1. APPROVED_BET Budget Comm. Consolidation Day 2 Minutes_3-4-2021

Documents:

APPROVED_BET BUDGET HEARINGS_CONSOLIDATION DAY 2_MINUTES_3-4-2021.PDF
TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION  
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  

CONSOLIDATION DAY #2, FISCAL YEAR 2021 - 2022 BUDGET  
Hybrid Virtual and Town Hall Meeting Room, Thursday, March 4, 2021  

Present:  

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

Staff: Daniel Carlsen, Senior Business Analyst, Office of the First Selectman (OFS); Angela Gencarelli, Assistant Budget & Systems Manager, Finance Department (Dept.); Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems Director, Finance Dept; Jenny Larkin, IT Dept; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Demetria Nelson, Commissioner, Human Services Department  

Board: Michael Mason, BET Chairman; William Drake, Laura Erickson, Karen Fassuliotis, Miriam Kreuzer, Elizabeth K. Krumeich, David Weisbrod  

Selectmen: Jill K. Oberlander, Select-person  

RTM: F. Alvarez, (D-12), Land Use; Michael Basham, (D-2), Chair, Finance; Lucia Jansen, (D-7), Chair Budget Overview (BOC); Richard Neuman, (D-11), Town Services; Roz Nicastro, (D-2), BOC; Dan Ozizmir, (D-5), Vice Chair, BOC, Chair, LCC; Brian Raney, (D-11), Town Services; Molly Saleeby, (D-8), BOC, Louisa Stone, (D-10), Land Use; Lucy von Brachel, (D-4), James Waters  

BOE/GPS: Peter Bernstein, Chair, Board of Education (BOE); Dr. Toni Jones, Superintendent, GPS  

Other: Ken Borsuk, Reporter, *Greenwich Time*; David Chass, Vice President, Round Hill Fire Station; Richard Kaufman, Reporter, *Greenwich Sentinel*; Tracy Schietinger, Executive Director, GEMS; Horst Tebbe, GCTV  

Ms. Tarkington called the meeting to order at 9:04 A.M. and 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, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget & Systems Director, Angela Gencarelli, Assistant Budget & 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. Technical expertise is being provided by Jenny Larkin. A schedule of the Budget Committee’s Departmental Review Hearings is available on the Town website.

Consolidation Process

Ms. Tarkington welcomed attendees and introduced Consolidation Day #2 as a continuation of the March 1, Consolidation Day #1 workshop for the BET Budget Committee to review the issues, proposed initiatives, and opportunities in a public forum. With the assistance of the Finance Department, information was prepared for the Budget Committee decision process. BET members were encouraged to contribute their questions and comments.

Ms. Tarkington commented that the area Consumer Price Index is 1.2% p.a., but that the BOE’s FY2022 operating budget is up $6.5 million and the Town’s $2.1 million, or 3.97% and 1.73%, respectively.

The delivered capital budget is $92.1 million exceeded the BET’s Budget Guidelines level of $55 million by 67%. There are 130 proposed projects, many of which are bundled and require additional substantial funding in future years. The second Consolidation Day will continue discussion of outstanding items and identify line items in which members may make motions to modify the proposed budget during Budget Committee Decision Day on March 5.

OPERATING BUDGET

Revenue

Mr. Ramer commented that after reviewing the results of Consolidation Day #1, he wished to add increases to several items: an increase in revenue to Schools’ Educational Cost-Sharing; revenue to DPW Waste Disposal tipping fees and recycling; and an increase in operating cost to DPW Highway paving and maintenance.

Mr. Mynarski drew the Committee’s attention to possible need to increase the allocation to the Senior and Disabled Tax Relief resulting from the increased number of residents and properties which could qualify.

