$80,000 for electronic locking system for all Fire Department exterior doors). He stated that he sent an email to Fire Chief Egloff concerning the security of the exterior doors of the Fire stations for the security of the millions of dollars of equipment, but mainly for the safety and security of the personnel. There are employees who come and go throughout the years, whether they leave on their own personal accord, or retire or by other means. Essentially every employee walks away with a free key to access the fire stations because the passcode to the doors do not change regularly or easily. He stated that Chief Egloff shares the same concern for the individuals who are there working 24 hours a day, 365 days per year and for the millions of dollars of equipment that is stored at every station. He stated that there are millions of dollars equipment and vehicles that can be driven out by anyone who can gain access. He wanted to press upon the Finance Committee and how important it is to protect the personnel and to understand that the majority of the equipment are specialty items that cannot be easily replaced by purchasing them through a store. He further explained that frequently people questioned the security because the exterior doors are open throughout the day, but he stated that there are personnel who are present to welcome the public and they know who are coming and going. Mr. Lucia thanked the Finance Committee members for their time. Chair

Matthews-Kane asked if anyone else would like to speak during public participation; no one else spoke. She stated that she received a letter for someone and read it during public participation. The letter was submitted by Patrick Lusteg, a Westfield Police Officer: *“Bridget, since I will not be able to join tonight, I just wanted to take an opportunity to really introduce myself and explain what this contract in education incentive means to me. The Chair stated that he is referring to agenda item #5, the Police Contract. She continued reading, “I have recently been a full-time police officer for the City of Westfield for almost three years as well as over a year of experience as a part-time reserve officer which I did when I held a full-time position at the YMCA as the director of Camp Shepard and Youth Programs. At the Westfield P. D. I have been an active member of the station and would like to think as a valuable member of the department, I currently serve on the Special Response Team Swat, the Retirement Committee and the ATV Unit. Since the start of my full-time career, I have been in good standing and have gone out of my way to better myself in every way possible, including being trained in the new Dart Addiction Program. But this is also not just about me, all other officers are affected, I can confidently say, are valuable members of the department. I could list all of their accolades, but I particularly like to highlight the officer who recently rescinded his offer to join the State Police and instead now just was accepted to be a Field Training Officer for this department. A major part of this decision was hopes for this new contract. Although, I’m aware whatever decision is made is not personal and based on what the city can afford. A decision against the new contract most certainly will make valuable officers feel invaluable and in the long run could prevent more valuable officers from accepting a job in Westfield and can sway current valuable officers to take a job in another jurisdiction. As for me, I graduated from Norwich University in 2013 with a degree in Military History and a minor in Criminal Justice. The reasoning behind my degree is simple; a criminal justice career fair hosted at Norwich where multiple federal agents told me to go that route. This is due to the fact that the most important aspects of policing are either taught in the academy, learned on the street and learned through personal experience. For me, that is the case. History was recommended to me due to the fact that you are able to research for the facts and excel in writing. These are attributes that are used every day in policing on the streets and writing reports. The minor in criminal justice was chosen because I took the same exact classes as a major in C.J. The only difference was the core classes, which I took in History and the senior thesis projects. Otherwise, these two areas of study are completely identical which you can confirm through the course catalogs with Norwich. Once again, I know these decisions are not personal and I appreciate you taking the time to interact with me over the past few weeks as well as to read this email. Although this email is about my past, the eight other officers this decision will affect are equally, if not, more qualified than me and are also full of great education and experience. I hope you and the council will take our experience and education into consideration while make this decision and realize that we are just as valuable as someone who holds a criminal justice degree. Respectfully, Patrick Lusteg.”* Again, Chair Matthews-Kane asked if there was anyone who would like to speak during public participation. No one else spoke.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean, to APPROVE the recently signed Westfield Police Officers Coalition contract which will become effective July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025.

