

1. BET Budget Comm. Consolidation Day Documents

Documents:

[SUB\\_TO\\_APP\\_BET\\_BUDGET\\_COMM\\_CONSOLIDATION\\_DAY\\_02-25-14.PDF](#)  
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**TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION  
BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**CAPITAL BUDGET REVIEW and CONSOLIDATION DAY – FY14 BUDGET  
MINUTES**

**Town Hall Meeting Room, 1st Floor – 9:00 A.M.  
Wednesday, February 25, 2014**

Present:

Committee: Marc V. Johnson, Mary Lee Kiernan, Jeffrey Ramer, Leslie L. Tarkington

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Amy Siebert, Commissioner of Public Works; David Thompson, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works; Tom Greco, Manager, Business Services Operations; John Crary, Town Administrator; James Michel, DPW Chief Engineer, Richard Feminella, Waste Water Division Manager; Lauren Elliott, Assessor, Alan Monelli, Superintendent Building Construction & Maintenance; Rod Dioquino, Business Operations Supervisor Parking Services

First Selectman: Peter Tesei, First Selectman;

Board: Michael Mason, Chairman, John Blankley, William Drake, William Finger, Sean Goldrick, Randall Huffman, Nancy Weissler

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:06 A.M and welcomed everyone to the review of the Capital Budget outstanding items remaining from February 19, 2014 and thereafter a review of the Operating Budget by department. He indicated that Capital Accounts would be reviewed one at a time and invited discussion on any item that the Committee members wished to discuss or propose changes.

**Department Speakers and Topics Covered**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**Stormwater Master Plan Program** - The meeting began with Mr. Johnson asking how much of the \$6.8million not spent from the Department's Capital Appropriations was available to be returned to the General Fund. Acknowledging that \$1.4million had already been returned, he asked for clarification of lead time to begin execution of outstanding funded projects and what could get done during FY2014-2015. He also asked what would be reimbursed by State grants and the percentage of reimbursements that could be anticipated.

Mr. Geiger responded that it was difficult to forecast the State's reimbursement timeline because it was a function of State internal auditing practices. Mr. Mynarski noted that TOG received grants from state as well as local sources and gave the example of State reimbursement for town bridges which to date had reimbursed Greenwich \$972million. Ms. Tarkington asked if there was a predictable percentage based on a project type and Ms. Seibert responded that the percentage of reimbursement is known at the beginning of the grant application phase but that each reimbursement rate is different.

Ms. Kiernan asked for a sense of scale and strategy for DPW's drainage and storm water projects. Ms. Seibert replied: 1) analyzing Greenwich's drainage networks; 2) responding to EPA sampling stormwater quality to established standards; and 3) integrating DEEP's recommendations for controlling and enforcing its bacterial goals. Mr. Michel noted that the project is phased so that multiple contractors could enhance its efficiency of implementation. Ms. Kiernan asked for clarification of how the \$40million Flood Erosion Committee estimate was reflected in DPW's Stormwater Master Plan. Ms. Seibert responded that DPW, Conservation, P&Z and Highway were coordinating allocations in their individual budgets.

**Town Hall Improvements** – Ms. Seibert commented that many of the projects budgeted for \$970K over two years were progressing through the planning and design phases.

**Mianus Park Dam Repair** – although this was originally in the 2008 – 2009 Budget, it is a ready project but has not gone forward due to lack of identification of a reimbursement source.

**Byram River Project** – although \$200K has not yet been spent, DPW estimates that an additional \$450K from the 2014-2015 Budget is needed to begin the next phase.

**Silva Cell Tree Well** – Ms. Tarkington asked why trees had been removed and new paving installed after Superstorm Sandy in the Island Beach parking lot before this new tactic was considered. Mr. Crary responded that the Tree Conservancy was donating \$20K to test the new theory that promises not to compress tree roots and that additional funds, although not earmarked, might be applied for from the insurance reimbursement and FEMA funds.

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## **PARKING SERVICES**

Mr. Cray and Mr. Geiger replied to questions about the increase in salaries and departmental overtime indicating that two positions had been upgraded and that the number of projects would increase by 20% in the coming year.

