

## SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL

59 COURT STREET

MUNICIPAL BUILDING, CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 23, 2022 AT 5:30 PM

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by President Onyski.

The Clerk called the roll. Councilors Beltrandi and Morganelli were absent.

President Onyski called the Public Hearing to order for the following purpose: To conduct a public hearing on the annual budget as submitted by the Mayor, at which all interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard for or against the proposed expenditures or any item thereof. Comments may also be sent to [city.council@cityofwestfield.org](mailto:city.council@cityofwestfield.org).

The Council was addressed by Lisa Okscin, 341 Steiger Drive. She read a statement as follows: "When I reviewed this year's budget, I had similar concerns of years past. I felt I could probably pull up my letter from last year and all of the issues would still apply. I have concerns with increase spending. Inflation is affecting everyone and everything right now. It is hard to keep asking taxpayers to pay more and not see much more in return. What is going to happen if and when the housing market crashes? The levy ceiling will definitely start becoming a factor. I have concerns with one time grant money being used to cover ongoing operating expenses. What is the plan to cover these costs when the funding runs out? While I appreciate the mayor's intention to fund the engineering and highway departments to address our deteriorating roads. I have concerns over the lack of funding for the other issues like the looming pension and OPEB challenges. While the budget season is the time to look for where to cut costs. The work cannot stop here. After the budget we need to focus on where we are missing revenue or opportunities to generate new revenue. If labor negotiations are occurring now, we need to address severance payouts. The teachers' union was the first to have their severance negotiated down and now the other unions need to follow suit. Taxpayers cannot afford to keep paying \$870,000 out and receiving nothing for the city in return. I would like to see the city council focus their goal of this budget season to position the city in a better financial standing for the future budget years. Please ask department heads for any creative money saving ideas and how we can implement them. I hope all councilors really spend the time to review the budget in these upcoming weeks. Taxpayers are depending on you to make the right decision with our money. I will be sure to share my thoughts on accounts that I see opportunities for change at the upcoming finance committee meetings."

President Onyski asked the Clerk if there were any comments on the email of [city.council@cityofwestfield.org](mailto:city.council@cityofwestfield.org) . The City Clerk replied that there were no comments on that email address.

With no others appearing to be heard and upon motion of Councilor Bean, it was VOTED: That the Public Hearing be CLOSED.

At 5:36 PM and upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was VOTED: To ADJOURN.

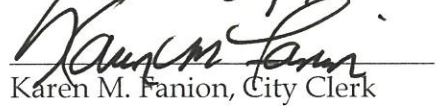
A true record, Attest:



Karen M. Fanion  
City Clerk/Clerk of the Council

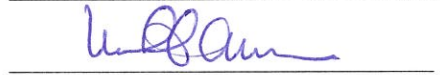
Presented to the Mayor

For approval July 7 2022

  
Karen M. Fanion, City Clerk

Approved by the Mayor

7-8 2022

  
Michael A. McCabe, Mayor