Chair Matthews-Kane stated that Chief Valliere, Captain Pitoniak and Vicki Moro were present to discuss the numbers they are working with currently. Captain Pitoniak began the discussion by stating that he submitted to the Finance Committee a list of major vendors that the Police Department charges for officers who work police details. The Westfield Gas & Electric is the vendor who mostly used police details and second would be the Department of Public Works. Councilor Sullivan asked if these are the numbers the Chair was looking for and she replied, yes, and there are some questions submitted by other City Councilors, as well. Chair Matthews-Kane asked City Auditor Vicki Moro to explain how much the increases will cost for FY23, 24 and 25. City Auditor thank Captain Pitoniak for his assistance and because the officers, for the most part, are known, the numbers are more accurate. The two percent salary increase, based on the officers that are in the FY23 budget, would cost \$115,001.68 and then adding the 85 cents to the officers who are in Step 9, it would also include four officers who weren't already in Step 9. It also includes the education incentive that's affected by the 85 cents and that number is \$65,775.74. She further explained that out of that \$65,000, \$22,000 is for those four patrolmen who moved up to Step 9. The new education incentive for those varying degrees that were not in the contract before at the 10% rate, which is the first year, is \$52,089.67, then to increase the officers who are at 15% to 17.5% for FY23 is \$44,328.16, the out of grade increases to those C, A and shift differentials that is currently in the budget which is \$22,524.64. Vicki stated that the total for Fiscal Year 23 is \$299,719.89 and part of that total are for officers in the process of getting degrees which those must be budgeted so as not to short fund later. She further explained that this number includes funding for two new officers and for those who are in the academy which also must be budgeted at those top levels in order to ensure enough funding. Captain Pitoniak confirmed that those numbers are correct and stated that the Westfield Police Department is going from 64 officers to 66. Chair Matthews-Kane asked if the two new officers were included in the \$299,000 budget. Captain Pitoniak replied, yes. He further explained that 66 will be the most Westfield PD ever had budgeted. Chief Valliere stated that there are three officers in the academy and will not begin as entry level because one officer has 10 years of experience and the other has two ½ years. Captain Pitoniak stated that these are transfer officers from two departments and will come from the academy trained and ready to work. Councilor asked what the cost will be for FY24 and FY25, just the bottom line cost increase. Vicki replied that in FY24 with the 2% increase and education incentive, the total is \$159,592 and with the 2% increase and education incentive, based on the officers that are listed now, in FY25 it will be \$132,538. She further explained that in the contract, the officers are going from 15% to 17 ½% in FY23, then from 17 ½% to 20% in FY24, but in FY25 it will be a 2% increase because the officers are already at that 20% increase. Councilor Sullivan asked if the total will be \$600,000 for the life of this contract. City Auditor Vicki Moro replied, yes. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that she will ask questions that some Councilors submitted prior to the meeting. First question, has the Police Commission reviewed and recognized this contract. Chief Valliere stated, no and agreed with Chair Matthews-Kane that the Police Commissioners do not have authority to approve or disapprove contracts. Second question through the Chair, does this cost the city money or will the cost be passed

along to the companies paying for the detail service. Captain Pitoniak stated that the increase in cost will be billed to the vendors. The biggest vendors are the Westfield G & E and the Westfield DPW is the next largest but a lot of those projects are under State contract and sometimes the DPW are billed directly. Also, Verizon will be billed directly or through the state for state funded projects such as moving poles, etc, or Northeast Paving Company for sidewalk or paving projects. He stated that some companies pay the city directly or they are paid with State grant money, but ultimately the vendors pay the cost. Councilor Bean asked if the vendors just pay for officer details. Captain Pitoniak stated yes and explained that the increase in salary will affect the detail overtime rate. Councilor Sullivan stated that the aforementioned statement does not mitigate the \$600,000 cost. Captain Pitoniak replied, no, but some companies are charged an additional 7% that goes back to the city's general fund, Verizon, for example, can be charged an additional 7% administrative fee. City Auditor Vicki Moro stated an example, such as a company needing to borrow a cruiser, they will be charged an additional fee which goes back into the general fund. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that she has another question(s) from a City Councilor, what is the breakdown of how the different changes helps/improves the city and what is the added benefit for the citizens of Westfield to these contract changes. Captain Pitoniak stated that he spoke about the education benefit last time (January 31st) and as Officer Pat Lusteg had mentioned, the hope is to have officers remain in the Westfield Police Department and not go to another jurisdiction or the State Police. He further explained that there are police transfers looking to be employed at the Westfield Police Department which is a savings, in a sense, because there is no cost in having to put them in the Police Academy or field training for 14 weeks. Chief Valliere further explained that quality of candidates that have been seen so far are so sharp, so well-spoken and they're all highly educated with approximately 95% or more have bachelor's degrees or higher. Captain Pitoniak added that the midnight to 8 A.M. shift has always been behind the rest of the units for stipend, which is a tough shift to work. One of the reasons why there was increase for the shift was to encourage the older or more experienced officers to stay on in order to train the new officers coming in so they have some mentors to look up to. Chief Valliere further explained that there was an increase with the bureau differentials because there are less officers inclined to go into the Detective Bureau, Traffic Bureau or Community Policing because there is a lot more work that goes into those units and their day does not typically end at the end of the shift, therefore, the extra monetary incentive has been an attracting factor. Councilor Bean spoke through the Chair and stated that the contract appears to be a very large burden, financially. It is a little different compared to past years; the amounts have significantly increased. He stated that he is very concerned about the end game when it comes to finances and does not think the city can afford this particular contract at this point. The Council discusses the cost year to year, the Council can tax 2 ½ %, but in talking about other pots of money, those are for onetime costs not for recurring costs. He further explained that when it comes to the numbers and the facts of the contract itself, his measurement is whether or not the city can afford this. At this given time, Councilor Bean's opinion is that the city cannot, therefore, he will not support this moving forward. He stated that this was probably the first time that he is not supporting something from the Police Department, but it is too big a number to support. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that this contract has been discussed over two meetings and received notice from the legal department in response to the Finance Committee's question regarding what role the City Council plays in Union Contracts. The Chair read a legal response from City Attorney for Labor

