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Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2023 PM

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bridget Matthews-Kane at 6:00 PM. In attendance were Finance Committee members Councilor Bridget Matthews-Kane, Councilor Richard K. Sullivan, Jr. and Councilor Brent Bean. Also in attendance was Airport Manager Christopher Willenborg, Dispatch Director Nina Barszcz, Police Captain Stephan Dickinson 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 Sullivan for the approval of an appropriation of \$654,393.67 from the Stabilization Account (8303-340000) to the Westfield Barnes Airport Capital Project Taxiway B South Account #11990000-580000-4899 to cover the 2% local share of the \$32,054,500.00 Taxiway B South Project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Christopher Willenborg stated the project with Taxiway B South has been in the capital program for the past 3 ½ years. The project is scheduled to start in April 2024. It is a 240 day project. He further stated the low bidder is ET & L, based out of Stowe, MA. He stated that all the grant applications have been submitted. Mr. Willenborg stated there are five funding agencies for this project. The FAA's share is \$11,779,086.00. The MassDOT Aeronautics share is \$645,393.00 which is the same amount as the City's share. The Air National Guard share is \$9,329,141.52. The Governor's Military Task Force share is \$9,637,485.00. The FAA Grant is anticipated to come in within the next two weeks. He further stated that within the next week or two a letter should be coming from the Governor's Military Task Force for their funding share. The Air National Guard commitment letter should be in within a month. The MassDOT Aeronautics letter will be sent out once the FAA grant comes in. He stated by the end of October all the grant funding should be in place for the project. Mr. Willenborg stated it has been a true team effort from the federal, state and local level to leverage 98% of the project. He further added that Congressman Neal was personally involved and reached out to the FAA. He stated the F-15's and the incoming F-35's are supposed to operate on a 75 foot wide taxiway with 25 foot shoulders. Currently the section is only 50 feet wide with no paved shoulders so a waiver has to be obtained yearly from the Department of Defense. This project will also address safety concerns. He stated if project isn't completed, the FAA won't be able to fund the project until 2027. Mr. Willenborg stated this project needs to be completed next year. Councilor Sullivan asked if this full depth reclamation and widening. Mr. Willenborg confirmed and stated all the permitting has been completed. Councilor Sullivan asked if there was any local bidders for the project. Mr. Willenborg stated there were three bidders including one from Connecticut and two from Massachusetts. Councilor Sullivan questioned why the amount from the Governor's Military Task Force is so high. Mr. Willenborg stated this project has a concrete apron tied into the taxiway, the apron is 5 feet lower than the current runway center line and the apron must be reconstructed to meet the design criteria. Councilor Sullivan asked if there was a problem with any of the funding sources what would happen. Mr. Willenborg stated that if any funding

partners fall out of the project, the project will not move forward. He also stated that once free cash is certified the money will be put back into the Stabilization Account. Councilor Matthews-Kane stated she spoke to the Mayor who confirmed this commitment. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the approval of the acceptance of a Grant in the amount of \$1,040,343.00 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security State 911 Department Support & Incentive Grant to the Regional Public Safety Communications Department to cover equipment, annual licensing, maintenance contracts and to defray the costs of salaries & overtime for certified telecommunicator personnel. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Nina Barszcz stated this grant is given to Public Safety Answering Point's as long as you apply. She further stated the last several years the amount awarded was between \$140,000.00 and \$170,000.00 however due to the regionalization with Southwick the amount awarded this year was over a million dollars. She stated that 100% of personnel costs and most of the operational costs will be covered by this grant. It will also replace aging equipment and purchase headsets for the dispatchers. Councilor Sullivan asked if some of this money would be returned to the state. Ms. Barszcz confirmed and added that her overall budget is just over \$900,000.00. She further stated there are strict guidelines on what the grant money can be spent on. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the acceptance of a Grant in the amount of \$106,313.00 from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security State 911 Department Answering Point and Regional Emergency Communications Center Development Grant to the Regional Public Safety Communications Department for transition and equipment expenses for regionalization with the Town of Southwick. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Nina Barszcz stated this is a developmental grant that is awarded specifically to dispatch centers that are regionalizing. This grant previously funded most of the operational and equipment costs in order to get Southwick into the dispatch center. She further stated that now she is applying for this grant to keep up with the costs of regionalization. This year it includes \$100,000.00 for the assessment fee that Southwick would be paying to Westfield for dispatch services. She added that this isn't reimbursed as it is disbursed directly to the City. Ms. Barszcz stated \$6,000.00 will cover half of the cost of an avatar receptionist in the Southwick Police Department. She stated that the Southwick Police Department will be the first department in Massachusetts to install the avatar. Currently in Southwick a button is pushed to speak to someone, but it doesn't work if the person is deaf. The avatar receptionist will help with communication and move towards ADA compliance. Councilor Matthews-Kane stated this grant is paying Southwick's cost. Ms. Barszcz confirmed. She stated that Southwick did pay the City from December of 2022 until June 30, 2023. The assessment fee for Southwick for this year, next year and the year after will be paid for with this grant. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked what the grant was used for last year. Ms. Barszcz stated it was used for salary, equipment and operational

