



MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
59 COURT STREET
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
MAY 31, 2022 AT 5:30 PM

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Councilor Matthews-Kane, Chair of the Finance Committee.

The Clerk called the roll. Councilors Allie and Bean were absent.

Under "Public Participation" the Councilors were addressed by Kristin Mello, representing WRAFT (Westfield Residents Advocating For Themselves). She informed the Council that a representatives of ATSDR (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry) were present in September in 2019 taking urine and blood samples to determine levels of PFAS and next week they will be back to take samples from the environment from the original list participants and there are 20 spaces still available.

The Departmental Budget Hearings were as follows:

Mayor's Department

Mayor Michael McCabe was present to represent the Mayor's Department budget. He informed the Council that the full time salary account has decreased because he is not seeking a City Advancement Officer at this time. The part time hourly position has been increased from \$17,000 to \$19,000 as the employee is fluent in Spanish and is a Notary. The travel line item has gone up a bit and other line items are holding steady. Medicaid area is pretty much the same with a small increase in wages. Councilor Sullivan commented that the Medicare/Medicaid department is a revenue generating department and that the employee is doing a great job to recoup money for the City.

Upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was

VOTED: That the Mayor's Department budget, as submitted, be APPROVED.

Councilor Flaherty abstained.

PEG Programming

Media Specialist Peter Cowles was present to represent the PEG Programming. He informed the Council that not much has changed since his last year's budget. The part time hourly is to cover the meetings and would like to keep the part time position to fill in when he is out so it would be more of an engineering position. The department

is getting busier. There are savings with the G and E connections. Software license agreements are included, Supplies went up for toner for the copier. Additional equipment went up for new cameras and equipment. And not exceeding monies coming in from Comcast. Councilor Flaherty questioned how the public is getting involved to use this equipment. The Media Specialist replied that he would like to have training for the public to use the equipment and that the use of the equipment must lead to a program. Councilor Flaherty questioned why PEG is paying for internet service. It should be paid for by the G and E. The Media Specialist replied that that would be a decision for elected officials. Councilor Mello questioned when PEG started paying the internet for City. The Media Specialist replied before 2018. Councilor Mello questioned if money that is used for paying for the internet could be used for ADA compliant services. The Media Specialist replied using money from PEG to pay for internet happened before he was employed by the City and that ADA services are very expensive. Councilor Mello questioned the Chair if the Council can add to the department. The Chair replied that the Council can only cut, not add. Councilor Morganelli thanked the Media Specialist for all he does for the City and it is nice to have part time hourly employees to help out. The Media Specialist replied that another full time person would be helpful and that he has to say no to some things because there are not enough employees. Councilor Morganelli replied that as a passionate person, he would like to see this department get what it needs. Councilor Flaherty also thanked the Media Specialist for all he does and that there are some events that are not covered and would like to see more coverage and have the City pay its share of the internet costs. Councilor Onyski also thanked Peter for all he does for the City. Councilor Mello questioned how much would internet be just for the PEG department. The Media Specialist replied that he is part of the building (WTA building) connection and its \$1,100.00 per month per building. Councilor Mello offered a motion to reduce the G and E internet line by \$120,000.00. There was no second, the motion was not recognized.

Upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was
VOTED: That the PEG budget, as submitted, be APPROVED.

Councilor Mello and Morganelli were opposed. Councilors Flaherty abstained because he is not a member of the Finance Committee and did not believe he should be voting on finance committee items.

Public Safety Communication

Dispatch Administrator Nina Barszcz was present to represent the Public Safety Communication Department. She informed the Council that the budget is pretty straight forward. The fluctuations are in contractual obligations and also seeking one more hire to bring the staffing level to 12. The overtime has decreased as 57% has only been spent in the current fiscal year and there are grants that are received for overtime. The temporary salary per diem has increased to account for employees out on FMLA or working out of grade. The increases are due to the impact of regionalization. The purchase of services are up 5% for an extra cell phone and G and E fiber connection for

Southwick. Councilor Flaherty thanked the Administrator for her work on the regionalization with Southwick of the department. A decrease in equipment because last year there was a need for radios and that has been completed. The Administrator informed the Council that the grants will increase this year due to the regionalization project. Councilor Mello questioned if the grant money goes to the department or to the City's general fund. The Administrator replied that the grants are reimbursable so only the money that is spent is reimbursed. Councilor Morganelli questioned the continuing education line item. The Administrator replied that it is a Massachusetts requirement that dispatchers are certified every year.

Upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was

VOTED: That the Public Safety budget, as submitted, be APPROVED.

Councilor Morganelli was opposed.

Councilor Flaherty abstained.

Planning Department, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Community Preservation

City Planner Jay Vinskey was present to represent the departments. He informed the Council that there is no Planning Department as far as the budget is concerned, it falls under the Community Development Department. He informed the Council that he is present to represent Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Community Preservation and that there they are the stipends and pretty much the same and that Community Preservation is separate from the General Fund.

Upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was

VOTED: That the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Community Preservation budgets, as submitted, be APPROVED.

Councilor Morganelli was opposed.

Councilor Flaherty abstained.

Community Development Department

Community Development Director Peter Miller was present to represent the department. He informed the Council that there is a small decrease due some duties that were moved to the staff of License Division of the City Clerk's office. The department is down three spots from where it was three years ago. The CDBG coordinator is being advertised to have someone in place for July and he is taking on some of the City Advancement duties. He reviewed the line items which are contractual. Councilor Flaherty questioned if the duties of the CDBG are year round or busy only at certain time. The Director replied that it's busy at times, but is also needed year round to take care of all the projects. Overtime is for Planning Board meetings. Purchase of services is budgeted on a project perspective. Due to COVID there were a lack of events but now most events are back such as the Run Westfield and the Fireworks. General expenses are for Pioneer Valley Planning services and Economic Development is for the design of signs for downtown stores. The Director reviewed the Off-Street parking. It is for the 19 hour a week parking enforcement officer and for

Board members stipends. The salary for the parking principal clerk that handles the meetings of Off Street commission is in the License Division of the City Clerk's office, it's a dual operation with the City Clerk supervising the administrative responsibilities and Community Development Director handling the professional side. Under purchase of services there will be a new vendor for parking tickets. The Director reviewed the Westfield Redevelopment Authority and it has a \$1,500 item to continue what they are doing and they are still going forward with the Urban Renewal plan. Councilor Flaherty questioned how the CPA fund is doing and if people are interested what should they apply for. City Planner replied that there is a lot of money in the housing side.

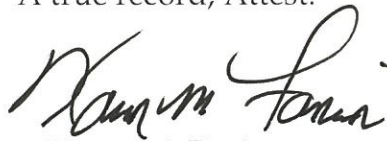
Upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was VOTED: That the Community Development, Off-Street Parking and Westfield Redevelopment budgets, as submitted, be APPROVED.

Councilor Morganelli was opposed.

Councilor Flaherty abstained.

At 6:32 PM and upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was VOTED: To ADJOURN.

A true record, Attest:

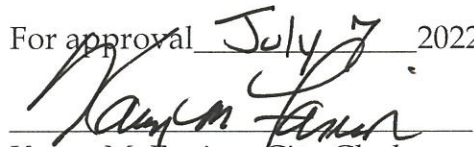


Karen M. Fanion

City Clerk/Clerk of the Council

Presented to the Mayor

For approval July 7 2022



Karen M. Fanion, City Clerk

Approved by the Mayor

7.12 2022



Michael A. McCabe, Mayor