- Property Taxes $33,638,812,981
- Tax Settlements $1,500,000
- State Senior Tax Relief $150,000
- Town Senior Tax Relief $950,000
- 46110 Interest income $500,000

State Reimbursement

- 43444 LOCIP $322,000
- 43493 Unrestricted Grants to Municipalities $89,022
- 43451 Education Cost Sharing (ECS) $378,649
- 43997 Pilot $675,000
- 49055 cancel of prior year encumbrances $1,700,000
- 41911 Interest on delinquent taxes $ 1,350,000
- 44731 Pay to throw/tipping fees $2,230,000 (RTM sunset vote)
- 45134 Parking Fines $ 881,969
- 43500 COVID Reimbursements $ 1,894,294

Operating Expenses – The Committee considered the change in operating expenses of $3.671 million at the close of Consolidation Day #1. Mr. Duus proposed $3.5 million of transfers from the Capital Budget to the Operating Budget, which would impact multiple operating budget lines.

105 OFS – Mr. Ramer suggested increasing the amount of consulting fees for Greenwich Plaza Committee use for valuation of its air rights, appropriating $25,000 for consulting fees for the resolution of the TNW RFP, and provide a salary for the Economic Development Director Initiative of $70,000.

120 Registrars of Voters – (reduce salary by $2,000).

139 Tax Collector – (reduce salary by $800).

150 Town Clerk’s Office – (reduce salary by $800).

General M&C Salary Increases – Upon BET approval of HR Committee salary motion.

130 Finance - Add back Internal Auditor position in TOO without salary and benefit.

134 IT - Centralized policy

135 Assessor – Delete Assistant Assessor position and salary from TOO

140 Law Department - Mr. Ramer proposed adding back the job title of Assistant Town Attorney with a salary of $150,000 plus benefits to the Law Department’s TOO. Additionally, he proposed separating the Town Attorney fee of $150,000 from the $1 million budget for outside counsel.

172 Conservation – The Committee questioned the appropriate location of the fee (capital or operating) for the Bicycle Path Study, $50,000, and discussed a condition for its release upon a report of fundraising for a public/private/partnership. Consulting project for the Sea-Level Rise project location of $100,000 (Capital Budget or Operating Budget) is to be decided.

Fire Department

201 Defer appointment of Assistant Fire Chief until completion of Matrix Fire Response Time Study review and Strategic Plan and an Action Plan has been developed. Maintain Volunteer Coordinator position for overlap when the Assistant Chief is in place.

202 Training - Reduce $10,000 because some courses are now online, and volunteer fire fighter curriculum has been abbreviated.

206 Fire Apparatus & Equipment – Reduce cost of software from the $28,500 item.

207 Fire Department Building
• Reduce rental software by $18,400.
• Add funds for development of Round Hill Fire station renovation plan to include accommodation for career firefighters

208 Fire Department Volunteers
• Add $4,250 for Bail Out Kit for each Volunteer
• Increase the Town’s contribution to the maintenance of Round Hill and Banksville volunteer fire stations by 2% increase

Police Department
• Restore General Services Position and salary to TOO for a new business manager with financial management skills for budgeting and FOI requests.
• Consider civilian personnel for dispatch position.
• Acquire appropriate software for Matrix Study implementation in dispatch center.
• Benchmark Uniform Patrol, currently 154 while peer communities are staffed with 130-135 police; when eligible retirees, retire, do not replace with new staff.
• Move funding for the annual taser replacement program from capital to operating.

213 Police
• 22312 – Transfer from Capital Budget to Operating Budget for Taser Upgrade Program and add $30,000.
• 22365 Police Interceptor SUV Upfitting - Transferred from Capital to Operating Budget

302 Public Works
• 22315 Stormwater Compliance Program – Moved from Capital to increase Operating Budget by $200,000

440 External Entities
• TAG - Condition release of funds on semi annual reporting to Budget Committee
• TAG – Discussion took place as to whether to transfer SAFE RIDE contribution, $18,000, permanently to increase Town total contribution to TAG budget or not.
• GEMS - Condition release of funds for semi-annual reporting to Budget Committee
• YWCA – Discussion took place as to whether Domestic Violence and Kids in Crisis programs oversight should be transferred to External Entities with release of conditions on $175,000 upon annual report to the Office of the First Selectman.

