



APPROVED 10-24-2023

FINANCE MEMBERS

Frank Laflamme, Chairman
Robert J. Zygarowski, Vice Chairman
George Balakier
Gary Labrie
James Tillotson
Jerry Roy
Shane Brooks

MINUTES
September 13, 2023

The following are the minutes of a public hearing held Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 6:30 PM in the Chambers, 4th floor, City Hall Annex, 274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013.

Members Present Laflamme, Balakier, Labrie, Tillotson, Roy, Brooks

Absent Zygarowski

Also Present Councilor Dobosz (zoom), Councilor Courchesne, Tim Reilly (Associate City Solicitor), Doug Ellis (City Engineer), Stephen Zajchowski (HR Director), Mike Pise (Mayor's Chief of Staff), Karen Gay (Benefits Manager), Captain Watson (PFD)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

In compliance with the Open Meeting Law the Chairman asked if anyone in the audience was recording the meeting. Hearing none, the meeting continued. The City is recording for future broadcasting.

Item #1

\$52,388.72 be and hereby is appropriated to the following named account
Human Resources Salary Account for Benefits Coordinator (Acct # 11520001-514030)
Said amount is to be taken from available funds in the Stabilization Fund (Acct # 83001008-599980)

Stephen Zajchowski stated that this is a request for a new position to help the current Benefits Manager. There are over 4,100 employees and this additional position is needed to provide services to all the employees and retirees.

Councilor Laflamme asked if there is anyone for public input in the Auditorium or on zoom. Hearing none.

Motion made by Councilor Brooks and seconded by Councilor Laflamme to close public input.

Roll Call

	Yes	No	Absent	Out of Chair	Abstain
Laflamme	X				
Zygarowski			X		
Balakier	X				
Labrie	X				
Tillotson (zoom)	X				
Roy	X				
Brooks	X				

Motion passed

Councilor Labrie asked for a breakdown of the employee count. Karen Gay stated that there are 2,600 active employees and 2,000 school employees. The remaining are retirees.

Councilor Brooks stated that creating redundancy will allow splitting work and will offer some checks and balances that are probably nonexistent because the position is latterly handling 4100 individual cases.

Councilor Dobosz asked if the self-service software will allow changes to insurance. Stephen Zajchowski replied that it will eventually.

Motion made by Councilor Roy and seconded by Councilor Laflamme to approve.

Roll Call

	Yes	No	Absent	Out of Chair	Abstain
Laflamme	X				
Zygarowski			X		
Balakier	X				
Labrie	X				
Tillotson (zoom)	X				
Roy	X				
Brooks	X				

Motion passed

Item #2

BE IT ORDERED THAT the Finance Committee meet to discuss the funding of an Over height Warning System for the Prospect Street train trestle.

Councilor Laflamme asked if there is anyone for public input in the Auditorium or on zoom. Hearing none.

Motion made by Councilor Brooks and seconded by Councilor Laflamme to close public input.

Roll Call

	Yes	No	Absent	Out of Chair	Abstain
Laflamme	X				
Zygarowski			X		
Balakier	X				
Labrie	X				
Tillotson (zoom)	X				
Roy	X				
Brooks	X				

Motion passed

Councilor Courchesne stated that he and Doug Ellis met out in the field about 4 or 5 months ago. This proposal is one more way to get truck drivers to pay attention since they don't notice the other signs. Too much police resources are taken up when a truck does not stop in time. The early warning system would at least alert drivers ahead of time. There is enough approach to the intersection where the cameras could be installed and the warning system, could activate in time to get drivers not to go in the underpass.

Councilor Courchesne stated that Pan Am runs the tracks and Amtrak owns the tracks. That's why it took him 14 months to get those signs up because he had to get all those people together.

Doug Ellis stated that this proposal makes sense. The existing signs have seen a decrease in the number of trucks attempting to go under the underpass, but this would alleviate more problems and not tie up police resources. This would be accomplished in the city's right of way. A quote has been requested but not received yet for this proposal.

Councilor Laflamme stated that he agrees with this proposal, but he would prefer to place this on file until the city gets a price for the trestle.

Motion made by Councilor Roy and seconded by Councilor Laflamme to postpone to the call of the chair to obtain information from Engineering and a cost estimate.

Roll Call

	Yes	No	Absent	Out of Chair	Abstain
Laflamme	X				
Zygarowski			X		
Balakier	X				
Labrie	X				
Tillotson (zoom)	X				
Roy	X				
Brooks	X				

Motion passed

Item #3

Minutes – July 31, 2023

Motion made by Councilor Labrie and seconded by Councilor Laflamme to approve.

Roll Call

	Yes	No	Absent	Out of Chair	Abstain
Laflamme	X				
Zygarowski			X		
Balakier	X				
Labrie	X				
Tillotson (zoom)	X				
Roy	X				
Brooks	X				

Motion passed

Item #4

Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Brooks and seconded by Councilor Laflamme to adjourn at 6:57 PM.

Roll Call

	Yes	No	Absent	Out of Chair	Abstain
Laflamme	X				
Zygarowski			X		
Balakier	X				
Labrie	X				
Tillotson (zoom)	X				
Roy	X				
Brooks	X				

Motion passed