Mr. Dioquino indicated that the investment in additional pay stations, electronic meters and charging stations would result in increasing electrical service costs however \$3.9million additional revenue was anticipated based on sales of smart cards and increased downtown parking fine enforcement. The Parking Fund budget projection of a 10% increase in Parking Permit sales was questioned by Mr. Ramer and Ms. Tarkington who were concerned that private commercial companies were renting space in public lots rather than building sufficient parking to accommodate customers and employees and the additional financial burden above the inflation rate on commuting residents for their cost of parking.

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Mr. Dioquino was asked about the expense for extensive maintenance on Town Hall's garage to which he responded that the water proofing membrane needed to be replaced because its deficiencies were responsible for creating potholes.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that \$75K had not been spent of the \$674K that had been allocated in Capital Appropriations as well as \$175K for paving but Mr. Dioquino said that some money would be taken forward and the majority of paving money would be spent before the end of June 2014.

**Lunch Break began at 1:05 P.M. and concluded at 1:35 P.M.**

**Operating Revenue Presentation** - The Operating Revenue review was presented by Mr. Mynarski. He itemized the sources and amounts of the \$397million of revenue that was anticipated to support the 2014-2015 Budget. He noted that the primary revenue source was property tax but that grants and LOCIP reimbursements were major contributors. He noted that the Mill Rate would be calculated after reductions for tax settlements, senior tax relief and losses from uncollected taxes were subtracted from anticipated revenue. He also noted that savings from employee migration to HSA health benefits and fiscal year end release of encumbrances would contribute significantly to revenue.

Ms. Elliot commented on Grand List adjustments comparing 230 appeals in 2013 to 176 made for 2014 adjustments. Her Capital Budget request for \$110K would implement the Assessor Department's Reevaluation Project to inspect residential properties.

**Capital Budget Review concluded and Consolidation discussions began at 3:25 P.M.**

### **Consolidation Process**

Mr. Johnson informed the Committee that the process would begin with a review of the Operating Budget by department. He commented to the Committee that projects such as MISA, Central Fire House and Soil Remediation might require additional funds in the future. Given the scope of these projects, the uncertain economy, and the ability of our senior citizens and unemployed to pay increases in taxes, he questioned the timing of introducing new initiatives and adding new positions to the 2014-2015 Budget.

Ms. Tarkington questioned the Operating Budget Revenue assumption of \$321million and suggested reductions in the estimated Grand List and proposed income from Parking Services should be considered.

## TOPICS

### **OPERATING FUND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **General Government**

- **Registrar of Voters –(\$14,000)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the request be reduced by \$14K and that TOG's 2.5% salary increase guideline be applied to this request; he recommend that this change should be implemented before Fall elections.
- **Law Department – (\$13,437)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the request for a FT Paralegal be reduced to adding a Part Time employee. Mr. Ramer indicated that he disagreed and noted that he would be voting against this suggestion.
- **Planning & Zoning Department** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for increasing a Part Time position to Full Time.
- **Conservation Department** – Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for increasing a Part Time position to Full Time. Ms. Kiernan summarized her support for the increase proposed in the First Selectman's budget changing the part time position to full time given the increasing demands on this department and the increasing applications in all land use departments, which is consistent with added staff in these other departments.
- **Inland Wetlands & Water Courses Agency - \$3,000** The Finance Department recommended that \$3,000 for consulting services that was originally reduced from this department by the First Selectman's Office be reinstated.

#### **Fire Department**

- **Fire Department – (\$425,076)** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for adding 9 career fire fighters and would also oppose the elevation of 4 current Lieutenants to the rank of Captain and elevating 4 firefighters to the rank of Lieutenant. Mr. Ramer suggested he would vote for hiring 9 new firefighters but opposed elevating the Lieutenants to Captains or promoting 4 firefighters to Lieutenants. He proposed a condition of releasing funds quarterly based on volunteer firefighters being integrated into training with career firefighters.
- Mr. Johnson indicated he approved of the \$60K allocation for the Round Hill Fire House and \$140K for the Banksville Fire House.

