

GREENFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting Minutes

October 18, 2023

John Zon Community Center/Zoom Hybrid

6:30 pm

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by President Guin.

CHAIRS STATEMENT: This meeting is being recorded by the City Council and GCTV-9. If any other persons present are doing the same you must notify the chairperson at this time. In accordance with MGLc 30A SS 20(g) “No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the Chair and all persons shall, at the request of the chair, be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body. If, after clear warning from the chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting and if the person does not withdraw, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person from the meeting.”

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS: All Councilors were present.

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Roxann Wedegartner; City Clerk Kathryn J. Scott; Finance Director/Interim Chief of Staff Diana Schindler; School Committee Chairperson Amy Proietti; School Business Manager Andy Paquette; Police Chief Robert Haigh; Deputy Chief of Police William Gordon; Health Director Jennifer Hoffman; Parliamentarian Wilson Roberts; GCTV-17 staff; Mary Byrne, *the Recorder*, and members of the public.

The Pledge of Allegiance was held.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: None

COMMUNICATIONS:

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE: Committee Chairperson Proietti reported the following:

- The School Committee was in the process of making decisions regarding the redistricting in the elementary schools. Due to a small quorum from October, the voting on redistricting was anticipated to take place at their November meeting.
- The School had launched their new website after some technical issues. The superintendent would welcome any feedback on the restructuring of the website, if presented.
- A special meeting was held on October 4th, 2023, and met with the Massachusetts Association of school committees which aided in their search for a new superintendent. The Association recommended an internal candidate and the public had chosen Assistant Superintendent Karin Patenaude as the replacement for Dr. DeBarge.
- October 26th & October 27th, 2023, would be half days for most students and no pre-k[inderergarten] would be available on those days as well. 7th grade and below students will have the half day on October 26th for parent-teacher conferences.
- A budget subcommittee meeting to discuss the school’s Capital request(s) was scheduled for Monday, October 30, 2023, time to be posted, by a remote conferencing system.
- Greenfield Schools were involved with a consortium of other Franklin County School Districts to attempt a bid for transportation services, busing services; and were interested in a five (5) year contract. Under the instruction of the consortium, the school was required to receive an approval from the funding authority.

Councilor asked the following questions:

- Transportation needs related to redistricting of schools.
- Situation with the busing transportation for schools as it stands now.

- Student's eligibility for bus transportation based on their residential distance from the school.
- Update on the Green River School's plan, if any, to be utilized in the near future.
- Expiration date of the current transportation contract.
- Opportunity to use transportation that used electric.

MAYOR, CITY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES: Mayor Wedegartner reported the following:

- The Mayor had submitted a memo regarding the City's Plan for Cold Weather; Options regarding Tax Title Taking and Current cases in Greenfield Land Court. (see attached)
- The Collins Center Wage & Classification Study was expected to go forward after a few internal and technical issues. Interviewers from the Collin Center were in discussion with various departments. They were hopeful the results would be available by the end of this year or beginning of next year.
- The quarterly grant list had been provided to the Councilors.
- The Mayor voiced her support for the resolutions regarding more State funding for the City's Schools.
- Mayor commented on the topic of the school's transportation contract bid. She noted transportation was a very expensive part of the school budget. The schools were hopeful that bidding on this contract could help alleviate some of that spending.

Councilors asked the following questions:

- Anticipated date to when Court Square would be open for the public and traffic for the winter.
- Request for further detail on grants applied for by GCET and how it could affect their plan to extend service, especially to Precinct 1.
- Request for a brief presentation on the City's Plan for Cold Weather, Options regarding Tax Title Taking and Current cases in Greenfield Land Court.
- Alternatives to the current cold weather plan, including state of emergency openings and waiver of certain bylaws.
- Inquiry as to why Greenfield did not have similar policies that other municipalities had in place regarding tax foreclosures.
- Certification of Free Cash and amount received by Greenfield.