funding to finish the regionalization project. Councilor Sullivan asked if the money that is disbursed will go into the general fund. Ms. Barszcz stated she believed so. Councilor Sullivan stated the department operates in the black. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the acceptance of a Grant in the amount of \$10,225.84 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety & Security State 911 Department Training Grant to the Regional Public Safety Communications Department to cover fees associated with 911 training courses, annual maintenances fees for CritiCall, the skill and ability testing software and licensing costs for the Emergency Fire Dispatch protocol card sets. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Nina Barszcz stated this is a grant that goes to continuing education for current dispatchers, training and certifications for new dispatchers and any type of equipment that is used for hiring and training. Councilor Matthews-Kane asked if this grant could be applied for even if the City wasn't regionalized with Southwick. Ms. Barszcz confirmed. She stated that items #5,7,8 go to all dispatch centers as long as you apply for them Item #6 is a competitive grant. Ms. Barszcz stated that the money for item #6 is given to centers that are already regionalized so those projects can be finalized. She added that she can use the Development Grant to put a dispatch center within a new police station or for a stand alone dispatch center. She stated that the state is pushing for regionalization. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the acceptance of a Grant in the amount of \$848.00 from the Massachusetts Office of Public Safety & Security State 911 Department Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant to the Regional Public Safety Communications Center to be used for the current medical protocol system card sets and annual maintenance fee of the quality assurance software. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Nina Barszcz stated this grant will go towards the emergency medical dispatch protocol that is used as well as a software fee. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the acceptance of \$100,000.00 from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security in Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds for the Police Department to upgrade cardio equipment, security doors and to purchase a small utility vehicle and sonar device for the boat. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Captain Dickinson stated this was earmarked by Senator Velis for the City from the Coronavirus State Recovery Funds. He further stated there has never been any new gym equipment at the department except for a rowing machine that was purchased during Covid. He stated all the new equipment will be able to be moved to the new police station when the time comes. He further stated a sonar device will be purchased for the boat. A utility vehicle will also be purchased. Captain Dickinson stated in addition there are some issues with the framework of doors including rust that need to be repaired. He also stated the doors don't protect cold air from

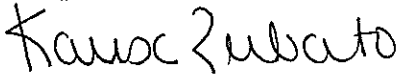
entering the building due to gaps that need to be repaired. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan for the transfer of \$149.26 within the Police Department from the FY24 Purchase of Services Account #12100000-520000 to the FY22 Purchases of Services Account #12100000-585001 to cover a Massachusetts Turnpike Authority E-ZPass invoice for \$9.20 and even outstanding Westfield Gas and Electric invoices, totaling \$140.06 for 12 Woodland Road which was seized by the Police Department. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bean.

Prior to the vote, Captain Dickinson stated several houses were seized due to marijuana grows and this was one of them. There was a dispute with Westfield Gas and Electric and the original owners and when the property was seized by the City this money was owed. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

A motion was made by Councilor Bean to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 PM. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sullivan. The motion passed 3-0 with Councilor Sullivan, Councilor Matthews-Kane and Councilor Bean voting YES.

Respectfully submitted,



Karisa Zerbato, Finance Committee Scribe