501 Human Services
• Mr. Ramer noted that YWCA Domestic Violence and the Kids in Crisis Programs are better monitored under Human Services Department oversight. Commissioner Nelson suggested that the programs remain under Human Services oversight monitored by an annual report to the First Selectman.
• 502 – Emergency Assistance Program budget increase by $30,000 contribution.
600  **Board of Education (BOE)**

- Mr. Duus remarked that $2 million of BOE capital items should be transferred to BOE Operating Budget.
- Mr. Mason commented that BOE revenue forecast should be adjusted to reflect a larger estimated COVID grant. He also recommended reductions for busing changes, reduction of permanent/part time and substitute staff to correspond to students in classrooms.
- Mr. Mason expressed concern about the BOE spend-rate and noted that the amount and timing of COVID reimbursement was uncertain.

680  **22372 BOE Digital Learning Environment** – Transfer from Capital Budget to Operating Budget.

680  **22373 BOE Cybersecurity** – Transfer from Capital Budget to Operating Budget.

**PARKS & RECREATION**

822  **22397 Organic Turf** – Transfer from Capital to Operating Budget.

822  **22400 Playground Inspection Program** – Transfer from Capital to Operating Budget.

822  **22412 Stormwater Management Program** – transfer from Capital to Operating Budget

822  **22418 Sand Replacement** – transfer from Capital to Operating Budget

**FIXED CHARGES**

901  **Employee Benefits - Healthcare 57095** – Originally budgeted for a 10% increase however reduce to 6% as smaller State Partnership increase is now anticipated.

902  **Benefits 57908** - (reduce $150,000) - Mr. Mynarski reported that Workers’ Compensation for Administrative and Claim costs were reduced and proposes a further reduction of contribution by $100,000 be considered.

908  **Town Insurance Premiums** - Mr. Mynarski indicated the insurance broker will be presenting new rates in March but he recommends an initial increase of $841 thousand while awaiting marketplace premium offers.

999  **Transfer to Other Funds** – Mr. Mason commented that it was typical for BET to pay off negative fund balance or outstanding deficient at year-end. Ms. Tarkington added at audited fiscal year end.

**FUNDS**

450  **The Nathaniel Witherell** – Reduce salary line $100,000 for staffing changes. Revised balance sheet needed to see impact of changes. Consider a lesser contribution from the Town to Nathaniel Witherell to reflect reductions in operation expenses.

670  **School Lunch Fund** – The Fund is currently experiencing a negative fund balance however COVID reimbursement is expected to reimburse previous year losses.
219 Parking Fund – Semi-annual release conditions upon reporting were discussed for the Parking Fund. Two initiatives have been proposed to increase revenues: resident parking permitting and special restaurant dining parking fees.

824 Griffith E. Harris Golf Course Revolving Fund – Discussion about the appropriate location for new cell tower rental revenue – Golf Fund or the General Fund. However, a subsidy from the rental revenue to the Golf Course Revolving Fund for maintenance would remain in the Golf Fund. A new policy for rental revenue should be developed.

CAPITAL BUDGET

General Government

172 Conservation Commission – Restore Sea Level Rise Study add $100,000 to Capital Budget and condition release on approval of an action plan.

172 Conservation Commission - Restore Bicycle Path Study and add $75,000 to Capital Budget and condition release on receipt and approval of fundraising report.

206 Fleet (22307) – Reduce $210,000 and defer purchase of Vehicle Extraction Equipment.

213 Police (22314) – Reduce $56,000 to delete Outboard Engines PB 125 purchase.

312 Public Works

- 22323 Brookside Dr. at Glenville Intersection – Restore $175,000 for LOCIP reimbursable project.
- 22324 Greenwich Avenue Intersection Improvement – Defer (reduce $500,000) leaving balance of $250,000 for additional detail.
- 22326 Greenwich Avenue Re-Imagine Greenwich – Reduce $250,000 - not timely.
- 22328 Bridge Maintenance Program – Add $100,000 – moved from Capital Budget.
- 22329 Bruce Park Bridge Replacement - Reduce $1,250,000 - remaining balance of $750,000 to improve Pedestrian Walkway.
- 22333 CMAQ Arch Street Improvements – Possible project deferral.

