

1. SUB\_TO\_APP\_BET Budget Comm. Hearings\_Day 3 Minutes\_2-8-2021

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**TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE  
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW FY2021-2022 DAY #3 MINUTES**

**Hybrid Virtual & Town Hall Meeting Room – 9:00 A.M.  
Monday, February 8, 2021**

Present:

Committee: Leslie L. Tarkington, Chair; Andy Duus, Leslie Moriarty, Jeffrey S. Ramer

Staff: Caroline Baisley, Director, Health Department (Dept); Benjamin Branyan, Town Administrator, Office of the First Selectman (OFS); Daniel Carlsen, Senior Management Analyst, (OFS); Angela Gencarelli, Assistant Budget & Systems Manager, Finance Dept; Roland Gieger, Budget & Systems Director; Craig Jones, IT Dept; Joe McHugh, Fire Chief, Fire Dept; Alan Monelli, Superintendent, Building Maintenance & Construction, DPW; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Demetria Nelson, Commissioner, Human Services Dept

BET Michael Mason, Chair; Bill Drake, Laura Erickson, Karen Fassuliotis, Miriam Kreuzer, Beth Krumeich; David Weisbrod

TNW: Nadia Benson, Director of Nursing Services, Nisha Hurst, Board of Directors; Richard Kaplan, Board of Directors; John Mastronardi, Executive Director; Nunzio Raimo, Director of Finance; Lawrence S. Simon, Chairman, Board of Directors

Selectmen Jill Oberlander, Select-Person

RTM: Michael Basham, Chair, Finance Committee (Cmte); Rosalind Nicastro (D-3), Budget Overview Cmte (BOC); Henry Orphys (D-7), Finance Cmte; Dan Ozizmir (D-5), Vice Chair, BOC, Chair, Labor Contracts Cmte; Charles Parkhurst (D-5) Finance Cmte; Molly Saleeby (D-8), BOC; Greg Zorthian (D-11) Finance Cmte

Other: Jennifer Baldock, Chair, Greenwich Emergency Medical Service (GEMS); Brad Markowitz; Robert Carangelo, Chairman, Board of Health; Thomas Diserendino, Chief Financial Officer, GEMS; Andrew Fox, Vice Chair, GEMS; Meredith Gold, Director of Domestic Abuse Services, YWCA; Alan Gunzburg, Chair, Board of Human Services; Mary Lee Kiernan, President and CEO, YWCA; Michael Miller, Treasurer, Board of Directors, Transportation Association of Greenwich (TAG); Tracey Schietinger, Executive Director, GEMS; Horst Tebbe, GCTV

Budget Committee Chair Tarkington called the Meeting to order at 9:08 A.M. and welcomed the attendees to the first in a series of eleven BET Budget Committee public meetings. Ms. Tarkington introduced members of the BET Budget Committee --- Andy Duus, Leslie Moriarty and Jeff Ramer. The Committee is also supported by the Finance Department --- Peter Mynarski,

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Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget and Systems Director, Angela Gencarelli, Assistant Budget and Systems Manager and Shira Davis, Executive Assistant.

The BET Budget Committee Departmental Review Hearings are operating under the Governor's COVID-19 Executive Orders and will be conducted by hybrid Zoom. This meeting is being recorded by Zoom. An audio recording will be posted on the Town website. Meetings are being live broadcast by GCTV on channels 79 and 24 and YouTube. Technical expertise is being provided by Jenny Larkin and Horst Tebbe. A schedule of the Budget Committee's Departmental Review Hearings is available on the Town website's calendar.

The day's Agenda begins with the Nathaniel Witherell FY2021-2022 Budget presented by Lawrence S. Simon, the Chairman of its Board of Directors.

### **The Nathaniel Witherell (TNW)**

Mr. Simon offered an overview of TNW's challenges during the past year: low occupancy - patient census pre-COVID (192 patients, 95%) and mid-COVID experience (134 patients, 65%) and low resident morale due to isolation from visitation. The patient census is increasing and is 166. TNW has received increased Medicaid reimbursement and COVID grant funds to help address the lost revenue from the census decline and unbudgeted expenses for personal protective equipment. Additionally, he pointed out the majority of the administrative staff was newly hired; revisions to job descriptions, layoffs and retirements and financial systems are still being adjusted.

**Operations** – Executive Director Mastronardi commented on how clinical and organizational improvements were changing the patient-mix referred from regional hospitals and increasing revenues without compromising care level. Projected annual savings are projected to be \$1.9 million through staff reductions, overtime management, drug formulary standardization, vendor pricing negotiations, inventory control and group purchasing. The increasing cost of benefits, healthcare, pension, differential for late night shifts and increased staff training costs were discussed. Nathaniel Witherell will accept more clinically complex cases, which will add revenue value. A new initiative, establishing an in-house managed homecare product, was proposed as a revenue generator. The Committee requested a revised Table of Organization (TOO) and additional information on budget assumptions to better understand FY22 projections.

