

**MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
AUGUST 20, 2020 AT 7:00 PM**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the City of Westfield **CITY COUNCIL** will be conducted via remote participation. Specific information can be found on the City of Westfield website at www.cityofwestfield.org. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so by tuning into Channel 15 or online at westfieldtv.org. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the City's website an audio recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the President.

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, it was
VOTED: That the rules of the City Council be **SUSPENDED** in order to act upon items received at tonight's meeting.

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, it was
VOTED: Under immediate consideration, that a Grant in the amount of \$30,445.45 from FEMA through the 2019 Assistance to Firefighters Grant to the Fire Department, with matching funds of \$3,044.55 to come out of the existing Fire Department operating budget, be **ACCEPTED**.

The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	Yes
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	Yes
James Adams	Yes
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	Yes
John Beltrandi III	Absent
Michael Burns	Yes
Ralph Figy	Yes
Dave Flaherty	Yes
Cindy Harris	Yes
Bridget Matthews-Kane	Yes
Kristen Mello	Yes

Prior to the vote, Councilor Figy informed the Council that the Grant is for dryers for the firefighters' clothing and it's time sensitive.

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, it was

VOTED: Under immediate consideration, that the sum of \$110.52 be appropriated from the Ambulance, Supply account #21002310-540000 (FY21) to Ambulance, Supply account #21002310-540000 (FY20), for a prior year bill.

The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	Yes
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	Yes
James Adams	Yes
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	Yes
John Beltrandi III	Absent
Michael Burns	Yes
Ralph Figy	Yes
Dave Flaherty	Yes
Cindy Harris	Yes
Bridget Matthews-Kane	Yes
Kristen Mello	Yes

Prior to the vote, Councilor Figy informed the Council that this was for a bill for a part from Sarat Ford and there was confusion on the billing.

Upon motion of Councilor Onyski, it was

VOTED: Under immediate consideration, that the sum of \$5,223.04 be appropriated from Community Preservation Undesignated (FY21) account #24101770-580000 to Community Preservation Account Paper Mill Playground (Recreation) account #24101770-580400-5310.

The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	Yes
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	Yes
James Adams	Yes
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	Yes
John Beltrandi III	Absent
Michael Burns	Yes
Ralph Figy	Yes
Dave Flaherty	Yes
Cindy Harris	Yes
Bridget Matthews-Kane	Yes
Kristen Mello	Yes

Prior to the vote, Councilor Onyski informed the Council that this is for repairs to the current playscape. Councilor Figy commended the Papermill PTO in raising \$4,273.39 for the remainder of the project. Councilor Flaherty congratulated the Papermill PTO for coming up with the funds and informed the Council that this type of a project should be part of the school budget.

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, it was

VOTED: Under immediate consideration, that the sum of \$100,000.00 be appropriated from Community Preservation Historic (FY21) account #24101770-580200 (\$50,000.00) and Community Preservation Undesignated (FY21) account #24101770-580000 (\$50,000.00) to Community Preservation Westfield Woman's Club Building (Historic) account #24101770-580200-5120.

The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	Yes
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	Yes
James Adams	Yes
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	Yes
John Beltrandi III	Absent
Michael Burns	Yes
Ralph Figy	Yes
Dave Flaherty	Yes
Cindy Harris	Yes
Bridget Matthews-Kane	Yes
Kristen Mello	Yes

Prior to the vote, Councilor Figy informed the Council that this is an ongoing project to modernize the building and bring it into ADA compliance

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, it was VOTED: Under immediate consideration that the sum of \$150,000.00 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Undesignated (FY21) account #24101770-580000 to Community Preservation Account Country Club Drive Greenway Connector (Recreation) account #24101770-580400-5309.

The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	Yes
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	Yes
James Adams	Yes
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	Yes
John Beltrandi III	Absent
Michael Burns	No
Ralph Figy	Yes
Dave Flaherty	No
Cindy Harris	Yes
Bridget Matthews-Kane	Yes
Kristen Mello	Yes

The President declared the motion PASSED.