#### **Public Works Department**

- **Public Works** – Mr. Johnson recommended approving the request for adding a Full Time permit coordinator.

#### **External Entities (\$77,500)**

- **TAG** – Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for a \$91K increase and recommended that the Committee consider a budget increase of 2.5% plus \$10,000.
- **GEMS** – Mr. Ramer suggested reducing this budget by \$125,000 – equal to a supervisor level position. Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed this request. Mr. Ramer suggested conditioning the release of funds. Ms. Kiernan suggested conditioning the release of funds on delivery by GEMS of financial and staffing information according to major object codes and Finance Department guidance.

## Board of Education

- **Schools** – Ms. Tarkington recommended that because enrollment was down and staffing had increased that the Committee consider reducing salaries by \$300,000. Mr. Mason commented that the ratio of 10 students to 1 certified staff person was not viable due to attendance dropping and he questioned why the BOE staffing model did not match what was approved. Mr. Finger pointed out that school budgeting took place in November but school enrollment in September could differ from November's basis.
- **Lunch Fund** – Mr. Mynarski noted that the \$300K fund was established as a revolving fund and that the budget's contribution was meant to bring the fund back to its intended level. He opposed capitalizing the fund beyond this level.

## Parks & Recreation

- **Parks & Recreation Community First** – Mr. Johnson recognized the proposal's creativity and initiative but opposed the cost because outsourcing the project may not have been explored. Mr. Ramer commented that if union contracts were involved, outsourcing might not be an option. Ms. Kiernan noted that her interpretation of Community First was that projects should be developed to increase productivity.

## SAVINGS FROM FIXED CHARGES (\$650,000)

Mr. Geiger and the Committee reviewed estimated savings that would result from the Operating Budget review as well as reductions from FIXED CHARGES for Unemployment Insurance (\$50K), Workers Compensation (\$100K) and healthcare benefit costs due to migration (\$500K) were calculated.

## INCREMENTAL REVENUE FROM PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES \$2,500,000

Additional revenue from payments in lieu of taxes was estimated. Nathaniel Witherell tax credits could be applied to reduce their debt service and reduce the amount funded by the General Fund.

## CAPITAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Trunked Radio System Replacement – \$5,400,000** - Mr. Ramer suggested that capital set aside for FY2016 be added to FY2015 in order to allow the Police Department to sign long-term supplier contracts that might be more advantageous. It would not be expected that the full amount would be spent in FY2015.
- **Document Imaging – (\$150,000)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the requested \$150K could be covered by the \$186K request in the 2014-2015 budget.
- **IT Disaster Recovery – (\$100,000)** - Ms. Tarkington questioned if this item was a realistic expectation of a newly hired IT Director.
- **Fire Department** – Give backs of \$91K for dry hydrants and \$150K for radios are expected.
- **Fire Department** – Mr. Ramer asked if public safety would be compromised if the purchase of apparatus was deferred. Chief Sicienski replied that it would be possible to defer one \$650K pumper. Mr. Mason noted that the delay on delivery meant that the



money could not be spent until the end of FY 2015. Mr. Johnson questioned authorizing the request in the 2014-2015 Budget and suggested moving the request forward.

- **Police Department** – the return of 2012’s \$51K allocation for Crown Victoria cars and \$44K for radios could be anticipated.
- **Police Department** – Mr. Ramer suggested that in the 2016 Budget he would recommend reducing the number of divers from 9 to 6.
- **DPW – Engineering Division** – Mr. Johnson suggested that the request for \$500K in 2014 and \$400K in 2015 for Town Hall projects might be delayed. Ms. Tarkington was in favor except for the \$117K for the front of the building.
- **DPW Sewer Division** – Mr. Geiger pointed out that the Division’s Capital Improvement Budget had \$17million of unspent funds available. Ms. Tarkington pointed out that construction under the Federal consent decree should have begun so that \$2.5million on hand could lapse from the Old Greenwich project.
- **Parking Services – (\$16,000)** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the Electronic Vehicle Charging Station expenditure because he believed it should be outsourced. Ms. Tarkington suggested that the Paving expenditure would not be spent because the work would be done by DPW.