OTHER CITY EMPLOYEES AS NEEDED, BY INVITATION: Police Chief Robert Haigh and Deputy Chief William Gordon reported on the Community Resource Policing Program, including staff and current results and Status of Greenfield Police Department Construction & Financing:

- The Community Resource Program involved the CIT (Crisis Intervention Team), association with CSO (Community Services Officers), and mental health partners in Greenfield as well as throughout the County.
- The police department had received approximately 11,660 calls.
- A diversion style program with CSO had been established to receive assistance that would not require police presence and involvement.
- Within the month of October, 349 calls were received by the police department through the 911 system that did not require police response.
- From January through September of this year, the police department had approximately 292 instances in which a co-response (combination with CSO Officers) that could not be diverted. Of the 292 instances, 77 were via calls and 221 were handled in person. The Towns of Deerfield and Montague, who were a part of this 3 Town Unit, had 16 and 14 calls, respectively.
- Greenfield received approximately 641 calls involving mental health issues.
- The police department received two grants: \$200,000 co-response grant which went directly to the CSO unit; and \$100,000 for CIT, which covered Greenfield Police Department overtime, resources for extra programming and training.

- Dispatch had been moved into the police building's roll call room, including all of the wiring and utilities that was asked of them.
- Currently waiting on the RFP (Request for Proposals) for dispatch.
- The RFP for the water infiltration issue was ready to go out for bid.

Councilors asked the following questions:

- Would the continued diversion program result in the need for less police officers.
- Average percentage of calls that would be diverted from the police department.
- Improvement to coding calls for maintaining a more accurate information trail.

PUBLIC COMMENT: The following members of the public spoke:

- Susan Worgaftik, Forest Avenue, spoke to her support of the Senate Bills 335, 337 and 303 in regards to increased State funding for schools. She also provided further information regarding providing shelter during winter months with her involvement with Housing Greenfield.
- Wahab Minhas, Davis Street, urged Councilors to support the resolutions regarding the increase in State funding for schools. He voiced his concern with the issue of home equity in tax title takings and restitution for homeowners.
- Joan Marie Jackson, Chestnut Hill, spoke to her experience with Land Court proceedings. She supported the passage of an ordinance under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 60 Section 87 which directs the Collector of Tax to use the power of sale to enforce a lien for taxes.
- Mitchell Speight, Chestnut Hill, spoke to the home equity issue, as previously spoken to by Mr. Minhas and Ms. Jackson.
- Al Norman, Grinnell Street, responded to the Mayor and Councilor Bullock's comments from earlier in regards to home equity and tax title takings.
- Jesus Leyva, Deerfield Street, thanked the Councilors for their support on the resolutions to increased State funding for schools and the impact the school budget had on the City's annual budget.
- John Garrett, Hope Street, spoke to his support on the resolutions to increased State funding for schools.
- Stephanie Duclos, Chapman Street, spoke to her concern that GCET was not available to low-income and poor communities. She spoke to her concerns with the proposed zoning changes and language. She voiced her support on the proposal for public comment at all Council subcommittee meetings and the resolutions to increase State funding for schools.
- Doug Selwyn, Forest Avenue, spoke to his support to the resolutions for increased funding from the State to the schools. He spoke to the need for Greenfield to enter into a new process regarding home equity and tax title takings. He questioned the process regarding the vetting and hiring of a new school superintendent.
- Pamela Goodwin, High Street, spoke to the way in which the Community Relations meeting for Precincts 4, 5 and 6 was executed and residents were prohibited to speaking on topics that were not listed on the agenda. She also inquired about the Portland Loo that was to be installed and the City's cold weather plan.
- Stacey Sexton, High Street, urged the Councilors to support the resolutions for increased funds from the State for the schools.
- Peg Hall, Pierce Street, spoke to her support on the resolutions for increased funds from the State for the schools. She also announced that there was going to be a community conversation about the changes that were proposed for Greenfield's recycling program and the grant for this program.
- Glen Ayers, Davis Street, thanked the Councilors for their efforts to get some progress in regards to the Lunt cleanup. He noted that a grant was obtained for technical assistance from DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) earlier this spring to hire an independent LSP (Licensed Site Professional); and, recently, a second grant was applied for. The administration has yet to reach

out to the PIP (Public Involvement Plan) Group regarding the progress with the Lunt Property cleanup. He was hopeful the new Council would continue to support and work with the PIP group on their continued effort to decontaminate the Lunt property.

President Guin called a 5 minutes recess at 8:38pm.