Prior to the vote, Councilor Figy informed the Council that this will make for a safe access to the rail trail. Councilor Flaherty informed the Council that this is a lot of money for one neighborhood and expressed his opinion that the money could be better used to hook up the downtown area and that he will be a no vote. Councilor Harris explained that at the CPA meeting everyone agree to fund the project. Councilor Mello questioned if these improvements will need to be done again when the Franklin Avenue project is completed. Councilor Onyski informed the Council that this improvement is not for the Franklin Avenue area, it is for Country Club Drive area. Councilor Mello questioned if this makes it a park. President Bean answered "no". Councilor Figy gave some background information relative to the appropriation. He informed the Council that former Councilor Paul wanted stop lights at the connection of the rail trail on Shaker Road and that this connection is more economical and that it is connecting a lot of other neighborhoods in the area, not just Country Club Drive. Councilor Allie agreed it is a good use for the money and that it is connecting 100 homes in the neighborhood. Councilor Matthews-Kane echoed Councilor Allie's comments. Councilor Burns informed the Council that he is a proponent of the rail trail, but agreed with Councilor Flaherty that it is a lot of money for one neighborhood and he would also be a no vote. Councilor Adams informed the Council that it is a safety issue and worth it if it saves lives. Councilor Matthews-Kane informed the Council that the CPA funds are limited for what they can be used for and that this is a project that qualifies for CPA funds.

Upon motion of Councilor Onyski, it was VOTED: That the application submitted by Neil Petrucelli, d/b/a gr8onlinestuff, 180 Root Road applying for a Junk Dealer's and Junk Collector's license be REFERRED TO THE LICENSE COMMITTEE and that a Public Hearing be scheduled at the earliest practicable date.

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, it was VOTED: That the meeting return to regular order.

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, for the Finance Committee, it was VOTED: That the motion of Councilor Allie, amended by Councilor Onyski, that the view tax be eliminated, limited, or reduced and that the water tax be also reviewed be REMOVED FROM COMMITTEE with no action. Councilor Figy informed the Council that per the City Assessor there is no view or water tax, it's just that the values are higher in that area.

Upon motion of Councilor Figy, for the Finance Committee, it was VOTED: That the motion of Councilor Flaherty requesting that the Capital Plan be updated by the first meeting in May and such plan should include edits and status updates for items that were listed on the most current capital plan be REMOVED FROM COMMITTEE with no action.

Upon motion of Councilor Onyski, for the Legislative and Ordinance Committee, it was VOTED: That an Order entitled "AN ORDER APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF FIFTY-TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$52,000.00) FOR THE PURPOSE OF TAKING LAND (47.5 Shepard Street) FOR THE PURPOSES OF MAINTENANCE OF A FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURE AND RELATED IMPROVEMENTS" (appropriated from the Flood Control, Judgments account #12990000-576000) be given first reading by title only.

The Order was given first reading by title and upon motion of Councilor Onyski, it was VOTED: That the Order be PASSED TO SECOND READING.
The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	Yes
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	Yes
James Adams	Yes
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	Yes
John Beltrandi III	Absent
Michael Burns	Yes
Ralph Figy	Yes
Dave Flaherty	Yes
Cindy Harris	Yes
Bridget Matthews-Kane	Yes
Kristen Mello	Yes

At this point Councilor Beltrandi arrived at the meeting.

Upon motion of Councilor Onyski, for the Legislative and Ordinance Committee, it was VOTED: That an Order entitled "AN ORDER OF TAKING OF REAL ESTATE BY RIGHT OF EMINENT DOMAIN" (47.5 Shepard Street) be given first reading by title only.

The Order was given first reading by title and upon motion of Councilor Onyski, it was VOTED: That the Order be PASSED TO SECOND READING.