& Relations which states, *“In response to your inquiry regarding the authority of the Council to reject the proposed collective bargaining agreement. Please be advised that the city has the power under Mass General Law Chapter 150e Section 7 requires City Council approval for all proposed CBA cost items.* The Chair stated that he gave an earlier ruling which states, *“Upon ratification of the union and signature by the parties, the City Council, as the legislative body has sole authority to accept or reject the proposed collective bargaining agreement.”* The Chair stated that the case in Methuen is different than this collective bargaining agreement, but that the Methuen Mayor and City Council approved that contract. She further explained that the Inspector General wrote a report which stated, *“The former Mayor and former and current City Councilors violated the duties of care and due diligence that they owe as elected officials to the residents of Methuen by negotiating and approving the superiors contract either without understanding the financial impact of the contract or by understanding the financial impact and approving it anyway.”* Chair Matthews-Kane stated that the key phrase is “financial impact” and stressed that the City Council must really look at the financial impact. She stated that she sat down with Captain Pitoniak and City Auditor Moro to review the numbers. She explained that the budget increases every year roughly 2 to 2 ½% because of proposition 2 ½% and if the number is lower or higher it is the responsibility of the Council to ask questions. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that based on the latest numbers, which is \$299,720 increase for the contract. The complete budget from last year for the Police Department was \$8,366,036 and if the increase from the contract is expressed against the FY22 budget then there is a 3.58% increase in FY23’s budget. She stated that her concern is not with the contents of the contract but with the fiscal burden on the city, which a 3.58% increase would be more and regretted to state that she cannot support this contract, echoing many of Councilor Bean’s comments. Councilor Sullivan stated that he does not disagree with any of the previous comments from the Chair or Councilor Bean and in fact, the 3.5% is only for this Union contract and not even with the others within the Police Department. Councilor Sullivan further stated that there will absolutely have repercussions down the road with the other unions as the city enters negotiations. He further stated that he has a real issue with the process on this, the fact that this was signed off on December 22, 2021, with a little more than a week left in the term of the previous administration that raised a lot of flags and believes that it was rushed. Councilor Sullivan further expressed that he believes that it was rushed, the timing was terrible and stated that he knows there are some councilors who are working on limiting some of the powers of a mayor who lost an election and will support those movements when those come forward. Councilor Sullivan continued by stating that there are serious cost implications here and at the last meeting he asked Chief Valliere what happens when he comes before the Council to ask for a 6, 7 or 8% total increase to the next fiscal year’s budget. He stated that he believes the funding will not be there which will cause there to be cuts, and having seen this before, the two new officers may have to go because the Police Department must make those numbers work. He further stated that from a financial point of view this was poorly negotiated and it is not with the current administration. Councilor Sullivan stated that he will vote yes to approve the contract because he believes that when the city enters into collective bargaining agreements with a union at the table, both sides go in with mutual respect and both come to an agreement that was bargained in good faith. He believes that it would set a really dangerous precedent for the Council to be a backstop on that and begin to interfere in those negotiations. He further stated that because of that, he is going to support the contract but will be a bit of a

bellwether and believes that the Police Chief will have to make serious cuts otherwise to his budget if in fact this contract goes through. After discussion, Chair Matthews-Kane conducted a roll call vote in order to AMEND the original motion from approve to NOT approve. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES. Councilor Bean made a motion to NOT approve the Police Officer Coalition Contract which will be effective July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, seconded by Councilor Sullivan. A roll call vote was made with Councilor Bean and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES and Councilor Sullivan voting NO. The amended motion passed 2-1.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean, to APPROVE an appropriation of \$62,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to Purchasing Department, Repair and Maintenance Account #11380000-524001.

Director of Facilities Bryan Forrette stated the request that was put forward encompasses seven buildings that is currently in the building management system which is currently provided by Siemens Industry, which has gone end of life. Their system that the city currently has is no longer supported by Windows 10 and the purchase is to upgrade to the next system. He further explained that this system upgrade will take care of the airport, city hall, the senior center, the police department, Little River fire station, Western Avenue repair garage, and Southampton Road fire station. The School Department has already started swapping buildings over to the new system by funds secured on their end, therefore, the appropriation is the balance of the seven buildings to clean up the network, so that it's all in one area that can be better accessed and supported. Councilor Sullivan asked what the system will be upgraded to. Bryan replied that approximately 2 ½ years ago when Windows 10 went end of life, from a network standpoint, the buildings could only be accessed from the building locally and getting support out for the old system now is no longer supported which means there is no outside help to fix the building management system which controls heat and A/C for all city buildings. Councilor Sullivan asked after the upgrade, the system should be accessed remotely. IT Director Lenore Bernashe stated that it is not Windows 2010, it is Windows Server 2008 which went out of life a few years ago. She further explained that the server is isolated so it cannot get out to the internet now but it can still be accessed internally to manage systems, therefore, the upgrade is to upgrade it to Windows Server 2019. Councilor Sullivan asked if the upgrade will last only two years. Lenore replied, no, it will be longer than that. Councilor Bean stated that the IT Department has been underfunded for years and wishes that more could be done. He stated that he hopes with this budget cycle will yield some of the free cash and really get up to date on a lot of the city's systems, at no fault of the department's or Lenore's. Councilor Bean commented that IT Director Lenore Bernashe has been really good about putting items forward to the Council but, it's been difficult to pass all of them. He asked if there will be any annual costs that are associated with this. Bryan Forette stated that the appropriation is for the hardware and capital costs, but the city has looked into the ongoing subscription costs with Siemens so the city will not fall behind like what has been done in the past so that the system will get current upgrades. He stated that he believes the cost will be approximately \$6,000 per year which will include maintenance on the system which the city can avoid paying the large expensive capital costs. He explained that the Building Management System has been up and running since 2011 without having to do any major upgrades. City Purchaser Tammy Tefft

stated that Bryan Forrette has done some maintenance, updates have been done when enough money was available and he has tried to get someone out to look and make sure that things are running. Bryan also stated that the costs does include training for city personnel as well. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean, to APPROVE an appropriation of \$47,000.00 From Free Cash (1000-359000) to Technology Center, Replacement Equip Acct #11550000-587000 to replace switches in Tech Center- \$22,000.00 and City Hall- \$25,000.00.

IT Director Lenore Bernashe explained that the money is a replacement equipment costs. The switches in the technology center are core switches through which all of the city's traffic flows. All of the city's sites connect up to the tech center then they go out to the internet. The switches at the tech center right now are five years old. While they're still good switches, they don't have the capacity for the increased bandwidth that are being sent out through them and the needs of the city to support it. She went on to explain that the new switches will have multiple 19 gig ports on them to help balance the traffic coming in and out of the city which will cost \$22,000. The \$25,000 is to replace the five switches in city hall that are located down in the Assessor's office which feeds all the floors in city hall on that end of the building. The switches there are 10 years old; they are workstation switches which can last 10 years. She further explained that IT is having issues with adding all the new phones to the systems, upgrading phones and upgrading computers which causes traffic flow issues back and forth. Lenore stated that at the end of last fiscal year, IT was able to find enough money to replace the main switches in city hall, in the media room, which serves the other half of city hall. Chair Matthews-Kane asked Lenore if she is adding to or replacing the switches at the Tech Center. Lenore replied that the switches will be replaced. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if the increased bandwidth is because of Covid and everything being done virtually. Lenore explained that the teleconferences are done outside of the network, but during Covid, the schools increased their network use exponentially. The School Department increased their number of Chromebooks and every single Chromebook has to flow through the city's network out to the internet. She stated that pre-Covid there were about 1,500 to 2,000 Chromebooks being used compared to post-Covid about 5,000 Chromebooks are on the city's network which are all web-based devices such as Google Classroom which must flow through the network to the internet and back again. The IT Department just transitioned the city email over to a web-based email so that is hosted outside of the city; there's more and more resources that require the flow of traffic through the network to get out to the internet. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that in reviewing the information on the Council Share Drive, she read that there were issues with the phones and asked if the phones will need to be replaced or if the replacement of the switches will solve the issues. Lenore explained that the 11 year old phones were replaced towards the end of last year and stated that the old phones had speed limitations on them that the computers ran through the phones to the switches and it was slowing down the computers as well. The current switches don't have the power capacity to support all the new phones and the connections needed for their VOIP or Voice Over IP, computerized phones and they get their power from their connection to the switch which it doesn't have enough power to power

all of the phones. She further explained that usually it works but there have been power outages in city hall where sometimes ports blow on the switches because of a power surge and then the ports can longer be used. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean, to APPROVE an Appropriation of \$62,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to Purchasing Department, Repair and Maintenance Account #11380000-524001.

City Treasurer Matt Barnes explained that when entering the office there is a large counter/storage piece of furniture that does not provide any type of security nor does it provide any type of physical barrier between the customers and staff. He stated that the \$15,000 is just an estimate based on a quote that was made in 2021 that would have used the same woodwork in the counters and gates similar to the Clerk's and Collector's office. He stated that the cost would have been over \$4,600 which was too much at the time, therefore, did not move forward with the project. Currently, Matt Barnes stated that he is looking into look at various options to either include the existing counter, purchase a smaller counter and/or both options, as well as adding a door or gate style system. He explained that he is working with City Purchaser Tammy Tefft and Director of Facilities Bryan Forrette to ensure that they are getting good quotes and the project will meet building and requirement compliances. He further explained that he wants to ensure that if the function of the office changes or there are changes to the space, that whatever they decided will still be usable. Chair Matthews-Kane asked Treasurer Barnes to explain how this will improve security. Matt replied that currently anyone can walk past the counter directly to the Assistant Treasurer's and Clerk's desks while they're performing their tasks. He explained that they are currently working with vendors to get ideas and designs to see if there can be a door or gate system that can be attached to the existing furniture or wall. Councilor Bean made a comment through the Chair and stated that what he has seen in the Treasurer's office compared to the Treasurer's Office at Westfield Bank is pretty scary because of the easy access and vulnerability. He stated that he understand that it is an expensive cost but, it would be nice to include other offices in city hall that are exposed to individuals or the unsafeness of the office as a packaged deal; he is support of this motion. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE an appropriation of \$10,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to Animal Control Department, FT Salary Account #1292000-511000.

Chair Bridget Matthews-Kane thanked Animal Control Officer Margaret Terkelsen for providing the Finance Committee supporting documentation. She asked Margaret to please explain what the needs are and to speak on some of the extensive research that was done. Animal Control Officer Margaret Terkelsen stated the \$10,000 is for a \$5,000 increase in salary for two animal control officers; one was hired and the city is looking to hire another officer. The current salary is \$35,000 in Westfield and in asking other surrounding towns, their Animal Control officers are starting at a significantly higher amount. She explained that the officers

from the surrounding towns are doing similar job duties, but many are not tending to animals at an Animal Shelter as is done in Westfield. There have been some qualified applicants that have turned down the offer because of low salary pay. She stated that the hours of Animal Control officers include weekends, holidays and on-call night shift response and believes that a \$5,000 increase will attract a better quality and higher quantity of applicants. She further explained that the officers are exposed to dangerous animals on a daily basis and/or dangerous situations similar to what police officers may experience which requires someone to be specially trained for this position. The increase in salary would demonstrate how important the job is and help keep the job applicants around. Personnel Director Robert Bishop stated that in discussions with Margaret she listed of the job duties that the animal control officers do and what they are paid for and few things stuck out. For example, these employees' values are exempt and they are governed by the Fair Labor Standards Act, the FLSA, of the Federal Government which sets a minimum for how much pay an employer can pay a salaried employee, which is \$684.00 per week, according to Federal standards. He further explained that the starting Westfield Animal Control Officers are only making \$673.00 per week, which means that the city is out of Federal compliance and for a family of three, \$35,000.00 is just barely below poverty level for the state of Massachusetts. Personnel Director Robert Bishop concluded by stating that he believes that not only should the Animal Control officers provide this raise in the FY23 budget, but should look at further increases to bring them up to the valued and appreciated employees they are. Councilor Sullivan directed a question to Robert, he asked what happened to the \$20,000 that was appropriated to the Personnel Department which was to be used for advertising via Glassdoor and Indeed in order to get qualified candidates to fill this position and what has changed between now and the \$20,000 that was approved by the Finance Committee last week. Robert replied that the \$20,000 from last week is solely to advertise all positions across the city and the Personnel Director and Margaret are in the process of interviewing qualified candidates. The \$10,000 increase in salary is to bring these positions up to living wage so that the city can better retain them. Councilor Sullivan stated that he understood and agreed that the salary should increase, however, the representation that was made to the Finance Committee was that there were qualified candidates for this position and now what's being said is that the salary must increase in order to keep the candidates, is problematic. Councilor Sullivan asked Robert why is the increase being brought to the Finance Committee now, with only four months left, as opposed to waiting until the FY23 budget to add the increase. Robert replied that there is high turnover rate in that department right now and employees are not staying due to the hours and the compensation for all of the job duties that these employees are do for the city, therefore, the money is need to retain the qualified employees. Chair Matthews-Kane asked which department's budget will this fall under going forward. Robert replied that the Animal Control Department falls under the Police Department at this point in time. Chair Matthews-Kane asked if that is a further increase for the Police Department. Animal Control Officer Margaret replied, that she does her own budget annually and stated her supervisors are the Police Captains and Police Chief but Animal Control has their own separate budget. The Chair recognized Mayor McCabe; he confirmed that the Animal Control is actually a different line item in the budget, and under the Police Department there are three different budgets which include Police Department, Animal Control and Traffic Supervisor. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Bean made a motion, seconded by Councilor Sullivan for an appropriation of \$70,000.00 from Free Cash Account (1000-359000) to Law Department, Purchase of Service Acct (11510000-520000.) At this time, First Assistant City Solicitor Shana Reed was unable to participate via teleconference due to technical difficulties. Upon motion of Councilor Bean, seconded by Councilor Sullivan to take item #10 out of order and place it at the end of the agenda. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE an appropriation of \$300,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to Airport Purchase of Services, Acct (11990000-520000) for design phase of Taxiway B5.

Airport Director Chris Willenborg explained that there had been multiple interested parties who reached out recently to discuss new hangar development. As part of the airport master plan and layout plan, an area was identified a piece of property that is located just south of what is called Ross Aviation MRO and just north of 365 Recycling. He further explained that the developer would build their own hangar, apron and work site, but the city needs to provide a taxiway in order to access this site, but the first step in this process is to get a design underway. Chris stated that the airport is potentially looking at new lease revenues, depending on the number of hangars on that site that would be approximately \$60,000 per year. There would be an opportunity to increase fuel flowage fees which could be anywhere from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per year. In addition, property taxes would be levied on these building, Chris did not have the number on what the property tax on new hangars, but that would be included. He stated that this would increase the number of based aircrafts and number of operations at the airport which helps with getting additional grant funding for infrastructure improvements. Councilor Sullivan asked if there is a chance that state or federal money will help pay for any of this. Airport Director Chris Willenborg replied that they are planning on using state money on the construction phase of the project and the fact that the city would cover the design costs up front, puts the airport in a better position to have the construction phase covered or get the design costs reimbursed by the state depending how much money is available. Councilor Sullivan asked if the \$300,000 is enough to cover what the airport needs for this project. Chris replied that he will need to finish the scope, work and fee. He has an estimate from the on-call engineering firm and has not negotiated the final contract, but he believes the cost will down depending on the services. Chris assured the committee that he made sure there was enough to cover the design. Chair Matthew-Kane asked how likely is the state going to cover the rest of the work, seeing as this is the just for the design phase. He replied that the department has been pretty successful in accessing construction funding for projects at the airport and he sees this as an economic opportunity that would potentially add 10 to 12 new jobs to support these aircraft facilities. The Westfield Municipal Airport is a major economic engine for the commonwealth, which are all those things that the state looks at. He further explained that based on the increase in aircrafts in the operations puts the airport in a better position to compete for grant money for the construction phase. It is difficult to estimate the construction costs right now, but funding estimates range from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000. He explained that the state can determine what the local share is, which could be 100% state funded or it could go as low as 20%. Based on that \$1.5 million estimate, it could be zero if it is 100% funded, it

