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WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Personnel Action Committee

Minutes for 8/22/2023

Meeting at City Hall, Room 207 Starting time-5:00 PM

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

The law department has requested that we ask if anyone is audio or video taping, or live streaming this meeting-None.

There were four items on the agenda.

Item 1. Submitting the appointment of Jeffrey J. Trant, 61 Yankee Circle, as a member of the Fire Commission for a term to expire in February 2026.

Jeffrey Trant is a longtime resident of Westfield and states it is a privilege to live in a community with esteemed first responders among them, our Firefighters who selflessly protect the lives and property of those in our community. He also states it would be an honor to serve as a member of the Fire Commission and is very interested in serving our city in this capacity.

All City Councilors received his resume detailing his professional background and experiences before the Council's September 7th meeting.

He has a PH.D. in Social Work from University at Albany State University of New York and a Masters' Degree from Boston College.

His professional affiliations include National Assoc. of Social Workers, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Assoc., and Society for Social Work and Research.

An extensive list of Awards and honors are listed, his service to the community includes being a member of the Community Advisory Board for the Hampden County Sheriff's Dept., Western MA Regional Women's Correctional Center, and was on the Board of Directors for the Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin for 6 years before he took over as its Executive Director where he currently is employed.

His past employment situations include being the Director, Office of Safe Environment and Victim Assistance for the Springfield Diocese, Quality Coordinator for Behavioral Health Network, Director for Adult Mental Health Center for Human Development and involved in Multicultural Community Service. He has been a professor and lecturer at many colleges and extensively published in subjects including opioid abuse and employment, psychological distress, closing the gap in mandated reporting laws.

A caring personality, down to earth, sensible, looks at risk assessment, believes in progressive discipline, treating people the same - words used by working associates to describe him.

Chair: Councilor Figy-any comments or you can make them at the full council meeting-or a motion

Councilor Figy-stated most impressive. I'm happy to see that you are willing to work with the Fire Department.

Trant stated I'm honored to follow in the steps of such a long-time Commissioner (Albert Masciadrelli) and am looking forward to helping the City in this manner. If voted positive with the full Council, would it be possible to get sworn in by September 11th so I can officially stand with the Fire Commission at the

City's September 11th Ceremonies. (Note from the Chair-He is of the family who lost a family member in NY on that fateful Day, 9/11/01)

Chair and Figy responded, absolutely. We are sure City Clerk Bruce would be happy to have take the oath on September 8th.

Trant stated, Thank you. I'm looking forward to joining the Fire Commission with the council's confirmation.

Motion to appoint Jeffrey J. Trant as a Fire Commissioner for a term to expire in February, 2026 made by Figy, 2nd by Harris.

All in favor-Harris-yes, Figy-Yes.

Motion passes on a 2-0 vote

Agenda Item #2

Submitting the name Michael Squindo for the position of Executive Director for Council on Aging for a term of three years from the date of appointment.

Tina Gorman, the long-time Executive Director for the Council on Aging has decided to step away from being the Director and will pursue another open position within the Senior Center which will allow her to have more time for personal endeavors. That position will go through proper posting and interviewing requirements.

A search for a new Executive Director was conducted by the City's Personnel Department and pursuant to the City's Ordinance the position was advertised and posted for 30 days. After reviewing applications and interviewing, the City's Personnel Director Anne Larkham recommended to the Mayor that Michael Squindo be appointed as the Executive Director. The Mayor met the applicant and has asked the City Council for approval for Squindo for the usual 3 year term from the date of appointment.

Michael Squindo has approximately 6 years as Council on Aging Director for Agawam, with the same responsibilities as those at our Westfield Senior Center and nearly 10 years of various experiences working directly with local Senior Centers. He has a Master's Degree in Social Work. Since 2018 to present he is also on the Advisory Board of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority and serves as a member of the ADA Paratransit Appeals Committee.

Tina Gorman is very enthusiastic about this appointment and adds that he is also excellent with technology as she worked with him and many other Directors throughout the Pandemic via Zoom.

