

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2022, at 6:15 p.m.  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
WOBURN CITY HALL**

Voting Members present: Chair Darlene Mercer-Bruen, Councilor Joseph Demers, Councilor Robert Ferullo, and Councilor Charles Viola. Absent: Councilor Joanne Campbell  
Non-voting members present: Councilor Lou DiMambro, President Michael Concannon, Councilor Richard Gately and Councilor Jeffrey Dillon

Also present: City Engineer John Corey and Fire Chief Donald Kenton

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**MOTION** made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Viola to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the meeting of August 9, 2022, and to approve; all in favor, 4-0.

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**Order to appropriate the sum of \$5,000.00 from Traffic Safety & Infrastructure Acct to Acct# 360058-588350 Traffic Detail Town Fair Tire:** Engineer Corey said the funds are being transferred from traffic safety accounts from the projects at 120 Commerce Way, 36 Cabot Road, Popeyes and others to regulate the equipment at intersections from Presidential Way to Dave & Buster’s on Mishawum Road. He said the money will be used to pay for equipment and a consultant, World Tech Engineering. He said all the signals on Commerce Way will be re-timed. He said the Engineering Dept. is trying to make the roadways as efficient as possible. He said the \$5,000 from this transfer will go toward new equipment and to pay for a policeman to be present in case there are any traffic issues. Chair Mercer-Bruen asked what the expected time frame is. City Engineer Corey said he expects all the work to be accomplished within the next 6-8 weeks. Chair Mercer-Bruen said she does not want the money to sit there for months and months. City Engineer Corey said he hopes it won’t. Chair Mercer-Bruen said she supports the order but she wants to make sure the money does not sit there for a long time. Motion made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 4-0.

**Order to appropriate the sum of \$19,550.00 from Traffic Safety & Infrastructure Acct to Washington Street Drainage Improvements Acct# 360058-588235 \$10,700.00 and UHaul Olympia Ave Acct# 360058-588206 \$8,850.00:** City Engineer Corey said the money in this appropriation will be used to apply for a FEMA grant of \$75,000 to help alleviate flooding issues in the Washington Street area. He said the amount of the appropriation is just shy of \$20,000. Chair Mercer-Bruen asked if the goal is to remedy flooding specifically in the area of Staples and the APNA supermarket. City Engineer Corey provided the committee with three documents, as follows: “Preliminary Plan Drainage Improvement Project located on Washington Street Woburn Massachusetts,” dated August 29, 2006; a photo of water cascading down a hill into a parking lot in the Washington Street area; and two photos labeled “flooding on Washington Street at Existing Drainage Crossing Early in Storm.” Motion made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Ferullo to receive the aforementioned documents and make them part of the

permanent record; approved, 4-0. City Engineer Corey said the funds have to be made available so the city can apply for the FEMA grant. He said there have been damage to the APNA market and an adjacent building due to flooding, which also renders Washington Street impassible. He said the proposal involves running a relief line that will take the excess runoff and discharge it into the Aberjona River. He said right now the water flows over the street. He said the relief project will be designed to accommodate a 500-year storm rather than a 100-year storm, as rainfall is expected to become substantially worse. Chair Mercer-Bruen said her initial concern is the problem stems from private property. She said that's where she has some concerns. City Engineer Corey said the drainage runs over the private parcel toward Route 128 and down Washington Street to the Reading line. He said the area affected by flooding is very large. Chair Mercer-Bruen said Washington Street is under the jurisdiction of the state. City Engineer Corey said when he asked the state to undertake the project, his request was refused. He said the state's stance is the drainage belongs to the city. Chair Mercer-Bruen said the city is not allowed to hiccup on Washington Street without approval from MassDot. She said she finds it ironic the state is requiring the city to perform this drainage work. She said she doesn't think the city should accommodate the state so easily. She said there are a number of projects the city could undertake with this funding. She asked City Engineer Corey when he will apply for the FEMA grant. City Engineer Corey said he expects to apply for the grant this coming winter. He said the project will cost approximately \$1 million. He said he expects to have a meeting with the business and property owners in the area to discuss the project. He said he is not allowed to solicit funds from private entities, but he will certainly make it clear the project depends upon adequate funding. Chair Mercer-Bruen said she had a conversation with the mayor and the city will move forward with the project if there is funding. She said her preference is to keep the order in committee for now. Councilor Demers asked when the paperwork for the grant is due. City Engineer Corey replied the paperwork is already filed. He said he needs a commitment letter from the City Council. Councilor Demers asked if the city could miss out on the funding by delaying approval of the appropriation. Chair Mercer-Bruen said there are other ways to appropriate money. She said mitigation money could go toward a number of smaller things. She said she is not inclined to move forward with this tonight. Councilor Demers said City Engineer Corey is saying the grant will be a moot point. Chair Mercer-Bruen said the mayor could find other funding sources. She asked City Engineer Corey if he needs the funds imminently. City Engineer Corey said the funding will need to be secured by late September or early October. Chair Mercer-Bruen asked if the council can approve funds with a restriction that they can only be used for the FEMA grant, and if not, can the council send the order back tot the mayor. President Concannon said he is not aware the council can make a specific restriction like the chair is suggesting. He said Chair Mercer-Bruen what her concern is. Chair Mercer-Bruen said she can think of other ways to spend this money, like for additional pedestrian crossings. Councilor Demers asked when City Engineer Corey needs a commitment letter from the council. City Engineer Corey said he would need such a document by the end of September. President Concannon said the matter could be kept in committee to ask the City Solicitor if the restrictive language suggested by the chair can be added.

**MOTION** made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Viola to take item #5 on the posted agenda out of order; approved, 4-0.

**Order to appropriate the sum of \$12,000.00 from Traffic Safety & Infrastructure Acct to Acct# 360058-588190 Traffic Controls & Equipment:** Chair Mercer-Bruen asked if the funding in this order will be used to construct a pedestrian traffic signal at Washington Circle and Washington Street. City Engineer Corey said that project may be under the auspices of the DPW. Chair Mercer-Bruen said the mayors order references the installation of a flashing speed sign at Washington Circle, Washington Street and Mill Street. City Engineer Corey said he believes this was approved by the Traffic Commission a couple of years ago. Chair Mercer-Bruen said she thinks City Clerk Lindsay Higgins was going to give the council a letter on behalf of the Traffic Commission. Motion made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Viola that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 4-0.

**MOTION** made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Viola to return to the regular order of business; approved, 4-0.

**Order to appropriate the sum of \$1,400,000.00 for a Ladder Truck and to Borrow funds pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 7(1) of the General Laws:** Chief Kenton said the new ladder truck will replace a ladder truck that the Woburn Fire Dept. acquired in 2002. He said there is a 2-year lag on delivery of the truck once it is ordered. He said Woburn has been operating two ladder trucks for a considerable amount of time. Motion made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Viola that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 4-0.

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**MOTION** made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Councilor Viola to adjourn; approved, 4-0. Chairman Mercer-Bruen adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

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Gordon Vincent  
Clerk of Committees