could be \$32,500, if it is 2 ½%, or it could be \$300,000 if it is at a 20% local share. Chair Matthews-Kane asked how successful has the airport been on receiving grants purely for economic development as opposed to military development. Airport Director Chris Willenborg replied that he believes that they have a very successful track record and offered to give a list of grant awards to the committee prior to the next Council meeting. He stated that over the last five years they have received approximately over 20 to 25 million dollars in grant funding and have received a significant amount, recently. Councilor Bean stated that he believes this is one of the first times that Chris is asking for money from the Council and pointed out the usually it is a grant for the council to accept and move on. Councilor Bean thanked Chris Willenborg for all of his hard work. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to go back to item 10 on the agenda. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE the appropriation of \$70,000.00 from Free Cash Account (1000-359000) to Law Department, Purchase of Service Acct (11510000-520000.)

First Assistant City Solicitor Shanna Reed explained that in the late 1980's there was a condominium project that was call City View Commons and for whatever reason or reasons, the project failed. The result was about 25 units with different owners, which added to the layer of complications, where there is one individual Attorney Frank Saia, who acquired interest in some of the units and various mortgages. She stated that he was either assigned mortgages, had mortgages assigned to him or to his pension plan. There were approximately 13 instruments of taking that have pending complaints in land court to foreclose on the city's tax liens. She further explained that even if the city was successful in foreclosing on those liens, the result would be a patchwork of ownership instead of the city owning the entire parcel, which would not benefit the city at all. There is extensive complications and extenuating circumstances giving the assignments to Mr. Saia of the mortgages in either his individual capacity or to the pension plan. He filed for Chapter Seven bankruptcy in 2014; his assets which were the lots and the assigned mortgages were included in the bankruptcy estate and then, unfortunately, Mr. Saia passed away in 2018. She stated that at this juncture, it is not known the status of the bankruptcy action or the status of any probate by his heirs. She explained that the appropriation request is an all-encompassing solution to this problem with this property. The law department has been working with Sidall and Sidall, a law firm that specializes in this type of work. They had been working with for City Solicitor Phillips back in 2014 and had provided a memorandum which outlines the steps to take to clean up this property to get it city owned, issue an RFP, and hopefully dispose of it in order to have it back in the tax rolls either as a successful development project or with whatever can be done zoning wise in that area. She stated that the end goal is for the city take full ownership of the entire property which will not be easy nor a quick fix. The \$70,000 is for the law firm to track down all of the answers to the status of the bankruptcy in probate, to follow through on the current tax foreclosures that are pending before land court, determine what impediments there may be and to walk the city

through the remaining steps. She stated that it is not known at this time if there are some parcels that are actual tax takings or delinquent but the takings have not been done yet. She explained that this is a multi-year approach and the \$70,000 will be for the thing which includes all of the support filing fees and any publication costs. Councilor Sullivan asked if the \$70,000 will be enough to clean up all of the legal issues with regards to title, taxes and everything else so the city has clear title to be able to transfer this property. First Assistant City Solicitor Attorney Reed stated that in discussing the details with Attorney Sidall, there will be a certain cost associated with each parcel and the estimated range is from \$45,000 to \$70,000. She explained that she estimated on the high end because there are so many unknowns, but she was confident that this amount will get them through to the next fiscal year. Councilor Sullivan wanted to clarify to the public that the \$70,000 is not for a physical clean up to which Attorney Reed agreed with Councilor Sullivan and stated that this is strictly for a title clean up. Chair Matthews-Kane asked if there were buildings there or empty lots. Attorney Reed stated that from the GIS viewpoint it appears to have a long driveway that leads to a flag lot. Councilor Sullivan stated that he has not been to the property recently, but stated that there may have been one or two condos that were inhabited some time ago. Chair Matthews-Kane asked if the city take ownership of the entire parcel, what will the property be valued at as a whole. Attorney Reed replied that she does not know and it is difficult to determine what the anchorage of the entire parcel would be because there are over 35 different parcels to cull out. She stated that there have been numerous inquiries over the several years and believes there will be interests for someone to do something developmental wise out there. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Bean made a motion, seconded by Councilor Sullivan to APPROVE the appropriation of \$112,910.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to Fire Department, Supply Account (12200000-540000) for supplies for a replacement Fire Apparatus.

Captain Patrick Kane of the Westfield Fire Department explained that the Westfield Fire Department is on a five year replacement plan to replace trucks. The Ambulance Enterprise Fund can purchase the vehicle but it cannot purchase the equipment on the vehicle due to the technicalities of the finances. The request is to outfit the new vehicle with all the necessary tools which comes to a total of \$112,910. Fire Captain Paul Lentini, who is on the Truck Committee, is the one who specs out all the tools and compiled the list. Councilor Sullivan asked if it includes the light bars and all the other accessories. Captain Kane replied that this is just for the tools, the lights and sirens are separate. Councilor Sullivan asked if the rest will be paid for by the Ambulance Fund. Captain Kane stated that Chief Egloff is working with Mayor McCabe, the Purchasing Director and the Auditor to appropriate funding for the new one, but the request is just for the tools for the new engine. Mayor McCabe stated that he is working towards buying the engine and assured the Committee that there will be a new engine for the new tools. Prior to the roll call vote, Councilor Sullivan asked Mayor McCabe to notify the Finance Committee prior to the Councilor of how the engine will be purchased. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor to APPROVE an appropriation of \$80,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to Fire Department, Purchase of Services, Account #12200000-520000 for electronic locking system for all Fire Department exterior doors.