The Director of Personnel states that he will be an asset to the elder community of Westfield.

All City Councilors received his resume which listed his ability to work as a team with the staff, his extensive knowledge of elder issues, services and resources including his certifications in Senior Bullying Intervention, SHINE, Alzheimer's and Dementia, and Behavioral Health and Aging.

Chair-Councilor Figy, any comments or you can make them at the full Council Meeting or a motion.

Councilor Figy asked Squindo, how does it feel to follow a legend-Tina has been here a very long time. Squindo stated well, I'm not quite there yet, but I'm excited to start a new place-fresh-and have had meetings with Tina beginning during the Pandemic so I'm aware of the Center's activities and doings in

general. I plan to be at the City Council Meeting on September 7th for that vote and hope to be the new Director.

Motion made to recommend appointment made by Figy, 2nd by Harris.

All in favor-Harris-yes, Figy-yes. Motion passes on a 2-0 vote.

Agenda Item #3

Submitting the reappointment of Jeffrey Siegel, 56 Wilson Avenue, as a member of the Fire Commission for a term to expire February 2025.

Attorney Jeffrey Siegel was first appointed in 04/2019. All Councilors have received his resume from that time so that his extensive background in Law could be reviewed.

The only change from those facts is that he is now with the Law firm of Fierst Bloomberg Ohm in Northampton after an approximate 10-year employment as Vice President Legal Affairs for United Bank. He has over 30 years' experience in Security, Compliance and Legal matters. He is or has been an adjunct faculty and lecturer for Clark University, Westfield State University, AIC, University of Pheonix, Yale and other institutions. He is admitted to the MA and Bar and admitted to practice before the U.S. Tax Court and U. S. Supreme Court. He has authored may Law articles.

He states he wants to be involved in Community Service, thus his initial interest and now continued interest in serving on the Fire Commission. The difficulties that the Department experienced was completed before he was sworn in and he believes that the has represented the city fairly and with professionalism. And is highly aware of the legalities and parameters he must adhere to while being a Fire Commissioner.

Motion made by Figy to recommend reappointment, 2nd by Harris.

All in favor-Harris-yes, Figy-yes.

Motion passes on a 2-0 vote.

Agenda Item #4

Submitting the appointment of Rebecca Blackburn, 555 Russell Road #A1, as a member of the Cultrual Council for a term to expire in September2026, replacing a vacancy.

Although on the Council Agenda as an appointment, it is basically a reappointment of Rebe cca Blackburn. She served on the Cultural Council two terms ending in May 2022, beginning 02/2016. The State's Regulations regarding serving on the City's Cultural Council states that only 2 terms can be served consecutively, then after 1 year, one can reapply for appointment to that Council. (The State provides the funding for the grants that the City's Cultural Council awards to individuals, businesses and groups, for their Arts and Cultural events or endeavors.)

Thus she states she had a great experience serving on this which gave her the opportunity to serve the Community at large as well as advancing the Athenaeum's mission by forging new connections between organizations and looks forward to returning. She is an accomplished Librarian at the Westfield Athenaeum for 17 years.

She states she is an enthusiastic and reliable volunteer, and many in our community would agree with that. She volunteered for Westfield on Weekends and was both Scribe and Chair when on the Cultural Council. The group is looking forward to her rejoining them.

Motion to recommend appointment made by Figy, 2nd by Harris.

All in favor-Harris-yes, Figy-yes.

Motion passes on a 2-0 vote.

Chair: The minutes will be as stated as has been stated and given to the City Clerk tomorrow, 8/23/23.

Motion to approve the minutes made by Figy, 2nd by Harris.

All in FAVOR, Harris-yes, and Figy-yes.

Motion passes on a 2-0 Vote.

Motion to Adjourn made by Figy, 2nd by Harris.

All in favor, Harris-yes and Figy-yes.

Motion passes on 2-0 Vote.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:25 PM

Submitted by City Harris, Chair on August 23, 2023