315 Public Works

- 22338 GHS Soil Remediation –Fund with long-term financing.

321 Public Works

- 22341 Holly Hill Resource Recovery – Defer due to potential Western Middle School soil remediation traffic.

345 Public Works

- 22337 Eastern Greenwich Civic Center – Value engineering proposed due to cost escalation concern., Release conditioned on public private partnership fundraising report.
- 22343 Hamill Rink Facility – Reduce $950,000 - defer for one year. Release conditioned on submission of business plan and land use approval.
• **22339 Town Hall Space Utilization Improvement** - Reduce $204,000; defer.
• **22345 Roger Sherman Baldwin Park** – Reduce $1,150,000 remaining balance of $100,000 for continued planning.
• **22344 Leased Buildings** – Reduce $1,348 defer replacements and upgrades.

380 Fleet

• **22357 Fire Rescue Pumper** Reduce $850,000 defer.
• **22359 Fire Dept SUV upfitting** Reduce $59,000 – defer.
• **22361 Motorcycle upfitting** Reduce $27,000 – defer.

**EXTERNAL ENTITIES**

404 **Bruce Museum IT Equipment Replacement** - Reduce $2,500 - inappropriate charge.
404 **Bruce Museum Roof replacement** - Reduce $102,000 - defer one year.

404 **GEMS Station #4** – Condition release on $210,000 for fundraising report; Appropriation authority DPW; Develop framework for future appropriations.

**SCHOOLS**

680 **22369 Cardinal Field Improvement** – Reduce by $4,800,000; defer. The Committee suggested that no separate funds are available for P-2b. Separate bridge and road area from stadium area. P&Z and IWWA approval for P-2a to date.

680 **22371 CMS Expansion/renovation** – Reduce by $102,000 – Suggestion for BOE hold off on an engineering study and use operating budget funds in **650 Maintenance of Plants** for the project. Mr. Mason reminded the Committee that the original 2018 report suggested the maintenance of assets and encouraged the Committee to consider the ADA, HVAC, and security recommendation for CMS.

680 **22381 HVAC** – Discussion about whether these projects may qualify for State reimbursement. Unbundle GHS, EMS, and North Street into separate accounts with remaining Glenville, Hamilton Avenue, and Riverside/District/Havemeyer to remain bundled.

680 **22382 Julian Curtis** – Release of conditions on $1,700,000 subject to receipt of new ed specs due to declining enrollment.

680 **22386 Electrical & Plumbing** – Separate requests into two discreet trade appropriations.

680 **22394 WMS Soil Remediation** – an action plan by DEEP and EPA is being prepared, with expectation for a public hearing scheduled in 45 days.

**LIBRARIES**

701 **22405 Perrot** – Reduce $100,000 - defer to FY2023 for $75,000.

**PARKS & RECREATION**

822 **22406 Organic Turf** – Reduce $300,000 - transfer from Capital to Operating Budget.
822  **22408 Field Master Study** – Condition release $150,000 of funding for receipt and approval of field repair action plan.

822  **22401 Tennis & Basketball Maintenance Program** – Reduce $66,000 - remaining balance of $67,000 available.

822  **22412 Stormwater Management Program** – Reduce $55,000 - from Capital Budget and transfer to Operating Budget.

822  **22418 Sand Replacement** - Reduce $80,000 - from Capital Budget and transfer to Operating Budget

All the comments and proposals were for discussion purposes only. There were no motions made and no votes taken on any item discussed at this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:04 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

Leslie L. Tarkington, Chair, Budget Cmte