Fire Captain Patrick Kane stated that local President Travis Lucia spoke on this during public participation. Captain Kane stated that there are three Fire Stations that are manned and anyone who is privy to the key code can gain access at any time. He explained that when there is a call, all personnel will leave and there is no one to man the station. Specifically, for substation on Little River Road and the Southampton Road station are more vulnerable when a call comes in than the Broad Street Headquarters because they do not have anyone in there. He stated that this would greatly enhance security and also have a time stamp of anyone who went in or out of the building by employees using their fob or key card. Councilor Sullivan asked why it is not as simple as changing the key code. Captain Kane stated that it could be because the key code would have to constantly change, but Bryan Forrette could answer that question. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE an appropriation of \$55,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to the following short- term debt accounts: \$30,000 to Principal on Short Term (45441135-591100) for Project 2358 Southampton Road, Target; \$25,000 to Principal on Short Term Debt (45199703- 591100) for Project 2592B, Airport HVAC.

City Treasurer Matt Barnes explained that in fiscal year 2020 there were two projects that incurred some spending, Project 2358 on Southampton Road for the turnpike interchange design work and then Project 2592B at the Airport for HVAC improvements. At the end of the fiscal year the city had to issue a BAN to cover these costs. These costs were already existing bonds that had been approved and this was just additional spending against these bonds for the intended purpose. He further explained that the BAN was then renewed in June of 2021 and as the city approaches the end of fiscal year, the bond will have to be sold. In reviewing the debt projections with the Mayor, the idea for this is to pay these off instead of bonding them for the 8 to 10 years that would be allowed for these types of projects and incurring the interest cost on that. He stated that the interest cost would be about \$8,500 and that would depend on what the interest rates will be at the time the bond is sold. In order to order to pay these back without selling the bond, the city would have to fund the Debt Payment Line so the city would have to make a payment instead of selling the bond. Chair Matthews-Kane asked is a BAN. Treasurer Matt Barnes answered that a BAN is a Bond Anticipation Note. He explained that when the city starts a construction project, for example, the city internally fund paying the invoices to the contractors or vendors through an internal borrow process. At the end of the fiscal year, those internal borrowers have to be repaid. In order to do that, the city would sell a BAN or Bond Anticipation Note which states that in the short future the city would sell a bond to repay that Bond Anticipation Note. He went on to explain that the city renewed the BAN once and now after two years it is coming to the time when the city does the renewal again. However, if the city renews it again, the city will be paying the principal and interest anyways and at this point, the city would just sell the bond. By repaying the BAN instead, the city would

avoid selling the bond and save the interest cost. He stated that Project 2358 could be bonded for 10 years and Project 2592B could be bonded for 8 years, but given the total is \$55,000 it would be better for the city to pay it off and save the interest costs in the short term. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE an appropriation of \$700,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to School Department, Westfield High School, Purchase of Lands and Buildings Account # 53082720- 580000 for swimming pool repairs.

Superintendent of Schools Stefan Czaporowski explained that last year the pool's filters had broken and the pool became not useful. There was an attempt to repair the pool last year, but due to Covid it was difficult to even secure the people to do the work. A bid document and funding had been put together at the end of last year, June, to award a bid. He was told that the cost would be approximately \$900,000 and in actuality, when the bids came back, the costs would be \$1,600,000 to \$1,700,000; they rejected the bid. The bid document was redone and after the height of the pandemic a bid came in that was reasonable. The funding that was for the repair of the pool was returned to the city at the end of the fiscal year, June 23, 2021. Superintendent Czaporowski explained the importance of the pool. At the Westfield High School it utilized by the students for physical education and has a fantastic swim team that is rich in tradition in Westfield. To not have a pool has been a struggle for the swim because they have to either use Westfield State University's pool when it is available or the Westfield Boys and Girls Club for a rental fee, but that facility does not have a diving board. He stated that he has been working with City Purchaser Tammy Tefft, Director of Facilities Bryan Forrette and School Business Manager Shannon Barry and asked Tammy to explain the process further. Tammy explained that the original bid come in much higher than what the estimation firm estimated and in looking at the bid document, there were issues between what the general contractor was supposed to carry and what the subs were to carry which led to the bid being completely redone by the design firm at no extra cost to the city. She stated that they waited until after the summer months due to GC's and contractors not having the time to take on this project and now the base bid is back to where it is supposed to be. At the advice of the Massachusetts State Attorney General's office, they allowed the city to rebid the tile work separately because the tile sub bids were three times the amount when included in the GC, and that bid is currently being worked out now. City Purchaser stated that the \$700,000 cost does include the repair of the filters and does get the pool back to where it needs to be so everything is code compliant. Councilor Bean asked what the cost will be for the tile work. Tammy replied that the design firm and a tile work company estimated that the cost should be under \$50,000. Councilor Sullivan stated that he supports this funding as a former swim team parent and believes that the swim team program, from a curriculum point of view, really does a lot for the community and certainly for the students that participate in the program. He believes if it is not repaired that would be a large embarrassment that there is a pool that is totally offline which makes a statement of the quality of life of the community. Councilor Bean asked how the Mayor and Superintendent would be feel about allowing public access to the pool after completion and spoke about his childhood experience in going to that pool for free swim.

