

1. SUB_TO_APP__BET Budget Hearings_FY23-24 BOE Day 4 Minutes_02-09-2023

Documents:

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**TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW FY 2023-2024 Budget - DAY #4 Minutes**

**Town Hall Meeting Room
Thursday, February 9, 2023**

Committee: Leslie L. Tarkington, Chair; Nisha Arora, Laura Erickson, Leslie Moriarty

Staff: Adam Ross, Assistant Budget & Systems Manager, Finance Department (Dept); Don Conway, GCTV; Roland Gieger, Budget & Systems Director; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller

BET: Dan Ozizmir, BET Chair, William Drake, Karen Fassuliotis, Harry Fisher, Miriam Kreuzer, Jeff Ramer, David Weisbrod

BOE/GPS: Joe Kelly, Chair, BOE; Dr. Toni Jones, Superintendent, Greenwich Public Schools (GPS), Blaize Levitan, Chief Operating Officer, GPS, Dan Watson, Director of Facilities, GPS, Caroline Baisley, Health Department Director, Debora Edwards, Business Office Manager, Health Department, Bob Barolak, Affordable Housing Trust Fund Chairman (via telephone call-in), Michael Long, Director of Environmental Health

Other: Lucia Jansen, RTM District 7

Budget Committee Chair Tarkington called the Meeting to order at 11:05 A.M. and welcomed attendees and the audience to Day 4 of a series of BET Budget Committee public meetings. Ms. Tarkington introduced members of the BET Budget Committee Nisha Arora, Laura Erickson, and Leslie Moriarty. The Committee is also supported by the Finance Department; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget & Systems Director; Adam Ross, Assistant Budget and Systems Manager and Shira Davis, Executive Assistant to the Comptroller.

Ms. Tarkington also reported that the BET Budget Committee Departmental Review Hearings for the FY 2023-2024 Budget Day 4, are being live broadcast by GCTV on channels 79, 24, and YouTube. A schedule of the Budget Committee's Departmental Review Hearings is available on the Town website at two locations along with the BET Meeting Calendars, Budget Documents and Schedules pages.

The following budget presentations were held:

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Discussion

Mr. Barolak, Chairman of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (Trust) called into the meeting by telephone. He acknowledged that the Trust had been awarded \$1.1 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. He also said that he was aware the Board of Estimate and Taxation has place conditions on the funds and that \$650,000 of ARPA monies was allocated to the Trust and an additional \$450,000 is reserved to match with donations to the Trust on a dollar for dollar basis.

Mr. Barolak, in his presentation, reminded the Committee that the Trust has two fundamental objectives; 1) Encourage Affordable Housing Development and 2) Mitigate Oversized 8-30g Set-Aside Developments.

Mr. Barolak told the Committee that the Trust will generally invest ARPA funds in loans rather than grants, expecting that the funds will someday be returned to the Trust and redeployed into other projects. This prompted a discussion about the eligibility of the ARPA funds and whether they meet the requirements of the ARPA Final Rule relative to granting loans.

Mr. Barolak assured the Committee that he felt the Trust could meet the ARPA deadlines of committing funds by December 31, 2024, and expending by December 31, 2026, which are also included in the BET conditions for allocation.

Health Department Budget Discussion

Ms. Caroline Baisley, Director of Health for the Town of Greenwich presented the Health Department budget. She distributed an updated Table of Organization which included grant funded positions.

Ms. Baisley presented her budget with the following comments:

- The overall Health Department budget request is \$2,650,710 with an overall increase of 1.8%
- Dept. 401 – Administration budget is relatively flat with a slight decrease in overtime services.
- Dept. 405 – Environmental Services is up 3.36% due to an increase in full-time contractual salaries.
- Dept. 410 – Special Clinical Services is down (3.11%) due to a retirement.
- Dept. 415 – Family Health is up 2.82% due to increases in full-time and part-time contractual salaries.
- Dept. 425 – Laboratory is up 3.48% due to increased full-time contractual salaries.
- Cost savings, efficiencies and performance measures were presented to the Committee.
- A number of State and Federal Grants for FY 2024 were listed and presented to the Committee.
- Department of Health revenues were challenging in some years due to the economic downturn during the COVID-19 experience.

After the lunch break, Budget Committee Chair Tarkington welcomed members of the Board of Education and GPS Administration. Due to the number of attendees at the meeting, she reminded everyone that this was a Public Meeting, not a Public Hearing.

Major School Projects

- GPS Administration prepared and presented a chart showing the status of school construction reimbursements by the State for four major projects: 1) MISA, 2) Hamilton Avenue School, 3) Glenville School and 4) New Lebanon School.
- The Central Middle School (CMS) project was discussed. Topics covered were 1) background information, 2) the rationale for the original \$67.5 million-dollar request in the FY 2023 budget, 3) the rationale for the \$85.5 million request by the BOE in FY 2024, 4) an explanation for the \$2.5 million design appropriation for FY 2023, 5) the \$75.2 million-dollar submission by the First Selectman's budget and 6) whether the First Selectman's Budget Proposal for \$77.7 million-dollars can work within the BOE bid specifications.
- A CMS Space Comparison between the original building constructed in 1957 at 110,000 square feet and the proposed building at 115,311 square feet was presented and discussed.
- After an extended discussion period, it was collectively agreed that more information was needed, and further discussions will occur regarding CMS leading up to the BET Budget Decision Day votes.
- The Committee discussed the activities of the Julian Curtiss Building Committee and was told that there is a \$850,000 request for capital projects at Julian Curtiss for FY 2024. They are for; 1) Front Entrance to the school for accessibility and security of \$800,000, and 2) \$50,000 for design for the expansion of the cafeteria. In addition, there is a request for \$200,000 for FY 2024 for ADA compliance for bathrooms at the school.
- There are also a number of capital projects at Julian Curtiss that continue to be managed by GPS Facilities such as 1) HVAC, 2) plumbing and electrical and 3) ceilings and lighting.
- Mr. Levitan told the Committee that there is a building committee for the Old Greenwich School project. There is funding in place, but the First Selectman's budget moved the project out to FY 2024-2025. This will delay the project and the filings for school construction reimbursements for one year.
- The Committee discussed the issue of trees on the overall Greenwich High School site. Mr. Levitan told the Committee that they are in negotiations with the Town's Tree Warden and a request for \$125,000 for tree planting to finish the GHS Cardinal Field Improvement Capital Project will be reduced.
- The Committee was updated on the Western Middle School Soil Remediation Project with a new timeline. In addition, Langan Consultants provided the BOE/GPS with an updated Remedial Alternative 2 Cost Estimate estimating the cost of the project at \$19.1 million dollars.
- Mr. Levitan told the Committee that funding for the Riverside School Renovation Project has been pushed out, thereby delaying the project.

Ms. Erickson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Arora to adjourn Day 4 of the FY 2023-2024 Departmental Review Meeting at 4:10 P.M. Motion passed by a vote of 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary

Leslie L. Tarkington, Committee Chair