Mr. Johnson suggested the Committee break for the day. More Consolidation Day discussions would take place at the beginning of Decision Day.

The meeting adjourned at 5:21 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

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Marc V. Johnson, Chairman

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Mr. Dioquino was asked about the expense for extensive maintenance on Town Hall's garage to which he responded that the water proofing membrane needed to be replaced because its deficiencies were responsible for creating potholes.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that \$75K had not been spent of the \$674K that had been allocated in Capital Appropriations as well as \$175K for paving but Mr. Dioquino said that some money would be taken forward and the majority of paving money would be spent before the end of June 2014.

**Lunch Break began at 1:05 P.M. and concluded at 1:35 P.M.**

**Operating Revenue Presentation** - The Operating Revenue review was presented by Mr. Mynarski. He itemized the sources and amounts of the \$397million of revenue that was anticipated to support the 2014-2015 Budget. He noted that the primary revenue source was property tax but that grants and LOCIP reimbursements were major contributors. He noted that the Mill Rate would be calculated after reductions for tax settlements, senior tax relief and losses from uncollected taxes were subtracted from anticipated revenue. He also noted that savings from employee migration to HSA health benefits and fiscal year end release of encumbrances would contribute significantly to revenue.

Ms. Elliot commented on Grand List adjustments comparing 230 appeals in 2013 to 176 made for 2014 adjustments. Her Capital Budget request for \$110K would implement the Assessor Department's Reevaluation Project to inspect residential properties.

**Capital Budget Review concluded and Consolidation discussions began at 3:25 P.M.**

### **Consolidation Process**

Mr. Johnson informed the Committee that the process would begin with a review of the Operating Budget by department. He commented to the Committee that projects such as MISA, Central Fire House and Soil Remediation might require additional funds in the future. Given the scope of these projects, the uncertain economy, and the ability of our senior citizens and unemployed to pay increases in taxes, he questioned the timing of introducing new initiatives and adding new positions to the 2014-2015 Budget.

Ms. Tarkington questioned the Operating Budget Revenue assumption of \$321million and suggested reductions in the estimated Grand List and proposed income from Parking Services should be considered.

## TOPICS

### OPERATING FUND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### General Government

- **Registrar of Voters –(\$14,000)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the request be reduced by \$14K and that TOG's 2.5% salary increase guideline be applied to this request; he recommend that this change should be implemented before Fall elections.
- **Law Department – (\$13,437)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the request for a FT Paralegal be reduced to adding a Part Time employee. Mr. Ramer indicated that he disagreed and noted that he would be voting against this suggestion.
- **Planning & Zoning Department** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for increasing a Part Time position to Full Time.
- **Conservation Department** – Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for increasing a Part Time position to Full Time. Ms. Kiernan summarized her support for the increase proposed in the First Selectman's budget changing the part time position to full time given the increasing demands on this department and the increasing applications in all land use departments, which is consistent with added staff in these other departments.
- **Inland Wetlands & Water Courses Agency - \$3,000** The Finance Department recommended that \$3,000 for consulting services that was originally reduced from this department by the First Selectman's Office be reinstated.

#### Fire Department

- **Fire Department – (\$425,076)** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for adding 9 career fire fighters and would also oppose the elevation of 4 current Lieutenants to the rank of Captain and elevating 4 firefighters to the rank of Lieutenant. Mr. Ramer suggested he would vote for hiring 9 new firefighters but opposed elevating the Lieutenants to Captains or promoting 4 firefighters to Lieutenants. He proposed a condition of releasing funds quarterly based on volunteer firefighters being integrated into training with career firefighters.
- Mr. Johnson indicated he approved of the \$60K allocation for the Round Hill Fire House and \$140K for the Banksville Fire House.

#### Public Works Department

- **Public Works** – Mr. Johnson recommended approving the request for adding a Full Time permit coordinator.

#### External Entities (\$77,500)

- **TAG** – Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for a \$91K increase and recommended that the Committee consider a budget increase of 2.5% plus \$10,000.
- **GEMS** – Mr. Ramer suggested reducing this budget by \$125,000 – equal to a supervisor level position. Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed this request. Mr. Ramer suggested conditioning the release of funds. Ms. Kiernan suggested conditioning the release of funds on delivery by GEMS of financial and staffing information according to major object codes and Finance Department guidance.

## **Board of Education**

- **Schools** – Ms. Tarkington recommended that because enrollment was down and staffing had increased that the Committee consider reducing salaries by \$300,000. Mr. Mason commented that the ratio of 10 students to 1 certified staff person was not viable due to attendance dropping and he questioned why the BOE staffing model did not match what was approved. Mr. Finger pointed out that school budgeting took place in November but school enrollment in September could differ from November's basis.
- **Lunch Fund** – Mr. Mynarski noted that the \$300K fund was established as a revolving fund and that the budget's contribution was meant to bring the fund back to its intended level. He opposed capitalizing the fund beyond this level.

## **Parks & Recreation**

- **Parks & Recreation Community First** – Mr. Johnson recognized the proposal's creativity and initiative but opposed the cost because outsourcing the project may not have been explored. Mr. Ramer commented that if union contracts were involved, outsourcing might not be an option. Ms. Kiernan noted that her interpretation of Community First was that projects should be developed to increase productivity.

## **SAVINGS FROM FIXED CHARGES (\$650,000)**

Mr. Geiger and the Committee reviewed estimated savings that would result from the Operating Budget review as well as reductions from FIXED CHARGES for Unemployment Insurance (\$50K), Workers Compensation (\$100K) and healthcare benefit costs due to migration (\$500K) were calculated.

## **INCREMENTAL REVENUE FROM PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES \$2,500,000**

Additional revenue from payments in lieu of taxes was estimated. Nathaniel Witherell tax credits could be applied to reduce their debt service and reduce the amount funded by the General Fund.

## **CAPITAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Trunked Radio System Replacement – \$5,400,000** - Mr. Ramer suggested that capital set aside for FY2016 be added to FY2015 in order to allow the Police Department to sign long-term supplier contracts that might be more advantageous. It would not be expected that the full amount would be spent in FY2015.
- **Document Imaging – (\$150,000)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the requested \$150K could be covered by the \$186K request in the 2014-2015 budget.
- **IT Disaster Recovery – (\$100,000)** - Ms. Tarkington questioned if this item was a realistic expectation of a newly hired IT Director.
- **Fire Department** – Give backs of \$91K for dry hydrants and \$150K for radios are expected.
- **Fire Department** – Mr. Ramer asked if public safety would be compromised if the purchase of apparatus was deferred. Chief Siencienski replied that it would be possible to defer one \$650K pumper. Mr. Mason noted that the delay on delivery meant that the



money could not be spent until the end of FY 2015. Mr. Johnson questioned authorizing the request in the 2014-2015 Budget and suggested moving the request forward.

- **Police Department** – the return of 2012’s \$51K allocation for Crown Victoria cars and \$44K for radios could be anticipated.
- **Police Department** – Mr. Ramer suggested that in the 2016 Budget he would recommend reducing the number of divers from 9 to 6.
- **DPW – Engineering Division** – Mr. Johnson suggested that the request for \$500K in 2014 and \$400K in 2015 for Town Hall projects might be delayed. Ms. Tarkington was in favor except for the \$117K for the front of the building.
- **DPW Sewer Division** – Mr. Geiger pointed out that the Division’s Capital Improvement Budget had \$17million of unspent funds available. Ms. Tarkington pointed out that construction under the Federal consent decree should have begun so that \$2.5million on hand could lapse from the Old Greenwich project.
- **Parking Services – (\$16,000)** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the Electronic Vehicle Charging Station expenditure because he believed it should be outsourced. Ms. Tarkington suggested that the Paving expenditure would not be spent because the work would be done by DPW.

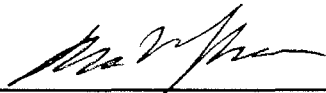
Mr. Johnson suggested the Committee break for the day. More Consolidation Day discussions would take place at the beginning of Decision Day.

The meeting adjourned at 5:21 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



Marc V. Johnson, Chairman