Councilor Bean stated that he realizes there are challenges in having the pool open to the public with having to coordinate lifeguards, custodians, etc., but he would like to see people coming together to work out a way to allow for that happen one day. Superintendent Czaparowski stated that he and the Mayor already discussed that and now they have to do the work to see how they make that happen. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that she remembers when there were swim lessons for the kids during the summer and it was such a great program teaching kids how to swim as a life skill. She stated that she would love to see it utilized more as well and hopes that can happen. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE the transfer of \$1,250.70 within the Public Works Department, Highway Division, FY22 Supplies Account (14210000-540000) to FY21 Supplies Account (14210000- 540000) for a prior year bill.

Both Interim Superintendent of the Public Works Department Francis Cain and Budget Analysis of the Public Works Department Joanna Williams were present to explain the request. Fran explained that this is for Robert's Energy for unleaded gasoline. A credit was processed for a different invoice in error and the vendor had already applied the credit to the invoice with the payment, therefore, the invoice was short paid. Councilor Sullivan asked if Robert's Energy is for gas. Fran stated that the city purchases unleaded gas and diesel from that vendor which DPW manages the majority of the fuel for the entire city. Then there are chargebacks to the Police Department and Fire Department to fuel all of their vehicles as well. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE the transfer of \$110.91 within the Department of Public Works, Sewer Wastewater Treatment Division from FY22 Purchase of Services account #67004400-520000 to FY21 Purchase of Services account #67004400-520000 for a prior year bill.

Interim Superintendent of the Public Works Department Francis Cain explained that this is for a freight charge for an item that was ordered by wastewater and unfortunately, the freight charges were not included in the quote, therefore, the city owes shipping charges. He further explained that more often than not, the vendor does not know the cost of the shipping charges until it has been shipped. Councilor Sullivan asked what was the item that was shipped. Budget Analysis Joanna Williams replied that it was a reactor for the chemical analyzers. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE the transfer of \$602.80 within the Public Works Department, Sewer and Wastewater Division, FY22 Supplies Account (67004400-540000) to FY21 Supplies Account (67004400-540000) for a prior year bill.

Interim Superintendent of the Public Works Department Francis Cain explained that \$579.00 is to pay Cintas Uniforms for the employees, but this particular invoice was sent to the School Department in error. It was just sent to the Department of Public Works. The \$22.80 is

for a vendor that again had sent an invoice via email to an employee who is now retired. He stated that this is not typically how invoices are handled, but it is because the former employee handled was in charge a particular project with this vendor. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that is occurred within this calendar where an invoice was sent an employee's email that was no longer working and asked if the changes have been implemented where the invoices no longer go to employees. Councilor Sullivan stated that it is just bad business practice for employees to be getting the bill and there should be a central place for the invoices to go. He further stated that it is ok for an employee to review an invoice to ensure they are legitimate and proper, but employees should not be receiving the bills and here is a perfect example as to why. Fran replied yes, and the majority of invoices are sent correctly, but sometimes the vendor responds to the person that is do the ordering via email. He stated that the DPW tries not to make this a habit, but it does happen occasionally. Most invoices go to the DPW general email or to the main office staff, Hannah. Fran stated that he will try to not let this happen again. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to APPROVE the transfer of \$2,904.86 within the Public Works Department, Water Division, FY22 Purchase of Services Account (68004500-520000) to FY21 Purchase of Services Account (68004500-520000) for a prior year bill.

Interim Superintendent of the Public Works Department Francis Cain explained that \$1,978.90 is due to the Westfield Gas & Electric. In their billing process they overlooked internet service to the new treatment plant on Owen District Road and two bills were just received from them for that amount. Chair Matthews-Kane asked if the bill was for Westfield Gas & Electric for internet. Fran replied, yes, the plant has Whip City Fiber out to Owen District Road, off of East Mountain Road. He explained that there was internet service go to the construction trailers and then it was transferred over to the plant after it was constructed. He stated that he believes there was some location confusion on their end and then the bills were finally adjusted sometime in September for services in June and July. Chair Matthews-Kane stated that she found the billing confusing because she believed that the internet service was billed through Whip City Fiber and not through Westfield Gas & Electric and on the invoice it states: Gas \$0, Electric \$0 and then under other it is a large bill for internet. Joanna Williams confirmed that there is no separate file for Whip City Fiber; it is just under Westfield Gas & Electric. City Purchaser Tammy Tefft stated that that is correct; all the city's fiber charges are under one bill that comes from the Westfield Gas & Electric. Tammy stated that there was some confusion as to who was getting the bills after construction and that is why the bill is coming in late for the DPW. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Chair Bridget Matthews-Kane asked if there are any items not reasonably anticipated for this meeting. There were none.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Councilor Bean to ADJOURN the Finance Committee meeting. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and

Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES. Chair Bridget Matthews-Kane adjourned the meeting at 7:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marisa Colon, Scribe of the Finance Committee