

**TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE  
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW DAY SIX FOR FY16-17 BUDGET**

**Town Hall Meeting Room  
Thursday, February 18, 2016 – 9:00 A.M.**

Present:

Committee: James A. Lash, Chairman; Mary Lee A. Kiernan, Jeffrey S. Ramer,  
Leslie L. Tarkington

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Melissa Jones,  
Senior Business Analyst; Angela Gencarelli, Financial Analyst; Mary Pepe,  
Director Human Resources; Allison Graham, Employee Benefits Manager  
Retirement; Rita Azrelyant, Director Parking Services

Board: Michael Mason, Chairman; John Blankley, William Drake, Beth  
Krumeich, Leslie Moriarty, Art Norton, Jill Oberlander, Nancy Weissler

Selectmen: John Toner, Selectman

Others: Allen Brown, Director, The Nathaniel Witherell; Chris Alexander, TNW  
Director of Financial Operations; Laurence Simon, Chair, Nathaniel Witherell;  
Lloyd Bankson, Member, Nathaniel Witherell; Louise Puschel, Member,  
Nathaniel Witherell; Ron Theriault, Ovation Benefits (by phone); Kirk  
Schubert, President, Old Greenwich-Riverside Community Center

RTM Members: Steve Warzoha, RTM Member; Lucia Jansen, RTM Member and BOC;  
Rebecca Steinfeld, RTM Member; Roz Nicasastro, RTM Member; Erf  
Porter, RTM Member

Mr. Lash called the meeting to order at 9:04 A.M.

## **SPEAKERS**

### **Ovations Healthcare Benefits**

Mr. Theriault summarized information received from healthcare benefit vendors in response to an RFP for the contract that began as of January 1, 2016. He agreed that healthcare costs were rising above the regional norm, but compared the current options to the Town's experience when it was self-insured. He attributed Cigna's proposed rate increase of 14.4% until 12-31-17 to their reaction to the risk they would be assuming, the actual Fairfield County healthcare cost environment, the trend of increasing claimants and incidents of cancer, heart disease and diabetes. Members of the Committee asked for a detailed explanation of Greenwich's current "minimum premium" program and its annual deficit feature. Mr. Lash asked Mr. Theriault to provide more specific statistics to better understand if plan design was causing Greenwich employees increased utilization. Ms. Kiernan asked if the State Partnership Plan was still

perceived to be a saving's opportunity, to which Mr. Theriault responded that the State was attempting to adjust its enrollment criteria to minimize risk. Mr. Theriault said that the state OPM is concerned about the risks of the high cost municipality groups from Fairfield County trying to get into the State health plan.

### **Eastern Greenwich Civic Center**

Mr. Porter and Mr. Schubert asked the Budget Committee to encourage the Parks & Recreation Board's Committee to expand the number of participants who would be involved in the pre-design planning phase of the Civic Center's new building based on their experience with its current usage.

### **The Nathaniel Witherell**

**Operations** - Mr. Simon provided the Committee with a detailed explanation of how the Nathaniel Witherell Board was calculating Fringe Benefits for full-time employees while continuing its policy of contributing only a portion Social Security and Worker's Compensation for part-time employees. A discussion ensued on the accuracy of reducing the value ascribed to TNW's budget of the services contributed by the Town's HR, Legal, Purchasing and Finance Departments. The Committee asked Mr. Simon and Mr. Gieger to recalculate Witherell's "in kind" service cost to make it more reflective of what is actually contributed by the Town on a variable cost basis.

Mr. Lash posed the question of the value of TNW to the Greenwich taxpayer. He asked that a recalculation be prepared that showed reduction, through private donations and tax credits, of the original principal portion of the debt associated with Project Renew. He noted that transparency was needed. He stressed that the Committee needed to see an operating plan with more accurate annual subsidies before Consolidation Day (February 26<sup>th</sup>). Ms. Kiernan asked whether there was a plan for addressing the projected deficit in the TNW Fund for FY 17,

Discussion returned to the request to add 8.4 PTEs to the staffing headcount and Mr. Simon explained the alternative would be expensive overtime and inability to comply fully with guidelines for shifts and hours of regular part-timers and returning retired employees.

### **Parking Services**

**Operations** - and Capital- Ms. Azrelyant spoke about the Department's efforts to automate and benefit from the cost savings and efficiency. As an example, the Department proposed allowing payment online for parking permits, and the license plate reader had eliminated several processing steps and the cost of mail. The installation of central meter dispensers where, credit cards are used to pay, and the ability to use phone apps to pay at meters were changing customer practices.

Ms. Azrelyant offered that departmental expenses were proposed to increase by 5.4%, of which only 2.6% were operating expenses, with the balance consisting of capital expenses for the installation of central parking meters. Other measures such as reorganization of BOE parking at the Havemeyer building to consolidate it in the south lot and the staff reduction of one PT employee due to automation, were mentioned.

The Committee asked about the Department's revenue sources and learned that Parking Ticket fines went directly to the Town's General Fund while the meter collections and parking permits

went to the Parking Fund. Ms. Azrelyant suggested that if paid parking could be expanded to Byram, Cos Cob and Glenville by the installation of central meters, additional funds would be available for parking lot paving.

**Additional Conversation with Actuary**

Due to a schedule conflict, this discussion is moved to Consolidation Day.

Mr. Lash asked Mr. Mynarski and Mr. Gieger to provide a list of topics identified for further discussion to be sent to the Committee for their consideration prior to Consolidation Day.

The meeting adjourned at 1:18 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

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James A. Lash, Chairman

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL