

1. SUB_TO_APP_BET Budget Hearings_FY23-24 BOE Day 1 Minutes_01-31-2023

Documents:

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**TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW FY 2023-2024 Budget - DAY #1 Minutes - BOE**

**Town Hall Meeting Room
Tuesday, January 31, 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); Christina Downey, BOE; Blaize Levitan, Chief Operating Officer, GPS, Dan Watson, Director of Facilities, GPS, Dr. Jonathan Budd, Chief Human Resources Officer; GPS, Dr. Stacey Heiligenthaler, GPS Special Education

Budget Committee Chair Tarkington called the Meeting to order at 9:05 A.M. and welcomed attendees and the audience to the BET Budget Committee Departmental Day 1 Meeting dedicated to the Board of Education recommended FY 2023-2024 Operating and Capital Budgets. Ms. Tarkington introduced members of the BET Budget Committee and Finance Department staff who support the process.

She reported that the BET Budget Committee Departmental Review Hearings are live broadcast by GCTV Channels 79, 24, and YouTube. The schedule of the Budget Committee's Departmental Review Meetings is available on the Town website.

Budget Committee Chair Tarkington welcomed members of the Board of Education and GPS Administration and invited BOE Chairman Joe Kelly, Dr. Toni Jones, and Mr. Blaize Levitan to share how the upcoming year's budget was developed so that the Budget Committee could better understand its proposed operating and capital requests.

BOE and GPS Officials introduced the Board of Education FY2023-2024 Operating Budget for Greenwich Public Schools and following a set agenda presented, discussed and took questions on the following topics:

- Mr. Levitan prepared a document showing the General Fund District Budget as detailed in the Town's financial reporting system, also known as Munis. Highlights of the budget shows the Schools General Fund Operating Budget at \$182,165,266, an increase of

\$5,209,524 or 2.9% meeting BET Budget guidelines. Budget drivers and their percentage of the Operating Budget increases are; salaries and other contractual payments, \$3,435,513 (66%), special education \$1,100,000 (23%), utilities and services, \$708,778 (14%), and transportation, \$373,749 (22%), and all other (net) -\$508,516 (-10).

- Enrollment and Staffing Categories were discussed with a concentration on declining enrollment as follows:
 - Elementary School Projections
 - K-5 & Preschool Classrooms
 - Certified and Non-Certified Staffing Formulas
 - Teacher Staffing Levels
 - School Staffing by School
- Mr. Levitan prepared a chart and discussed the areas where core services between the Town and the GPS are shared or coordinated. This item was prepared in response to a BET Budgetary Guideline request to review potential areas of consolidation between the schools and the Town.
- Dr. Jones reported to the Committee her concern where the Office of the First Selectman reduced the current year additional appropriation for five police officers on dedicated school security patrols had been reduced from \$682,000 to \$418,000. She noted that this would reduce the coverage from the current five officers to three and added that this reduction was reflected in the Police Department budget, not the GPS, but wanted to stress the need for the BET to increase the appropriation during budget deliberations.
- An Elementary School Building utilization chart were prepared, presented and discussed.
- The 2022 GPS Gift Report was prepared, presented and discussed.
- Mr. Levitan updated the Committee on the Public School Lunch Program. He reported that through increased outside State and Federal funding, the program has turned around dramatically going from a deficit program requiring Town subsidies to a surplus program. However, he cautioned that extended federal funded programs are not guaranteed to continue.
- Mr. Levitan prepared a chart showing the current and projected status of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund spending. The chart showed substantive reallocations of previously approved funding by the BET and RTM. The Committee reminded Mr. Levitan that he would need to come back for final approvals but advised him to wait until March, after the current budget deliberations conclude.
- Americans with a Disabilities Act (ADA) updates and information were provided by School sites and discussed.
- The GPS provided the Committee with an update on the Western Middle School Soil Remediation Project timeline with removals to start July 2023 after obtaining all of the required regulatory approvals.

- Mr. Levitan provided the Committee with an update on the status of all ongoing or planned HVAC projects by school.
- The Budget Committee, BOE and GPS discussed open capital projects as of January 23, 2023. Ms. Tarkington noted that discussions on major capital projects, such as Central Middle School, Julian Curtiss and Old Greenwich Elementary Schools will be deferred until Budget Committee Day 4, on February 9, 2023. The Committee went through each capital project submission listed in the Capital Projects Budget book and made a variety of inquiries. These did not include the major school capital projects deferred until
- The meeting concluded with a final update from Dr. Jones and Mr. Levitan reporting on BOE Capital Budget submissions to the Office of the First Selectman that were changed. They displayed a chart that showed \$167,196,750 was requested and \$125,936,000 was proposed by the First Selectman.

The Committee concluded its session at 4:08 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary

Leslie L. Tarkington, Committee Chair