President Guin resumed the meeting at 8:47pm.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

MOTIONS, ORDERS, AND RESOLUTIONS

Order no. FY 24-025

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Ricketts, second by Councilor Elmer, it was unanimously, **VOTED:** THAT IT BE ORDERED THE GREENFIELD CITY COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE ATTACHED CITY BIENNIAL ELECTION WARRANT FOR NOVEMBER 7, 2023, AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT TO SIGN SAID WARRANT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

**CITY BIENNIAL ELECTION WARRANT
CITY OF GREENFIELD
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Franklin, ss

To the Constable of the City of Greenfield, County of Franklin

GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of said city, who are qualified to vote in elections, to meet at the polling places designated for the several precincts in said City as follows:

**Precinct 1 – 9 Greenfield High School, Gymnasium
21 Barr Avenue**

**On TUESDAY, THE SEVENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2023 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
for the following purpose:**

To choose by ballot the following City Office:

ONE MAYOR	4 YEAR TERM
TWO CITY COUNCILORS AT LARGE	4 YEAR TERM
ONE CITY COUNCILOR PRECINCT ONE	4 YEAR TERM
ONE CITY COUNCILOR PRECINCT TWO	4 YEAR TERM
ONE CITY COUNCILOR PRECINCT THREE	4 YEAR TERM
ONE CITY COUNCILOR PRECINCT FOUR	4 YEAR TERM
THREE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS	4 YEAR TERM
ONE ASSESSOR	4 YEAR TERM
THREE TRUSTEES OF A.K. WARNER FUND	2 YEAR TERM
ONE ELECTOR UNDER WILL OF OLIVER SMITH	2 YEAR TERM
THREE TRUSTEES OF JENNIE L. BASCOM EDUCATION FUND	2 YEAR TERM

Given under our hands this 18th day of October, 2023.

Daniel Guin,
City Council President

A true copy,
Attest:

Kathryn J. Scott,
Greenfield City Clerk

Date of Posting

Constable

Order no. FY 24-024

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Bullock, second by Councilor Ricketts, it was,
MOVED: THAT IT BE ORDERED THAT THE GREENFIELD CITY COUNCIL, PURSUANT TO CHARTER SECTION 2-10, AFFIRMS THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS BY THE MAYOR:

Board of Health - Carrie Mimitz, Term to Expire December 31, 2025 (short term to maintain staggered terms)

Board of Trustees of the Greenfield Public Library - Jim Zaccara, Term to Expire December 31, 2024 (short term to replace Ed Berlin)

Community Preservation Commission (Planning Board appointee) - Amy McMahan, Term to Expire June 30, 2025 (short term to maintain staggered terms)

Historical Commission - Sarah Bolduc, Term to Expire December 31, 2026

Planning Board, change from alternate to full member - Amy McMahan, Term to Expire December 31, 2024 (short term to maintain staggered terms)

DISCUSSION: Councilor Bullock reported the Appointments & Ordinances Committee forwarded an unanimous positive recommendation.

It was unanimously,
VOTED: TO APPROVE ORDER NO. FY24-024.

Order no. FY 24-022

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Golub, second by Councilor Forgey, it was,
MOVED: THAT IT BE ORDERED THAT THE GREENFIELD CITY COUNCIL APPROVES THE ATTACHED RESOLUTION TITLED “**A RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE SENATE BILL NO. 303: AN ACT INCREASING THE COMMONWEALTH’S SHARE OF THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION BUDGET.**”

The City Council,
Move that it be resolved that,

WHEREAS, in 1993, the Commonwealth passed the Education Reform Act, committing to sharing 41% of K-12 school funding costs for school districts throughout the Commonwealth and established a minimum funding standard in the creation of “The Foundation Budget” for every school district,

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Foundation Review Budget Commission under-calculated the “Foundation Budget” costs by over \$1 billion annually in the areas of special education in-district teachers, health insurance and benefits, and special education out-of-district,

WHEREAS, in 2019, the legislature passed the Student Opportunity Act, which did not address 20 years of under-funded Chapter 70 local school aid relative to inflation and increased local school funding costs,

WHEREAS, S. 303, An Act Increasing the Commonwealth's Share of the Education Foundation Budget, would phase in a 1% increase each year to the Commonwealth’s share of K-12 education funding for 5 years to, increasing the state’s share from 41% to 46%,

The Greenfield City Council endorses the passage of S. 303, and we urge state legislators to vote for the passage of these changes to state law.