The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	Yes
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	Yes
James Adams	Yes
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	Yes
John Beltrandi III	Yes
Michael Burns	Yes
Ralph Figy	Yes
Dave Flaherty	Yes
Cindy Harris	Yes
Bridget Matthews-Kane	Yes
Kristen Mello	Yes

Prior to the votes, Councilor Onyski informed the Council that this is a friendly taking for maintenance of the flood control dike structure. He informed the Council that the property is practically on City property. There are back taxes that will be paid at the closing. The demolition of the building is not included in the appropriation and that will be brought forward at a later time.

Councilor Burns, for the Legislative and Ordinance Committee, offered a motion, which was duly seconded, that the motion of Councilor Bean to review all ordinances and licensing around outdoor dining be removed from committee. Councilor Burns informed the Council that the State and local municipalities came through with directives for this item that are good until November 1st, 2020. Councilor Bean informed the Council that this motion was brought forward to help out local business to get open but the State came through with regulations, but going forward there should be more flexible regulations for future outdoor dining and suggested the item go back into committee. Councilor Figy commended the Health Department in getting the restaurants up and open. Councilor Flaherty agreed with Councilor Figy relative to the Health Department and also agreed with Councilor Bean that this item should remain in committee for opening restaurants in the future. Councilor Onyski informed the Council that by the time L & O received this item the regulations from the State were already in effect and that the regulations for November will be challenging.

Upon motion of Councilor Adams, it was VOTED: That the above item to review all ordinances and licensing around outdoor dining REMAIN IN COMMITTEE.

Upon motion of Councilor Sullivan, for Councilor Bean, it was VOTED: That the motion of Councilor Bean requesting an update on the hiring of two positions: Personnel Director & City Solicitor be REFERRED TO MAYOR HUMASON and the motion was further amended upon motion of Councilor Flaherty that the Mayor submit this information at the first meeting in September.

Upon motion of Councilor Sullivan, for Councilor Bean, it was VOTED: That the motion of Councilor Bean requesting an update on plans and procedures to open City Hall to the public be REFERRED TO MAYOR HUMASON and the motion was further amended upon motion of Councilor Flaherty that the Mayor submit this information at the first meeting in September.

Upon motion of Councilor Sullivan, for Councilor Bean, it was VOTED: That the motion of Councilor Bean to request the Mayor to create a "grant writer's" position for the City of Westfield, including job description, posting and funding source be REFERRED TO MAYOR HUMASON and the motion was further amended upon motion of Councilor Flaherty that the Mayor submit this information at the first meeting in September. Councilor Harris informed the Council that she respectfully will vote no on the position. She informed the Council of the facts as follows, that the following departments apply for their own grants Community Development, Purchasing, Council on Aging, Facilities Director, School Department, Police, Fire and Airport. She informed the Council that the seasoned managers of each department know their departments and what their department's need. There are no grants for the Building Department, Assessor's Department and City Clerk's office and if one exists the State notifies the department. There has been only one grant for an Election in the past 3 years. She informed the Council that she talked to most departments and there is no support for this this and this is not the best route to bring in more money for the City. Councilor Matthews-Kane informed the Council that she is a proponent of the creating the grant writer's position. She informed the Council that she feels the City leaves a lot of money on the table. She informed the Council that her husband is an 8th grade Civics teacher in the State and brought a social studies grant to Westfield's attention and Westfield did not apply for it and there is another grant relative to trees that is coming due that the City could apply for and this position would assist department heads in writing these grants. Councilor Flaherty agreed with both Councilors' comments. He agreed a lot of money is left on the table. He informed the Council that when the City Advancement Officer's position was created, grant writing was part of the job description. He agreed it may not make sense to have a stand-alone position for a grant writer. Councilor Bean informed the Council that a grant writer is a set of skills that is not like any other position and as a former employee of Westfield State University there were four grant writers. And if the grant writer does their job it will raise three times their salary and it should be looked into and it would be up to the Mayor whether or not the position be created. Councilor Allie questioned if a job description on this would come to the City Council. Councilor Bean informed the Council that he does not know, it may be an Ordinance depending on what the Mayor wants to do.

