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WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

May 30, 2023 at 5:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bridget Matthews-Kane at 5:31 PM. In attendance were Finance Committee members Councilor Bridget Matthews-Kane, Councilor Richard K. Sullivan, Jr. and Councilor Brent Bean. Also in attendance were City Engineer Allison McMordie, Director of Public Health Joseph Rouse and Scribe of the Finance Committee Karisa Zerbato.

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 Bean for the appropriation in the amount of \$155,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to the Engineering Department's Purchase of Service Account #14110000-520000 to fund design services for improvements at the Western Ave and Bates Road Intersection. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sullivan.

Prior to the vote, City Engineer Allison McMordie stated this intersection is outdated. The intersection currently has a 30% angle however the angle should be at least 70% for safety purposes. Ms. McMordie stated 80% of the traffic comes from Bates Road and the rest comes from upper Western Avenue. This area causes confusion due to the straight through road on Western Avenue having a yield sign. Ms. McMordie stated now is the best time to update this area as the rest of the Western Avenue corridor has been redone. The proposal recommends a roundabout serving both a traffic calming purpose and a streetscaping purpose. Councilor Sullivan asked if there is information from the Police Department in regards to accidents/fatalities in this area. Ms. McMordie stated she does have reports and there aren't many crashes/fatalities in this area however the general design of the area is unsafe. Councilor Sullivan asked how this intersection got to the top of the list. Ms. McMordie stated she has heard from residents in general in regards to this area. Councilor Sullivan asked if there is any money set aside for construction of this project or if this is just for design. Ms. McMordie confirmed and stated there may be other opportunities for funding of the project. Councilor Bean asked what the cost of the project would be. Ms. McMordie responded approximately 1.1 million dollars. Councilor Bean stated there are many other projects that he thinks deserves attention ahead of this area. Councilor Bean mentioned a light being needed at Springdale Road and Holyoke Road. Ms. McMordie stated an action plan is needed for the funding of this particular project and is being worked on. Councilor Sullivan asked what is involved in putting the action plan together as this project would rank way higher on the priority list. Ms. McMordie stated all the crash data and state data needs to be put together. Councilor Sullivan asked if this was being done in house. Ms. McMordie confirmed and stated that Michaela from Community Development is assisting her with putting the action plan grant application together. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if Safe Streets for All is different than Complete Streets. Ms. McMordie stated yes and added that Complete Streets is more pedestrian focused whereas Safe Streets for All is focused on crashes and creating better intersections. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked where Pioneer Valley Planning Commission ranked this site for crashes. Ms. McMordie stated she doesn't think it falls within the top 10. Ms. McMordie stated she thinks there should be a design shelved for this

project so if the opportunity for funding comes along it could be applied for right away. Councilor Bean asked if a left hand turn onto Bates Road and a right onto Western Avenue would work. Ms. McMordie stated this is a potential option. Councilor Sullivan stated he wouldn't prioritize this project. He further stated the intersection has been there for years. He further added that it is better to have items under design than not. Ms. McMordie stated she could pull data and provide figures. A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan to table this item and leave it in committee. 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 Sullivan for the appropriation in the amount of \$30,000.00 from Free Cash (1000-359000) to Sanitary Landfill-Transfer Station Purchase of Service Account #14390000-520000 to cover unforeseen cost associated with a telephone system upgrade, scale repairs and increased rates in hauling costs. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Director of Public Health Joseph Rouse stated there was discussion in regards to modifying how money is collected for disposals at the Transfer Station. The scale that was just fixed was originally a truck scale and never met for residential use however that is an option. The building would need to be built out for accessibility purposes so transactions could be conducted at a business window. Mr. Rouse stated that the City is at the mercy of the haulers to report out tonages accurately. He further stated it is important for trash trucks and haulers to weigh when leaving the facility and match up weight at the destination facility. Mr. Rouse added there are a few haulers that pick up residential trash and enter the facility afterhours so this will need to be addressed. Mr. Rouse stated the telephones were outdated and needed to be upgraded as they were not a part of the City system. He further stated that the DPW side got updated as well. The updated phones are now a part of the City phone system. He stated \$5,000.00 was needed for mattress recycling hauling. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

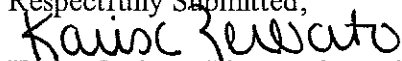
A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the submission of an order of appropriation in the amount of \$39,760.00 from the Flood Control Purchase of Service Account #12990000-520000 to various property owners along the Westfield River Levee for the purpose of taking permanent easements, temporary (5-year) easements, and fee takings by right of Eminent Domain to complete the Westfield River Levee Multi-Use Path project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, City Engineer Allison McMordie stated this will be coming out of the flood budget. She further stated money was set aside for the tree removal at the Little River Levee but it took longer for the Army Corp of Engineers to do the work. The money can be used now for easement work instead of taking it out of the engineering and construction account because the money would have had to been moved out of the flood account into the engineering and construction account. These easements are required for the project and include permanent easements, temporary easements and fee takings. She added that offer letters have been sent out to all the property owners. Councilor Sullivan asked if all of the homeowners have accepted the offers that have been sent out. Ms. McMordie stated there are plans that go out with a letter stating what is happening then an appraiser goes out and appraises all the property and sends a

letter and then an offer letter is sent out. She stated the homeowners don't necessarily have to accept per Eminent Domain. If the homeowners want to rebuttal they have three years to do so. She stated they are strict guidelines/date that have to be met and they have been followed. Title exams with the Assessor's office have been completed to make sure that the correct homeowners have been notified. Councilor Sullivan asked if any of the homeowners have agreed to take the payment and have signed off yet. Ms. McMordie stated technically the homeowners can't accept until it is filed with the Registry of Deeds. She further stated they are some of the properties that have fences in the backyard that are going to be taken down in which the homeowners are going to be compensated for. Councilor Sullivan asked if there is extra money set aside to cover additional expenses for this project if needed. Ms. McMordie confirmed. Councilor Bean asked if fences are being found on City property. Ms. McMordie confirmed and added there are garages as well as a junk pile. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if there has been any negative comments from homeowners. Ms. McMordie stated only from the section that was omitted. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked for clarification on what properties are permanent easements, which ones are temporary and which ones are being taken by Eminent Domain. Ms. McMordie stated on the list that TE is temporary easement, T3/T4/T5 are taking and PE is a permanent easement. She added that Westfield Gas and Electric is on the list and they stated they wanted to donate the land however a donation form hasn't been filled out yet so she will clarify that with them. Councilor Matthews-Kane stated she knows there was lots of encroachments on City property and asked if some of these payments are for these. Ms. McMordie stated there are encroachments but they are the homeowners so they will be accounted for and they will be compensated. For all other encroachments, license agreements through the Law Department have to be done. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked how many of these are there. Ms. McMordie stated approximately a handful. Councilor Matthews-Kane stated she thought DOT was paying for the whole thing. Ms. McMordie stated they are but it doesn't include non-participating items which includes easements and lighting. Councilor Sullivan asked if the \$39,760.00 will show back up in the flood account and all the work that was scheduled to be done will be completed in the next fiscal year. Ms. McMordie confirmed. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan to adjourn the meeting at 6:09 PM. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Bean, Councilor Sullivan and Councilor Matthews-Kane voting YES.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karisa Zerbato, Finance Committee Scribe