FURTHERMORE that we urge our local state legislators, school committee and mayor to formally endorse and support the passage of these changes to state laws.

FURTHERMORE that we urge city councils, school committees and mayors through Massachusetts to endorse the passage of these changes to state laws.

DISCUSSION: Councilor Forgey reported the Community Relations Committee forwarded a unanimous positive recommendation.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Golub, second by Councilor Lapienski, it was unanimously, **VOTED:** TO AMEND THE SECOND PARAGRAPH TO ADD “DETERMINED THAT THE STATE HAD” AFTER “COMMISSION” AND BEFORE “UNDER-CALCULATED”.

Order No. FY24-022, as amended, was on the floor: The City Council,
Move that it be resolved that,

WHEREAS, in 1993, the Commonwealth passed the Education Reform Act, committing to sharing 41% of K-12 school funding costs for school districts throughout the Commonwealth and established a minimum funding standard in the creation of “The Foundation Budget” for every school district, **and**

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Foundation Review Budget Commission **determined that the State had** under-calculated the “Foundation Budget” costs by over \$1 billion annually in the areas of special education in-district teachers, health insurance and benefits, and special education out-of-district, **and**

WHEREAS, in 2019, the legislature passed the Student Opportunity Act, which did not address 20 years of under-funded Chapter 70 local school aid relative to inflation and increased local school funding costs, **and**

WHEREAS, S. 303, An Act Increasing the Commonwealth's Share of the Education Foundation Budget, would phase in a 1% increase each year to the Commonwealth’s share of K-12 education funding for 5 years to, increasing the state’s share from 41% to 46%, **and**

The Greenfield City Council endorses the passage of S. 303, and we urge state legislators to vote for the passage of these changes to state law.

FURTHERMORE that we urge our local state legislators, school committee and mayor to formally endorse and support the passage of these changes to state laws, **and**

FURTHERMORE that we urge city councils, school committees and mayors through Massachusetts to endorse the passage of these changes to state laws.

DISCUSSION: Councilor Golub provided rationale for the submission of this resolution.

- Inquiry as to what this resolution would accomplish aside from agreement on this issue from the Council.
- Recognition was given to Jesus Leyva who brought this issue to Councilor Golub for Council support.

It was unanimously,

VOTED: TO APPROVE ORDER NO. FY24-022, AS AMENDED.

Order no. FY 24-023

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Golub, second by Councilor Ricketts, it was,

MOVED: THAT IT BE ORDERED THAT THE GREENFIELD CITY COUNCIL APPROVES THE ATTACHED RESOLUTION TITLED “**A RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE SENATE BILLS NO. 335 AND 337 RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING REIMBURSEMENT.**”

The City Council,

Move that it be resolved that,

WHEREAS, special education costs represent an extraordinary cost for the taxpayers of the City of Greenfield—over \$3.8 million for FY2022 alone,

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth mandates that school districts fulfill special education requirements without fully funding these mandates,

WHEREAS, in 1993, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court stated the Massachusetts constitution 1780 clause concerning education ‘is not merely aspirational or hortatory, but also imposes on the Commonwealth an enforceable duty to provide an education for all its children, rich and poor, in every city and town through the public schools’ and that ‘the Commonwealth had failed to meet its constitutional obligation.’

WHEREAS, S. 335—An Act to Increase Special Education Circuit Breaker Reimbursement From 75% to 90%—would increase the Commonwealth’s reimbursement to municipalities of high-cost special education instruction and transportation costs from 75% to 90% of costs exceeding the approved costs threshold,

WHEREAS, S. 337—An Act Relative to Adjusting Approved Costs Threshold—would reduce the approved cost threshold from \$45,793 (as set in FY ‘20 and adjusted by the foundation inflation index annually) to \$37,120,

The Greenfield City Council endorses the passage of S. 335 and S. 337 and urges state legislators to vote for the passage of these changes to state law.

FURTHERMORE, we urge our local state legislators, school committee, and mayor to formally endorse and support the passage of these changes to state laws.

FURTHERMORE, we urge city councils, school committees, and mayors throughout Massachusetts communities to endorse and support the passage of these changes to state laws.

DISCUSSION: Councilor Forgey reported the Community Relations Committee forwarded a unanimous positive recommendation.

It was unanimously,

VOTED: TO APPROVE ORDER NO. FY 24-023.