Councilor Harris was opposed.

Upon motion of Councilor Sullivan, (and Councilors Adams, Allie, Bean, Beltrandi, Burns, Figy, Flaherty, Morganelli), to investigate the process for removing the Fire Chief position out of civil service and be REFERRED TO LAW, PERSONNEL AND MAYOR. Councilor Sullivan informed the Council that back many years ago there were positions removed from Civil Service, including the Police Chief and the only one left was the Fire Chief because the Fire union did not agree to remove it. He informed the Council he would only support this if it did not affect the current Fire Chief. Councilor Harris questioned if the firefighters or the Mayor want this. If there was documentation from the firefighters supporting this, she would support it. Councilor Sullivan informed the Council that he has not talked to the fire unions and does not have any documentation from the unions relative to supporting it and that without fire unions' support this would not happen. Councilor Flaherty informed the Council that another path to take would be a Charter amendment and then do not need the fire unions' support. Councilor Onyski informed the Council that he would be a no vote and that this should be coming from the Fire Commission and agreed with Councilor Harris. Councilor Adams informed the Council that most other cities/towns are going in this direction.

Councilors Harris and Onyski were opposed.

Councilor Allie offered a motion, which was duly seconded, to discuss ways to help small businesses that were forced to remain closed by the State to be referred to the Mayor and Finance Committee. Councilor Allie informed the Council that the City should reach out to businesses to make them aware of options of making payments and letting them know what grants are available to them. He informed the Council that the businesses that are closed are stressed and some of them do not know a lot about the CARES Act. Councilor Bean questioned Councilor Allie if he has a list of closed business. Councilor Allie informed the Council that he doesn't have a list of names of businesses but types of businesses such as bars that don't serve food. Councilor Flaherty informed the Council that this is a feel-good motion and the Finance Committee cannot do anything for closed businesses. He informed the Council that the City Advancement Officer position may have handled something like this and the Chamber of Commerce, banks and accountants have info for businesses as well and that the City should not be in the business of advising businesses. Only procedures about City taxes could be offered. Councilor Figy informed the Council that Community Development is doing what they can and agreed with Councilor Flaherty. Councilor Allie informed the Council that the City should offer options for property taxes. He thanked Ms. Leanne Cloutier from the Community Development Department for her help in explaining options relative to taxes to a business owner. Councilor Onyski agreed with Councilor Flaherty that the sentiment here is worthy, however, the City has done a lot to help out businesses and that the Chamber of Commerce is the business arm for the community.

Upon motion of Councilor Allie, it was VOTED: To discuss ways to help small businesses that were forced to remain closed by state to be referred to the Mayor and Finance Committee.

The vote on the foregoing was as follows:

Nicholas Morganelli, Jr.	Absent
William Onyski	No
Richard Sullivan, Jr.	No
James Adams	No
Dan Allie	Yes
Brent Bean II	No
John Beltrandi III	No
Michael Burns	No
Ralph Figy	No
Dave Flaherty	No
Cindy Harris	No
Bridget Matthews-Kane	No
Kristen Mello	No

The President declared the motion LOST.

At 8:11 PM, and upon motion of Councilor Harris, it was
VOTED: To ADJOURN.

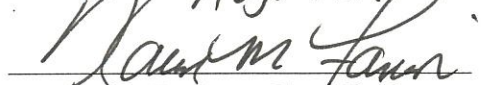
A true record, Attest:



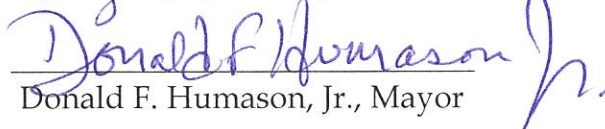
Karen M. Fanion
City Clerk/Clerk of the Council

Presented to the Mayor

For approval August 26 2020


Karen M. Fanion, City Clerk

Approved by the Mayor

August 26 2020

Donald F. Humason, Jr., Mayor