**Capital Budget** – Current budget items include revising an RFP to upgrade the building's power plant, while future projects include continuation of interior maintenance, nursing capital, water backflow prevention, and Tower air conditioning units' replacement. Committee members asked for a report on the Tower elevator and water line issues.

### **Greenwich Emergency Medical Service (GEMS)**

**Capital Budget** - GEMS Board Vice Chair, Andrew Fox, commented that the Town was partnering with GEMS to replace its King Street temporary trailer facility with a new permanent facility. Construction is estimated to cost \$1,430,110, with GEMS contributing \$200,000 towards the construction cost lowering construction costs to the Town to \$1,210,000. GEMS is also contributing the architect and engineering work and \$300,000 for furniture, fixtures, and equipment. The building will be owned by Greenwich for the use of GEMS; the site plan and municipal improvement status has been approved and GEMS is ready to proceed. Mr. Fox will act as owner's representative during the project's construction. An RFP through the Town Purchasing Department for construction bids anticipates selection of the winning bidder and

construction by July. Construction should occur over a six to eight month period. Al Monelli will provide oversight.

**Operations** – GEMS Finance Director, Tom Diserendino, commented that GEMS' budget was up 1.75% over previous year and 2.9% with its increases of benefits. COVID-19 impact on operating revenue has resulted in 4% decrease for the year based on an 8% reduction in transport, change in service mix, and lower investment interest returns of 1%-2%. The Committee asked if GEMS had sufficient rebound resources and were advised that it has received 3 grants, and has participated in the Federal PPE program. Ms. Baldock expressed extreme concern about reduction of people taking an ambulance out of COVID concern. Also, she added that recently GEMS employees were providing staff support to Greenwich's COVID vaccination clinics.

### **Transportation Association of Greenwich (TAG)**

**Capital Budget** – TAG Board of Director's Treasurer, Michael Miller, commented that TAG vehicles with over 100,000 mileage would be replaced using a State 5310 Grant shortly but that low-band two-way radios in the vehicles needed replacement to eliminate dead zones due to Town topography. Regular client funding decreased by \$100,000 but the Feed Greenwich pandemic food delivery revenue partnership with Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) for the BOE free meal food program, N2N clients, and Dept. of Human Services clients plus HUD Federal Grants through Greenwich Community Services Block Grant (CDBG) program enabled TAG to bridge the budget gap.

**Operations** – TAG found savings by recapitalizing through an SBA loan, renegotiating its line of credit as a term loan and reducing its monthly office rent. FY22 Budget assumes a gradual return to its pre-COVID business revenue. Its FY22 Financing Plan includes paying down its bank loan, pursuing a state grant of \$73,000 for its Dial-a-Ride service, requesting that the Town release the \$18,000 Safe Rides allocation to TAG itself, and continue to fulfill the balance of Feed Greenwich deliveries. A neutral cash inflow is predicted.

### **Human Services**

**Capital Budget** – Commissioner Nelson commented that the HUD Federal Grant awarded through Greenwich Community Services Block Grant, supplemented the Department's rental assistance and food insecurity program, Feed Greenwich, during the pandemic. The Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging also contributed by reimbursing for increased demand for the Department's Home Care program.

**Operations** – Increased demand by members of the Department's community partners' program (outsourced external entities) brought extraordinary pandemic challenges. Funding from pandemic non-operating programs was re-allocated to expanded operating programs such as N2N food delivery with TAG. Typically, 435 household received food support which escalated to 580 households; the BOE School reduced-cost lunch program is delivered to central locations schools or for pick up by remote students and families. Personal protective equipment (PPE) demand added these items to food deliveries. The Committee discussed the increasing requests for resident emergency aid and rental assistance.

The Department budget for FY2022 increased by 1.95%. Savings resulted from staff turnover, reduction of the number of Zoom licenses and cellphone accounts. The Commissioner proposed

an immediate outreach to community partners to increase awareness of all the Departmental programs.

### **Health Department**

**Overview** – The Health Department Board of Directors Chairman, Robert Carangelo, introduced the Health Department’s Budget as lean, crediting the Department’s hardworking staff especially during the COVID-19 pandemic environment with responsibility for Town contact tracing and the vaccination programs for COVID-19 in addition to influenza.

**Operations** – Ms. Baisley remarked that the total departmental budget was \$2,549,719, increased by \$47,000 or 1.8% for FY22. Salaries were increased 2% across the board; a savings of \$6,180 came from a retirement replaced with a new hire at a lesser salary; temporary salaries increased by \$507. Three full time positions are open due to retirements. She reviewed anticipated inflow of grants from the state and additional COVID reimbursement. Noticing that the cost of Lab Water Treatment, testing and analysis increased slightly, the Committee asked if it would be more economical to outsource the process. Ms. Baisley explained that outsourcing was impractical because of timing delayed issuance of Building Permits.

The National Health Accreditation preparation costs is located in the Operating Budget and totally offset by CT state underwriting grants.

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Mr. Duus, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 3:34 P.M. Motion carried.

The Budget Committee Departmental Hearing was to be followed by an Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

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Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

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Leslie L. Tarkington, Committee Chair