Councilor Forgey stated that she had to recuse herself from the next vote and left the rail at 9:06 pm.

Order no. FY 24-019

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Desorgher, second by Councilor Terounzo, it was, **MOVED:** THAT IT BE ORDERED THE CITY COUNCIL, UPON RECOMMENDATION OF MAYOR WEDEGARTNER AND UPON RECEIPT OF THE GREENFIELD RETIREMENT SYSTEM BOARD’S UNANIMOUS VOTE, AUTHORIZES THE LOCAL OPTION INCREASE IN THE MAXIMUM BASE AMOUNT ON WHICH THE RETIREE COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT IS CALCULATED, BY \$2,000, FROM THE CURRENT BASE OF \$14,000 TO NEW BASE OF \$16,000 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.

DISCUSSION: Councilor Desorgher reported the Ways & Means Committee forwarded a unanimous positive recommendation, 4 yes, 1 recusal.

It was unanimously,

VOTED: TO APPROVE ORDER NO. FY 24-019.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND SIMILAR PAPERS None.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Councilor Desorgher held the following first reading:

City Council – First Reading- October 18, 2023

- Repurpose \$289,000 authorized for Police Station Upgrades to Dispatch Communication System. (Backup documentation sent to Councilors separately.)
- Approve payment of \$12,707.40 for FY23 Energy Millbrook Solar Invoice from FY24 Energy Millbrook Solar Account 5209.
- Approve payment of \$50,829.58 for FY23 GTR Greenfield Millbrook Solar LLC Invoice – Sewer Enterprise from FY24 WPCF Millbrook Solar Account 5209.
- Approve payment of \$21,178.99 for FY23 GTR Greenfield Millbrook Solar LLC Invoice – Water Enterprise from the FY24 Water Enterprise Millbrook Solar Account 5209.
- Approve payment of \$15,038.75 for FY23 Doherty, Wallace Pillsbury and Murphy PC Invoice from FY24 Legal Town [City] Account 5302.
- Approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between City of Greenfield and United Public Service Employees Union representing the Department of Public Works (DPW) and transfer \$25,200 from Contract Stabilization for Parks Permanent Salaries/Wages Full Time line item 5111 (\$15,200) and Wages-Custodians line item 5113 (\$10,000).

Councilor Elmer read the following Notice of Zoning Amendment Proposals:

Notice of Zoning Amendment proposals – October 18, 2023

The following zoning amendment proposals have been submitted to the Greenfield City Council for consideration:

- Miscellaneous Zoning Amendments: Definitions of “Farm, Poultry” and “Dwelling, Three-Family”; Section 200-55: Marijuana Establishments; Section 200-34: Sign Regulations; Section 200-21: Water Supply Protection District (WP), submitted September 22, 2023, by the Planning Board.
- Zoning Amendments to Section 200-39: Open Space/Cluster Developments, submitted September 22, 2023, by the Planning Board.
- Zoning Amendments to Section 200-50: Major Development Review, Subsection (B): Application, Paragraph (1), submitted October 5, 2023, by Councilor Philip Elmer.

Councilor Lapienski submitted a proposed amendment to the Council Rules of Procedure to require all Council Sub-Committees to have public comment on their agendas. – This matter would be forwarded to the Appointments & Ordinances Committee for discussion and recommendations.

MOTIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION: None.

ADJOURNMENT: On a motion by Councilor Ricketts, second by Councilor Elmer, it was unanimously, **VOTED:** TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:12 P.M.

A true copy,

Attest: _____
Kathryn J. Scott, City Clerk, CMC

GREENFIELD CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

John Zon Community Center
 Regular Meeting
 October 18, 2023

Attendance

1. Golub, Katherine	Y					
2. Guin, Daniel President	Y					
3. Desorgher, Virginia	Y					
4. Bottomley, John	Y					
5. Bullock, Marianne	Y					
6. Gilmour, Sheila	Y					
7. Lapienski, Jasper	Y					
8. Vacant	—					
9. Helie, Derek	Y					
10. Elmer, Philip	Y					
11. Forgey, Christine Vice - President	Y					
12. Ricketts, Penny	Y					
13. Terounzo, Michael	Y					

RE: Report on Requested Topics as Presented by Mayor Wedegartner for October 18, 2023 City Council Meeting.

City Plan for Cold Weather

The City's plan for cold weather is the same as it always is, working in conjunction with various social service agencies. We will have our city buildings: the Library and the John Zon Center open and available during their normal business hours as "warming centers" on very cold days. The police department community resource/co-response unit will regularly check on encampments to see who may need and want assistance and shelter. It is my understanding that they have access to some tents and sleeping bags for those who prefer to remain out of shelters. We have met throughout the summer with social service agencies and the Greenfield Police Department on how best to prepare for our unhoused populations. Unfortunately, the Salvation Army is running low on hotel vouchers and will not get them replenished until later in the winter. They (SA) will remain open for showers and laundry services during their regular daytime hours. CSO has the capacity to add 5 more beds and staffing to the 40 that they have available on Wells Street, but they were short on the funding (\$45,000 - \$9000 per bed) to get that done. I'm happy to report that the City will repurpose CDBG money in the amount of \$45,000 to enable them to add those beds. While that is only a small number of beds, it is adding to beds that are already available. As CSO has indicated to us, when there's overflow, they try to accommodate people in other areas of the shelter as best as possible.

I am awaiting confirmation that the two rooms we have "reserved" at the Days Inn will remain available during the winter months. I do not have that confirmation at this time.

I recognize that none of this is ideal and I truly wish we could do more. But this is what we are able to do for now with the resources we have.

City's Options Regarding Tax Title Taking

I believe that the minutes of the Appointment & Ordinance meeting of September 13, show that Attorney Belcher-Timme, Attorney Iris Leahy, and Treasurer/Collector Kelly Varner gave a thorough report on our "options". Until the state legislature comes up with new laws on tax title taking, we will follow the law as it exists today. The only thing that has changed since that meeting is that I have directed the Finance Department to set up an "agency fund" to hold any excess funds (equity) in anticipation of the legislature making new laws that instruct municipalities how to move forward after foreclosures.

I am on record with the City Council and the legislature as supporting new laws on handling homeowners' equity following foreclosures.

Current Greenfield Cases in Land Court

The only Land Court case that we have outstanding now is Stephen D. Woodbridge and Roberta Browning v. City of Greenfield. It is being handled by Attorney Belcher-Timme on behalf of the city. Attorney Belcher-Timme has filed a Motion to Dismiss on that case (October 10, 2023) and a Memorandum of Law In Support Of the Defendant's Motion to Dismiss. The Plaintiffs have two weeks to file a response. As of this memo, I do not know if they have filed that response.

Statement read by Jesus Leyva at the 10/18/2023 City Council meeting

I want to thank the members of the subcommittee that forwarded the school funding resolutions to full council with a unanimous positive recommendation. The details behind the 3 state school funding bills that we are asking you to support tonight are complex, the reasons we are asking you to support them are not complex.

In 2015 a commission created by the Commonwealth to examine the equity of school funding and state local school aid appropriations found that the state was under calculating the costs of K-12 education to school districts in Massachusetts by over \$1 billion dollars annually. For Greenfield, this represents well over a million dollars every year for the last 20 years. In 2019 the state passed the Student Opportunity Act which re-adjust the funding formula.

As a result we saw an increase in state local school aid of \$1.7 million in 2022 and an increase of \$500,000 in 2023. Combined this is over \$2 million dollars. But that \$2 million dollars extra that we are now getting from the state has been missing ever year for the last 20 years from our budget.

To meet our school and city budget with the money we had, Greenfield made painful budget decisions in previous years.

There was a time in the 90's where the costs the state calculated for funding the Greenfield school district were within a 5% margin of Greenfield's actual net school spending. Starting in 2000 and accelerating every few years, this percent change would go from 10% to 15% to 20%, where for the last 2 years the percentage of money Greenfield spends over the required local contribution is now 25%.

The 8 billion dollar rainy day fund that the state has, was not built on the fiscal responsibility of state administrators, but by shortchanging municipalities in the state's local school aid obligations to our school districts. The state has acknowledged it under-calculated the costs and is funding some of those costs going forward, but not the cumulative effect of the funding being absent from our municipal budgets for the last 20 years.

A confident and resounding unanimous vote by Greenfield city councilors tonight will be a strong show of solidarity for local school funding advocates as we reach out to other districts to join us.

Thank you,