

**TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW DAY ONE FOR FY14-15 BUDGET
MINUTES**

**Town Hall Meeting Room – 9:30 A.M.
Tuesday, February 4, 2014**

Present:

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

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller, Roland Gieger, Budget Director, Maureen Tracy, Financial Analyst, Peter Tesei, First Selectman, John Crary, Town Administrator

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

Others: Peter Siecienski, Fire Chief, Robert Kick, Assistant Fire Chief, Larry Roberts, Deputy Chief, James Heavey, Police Chief, Mark Kordick, Police Captain, Greg Hannigan, Director of Police General Services Division, John Wayne Fox, Town Attorney, Carol Mahoney, Greenwich Library Director, Barbara Ormerod-Glynn, Greenwich Library Deputy Director, Alan Barry, Social Services Commissioner, Kevin McCarthy, Perrot Memorial Library Director, James Boutelle, TAG Director, Sandy Kornberg, President, Glenville Fire Department

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M.

SPEAKERS

1. **Police Department** – The Police Department budget was presented by Police Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick with assistance from Greg Hannigan. The presentation was a walkthrough of the Police Department budget pages with Captain Kordick explaining all material budget variances. The presentation was highlighted by discussions covering the following topics:

Account #51010 (Salaries) and #51100 (Overtime Services). The question arose about the increase in the salary line and the decrease in the overtime line. Captain Kordick reminded the Committee that the BET held lengthy discussions about the department not being at full staff during last year's budget deliberations. It was reported during last year's discussions that the Police Department is traditionally never up to a full staffing level and as a result police personnel are bought in to fill shift vacancies on an overtime basis. The BET increased the overtime line and reduced the salary line last year.

Captain Kordick pointed out that as of February 2013 there was 145 sworn police staff. He added that since then, there have been 12 additional hires (11 new recruits and one lateral

transfer) and 6 separations (3 retired, 1 resignation and 2 recruit dismissals). This brought current level of sworn police staffing up to 151. Therefore, this explains the restoration of the salary line funding and the decrease of overtime.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Ramer asked about the status of the compensatory time payment account. Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick updated the Committee on the status of police compensatory time accounts and stated that there are still a few police personnel covered under State Statute that allows them to maintain large balances. They also pointed to a distributed chart that showed the balance declining from just under \$950,000 in 2011 to a current balance of about \$825,000, as of January 2014. Chief Heavey said the outstanding balances will be reduced as those police personnel with large balances retire. However, he said that there will always be situations where compensatory time will be earned and accrued. Mr. Gieger told the Committee that the Town has not budgeted Compensatory Time since the fiscal year 2012-2013 budget. Ms. Tarkington asked if the outstanding balance is reported. Mr. Mynarski answered yes; it is disclosed in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) footnote section.

Account #51490 (Professional and Other Special Services – Not Otherwise Classified).

The question was asked about the decrease in this account. Captain Kordick explained that this reflects a more accurate accounting for this line item and referred the Committee to the actuals for fiscal year 2012-2013.

Account #51380 (EMT Credits). Ms. Tarkington asked about EMT credits and why the figure was high. It was explained that the State of Connecticut has legally designated the Police Department, in Greenwich, as first responders. The reason for the amount budgeted is due to a contractual obligation to pay a stipend of \$2,400 per accredited police personnel.

Account #52100 (Travel Expense). Captain Kordick explained the increase was due to reflect a more accurate accounting and referred the Committee to last year's actuals.

Account #52340 (Rental of Buildings). Captain Kordick explained the increase as a result of moving the Police Department's weapons training to another site, incurring additional charges for the usage of these facilities.

Account #52920 (Work Transfer To/From Dept.). The Committee asked for an explanation of this account. Captain Kordick explained this was a reimbursement from the Fire Department for the use of Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's) by Fire Department personnel.

Account #53310 (Personal Protective Equipment). The Committee asked if this was the result of any safety committee initiatives. Captain Kordick said no. Captain Kordick stated this account is used to pay for bullet-proof vests for police personnel and the increase was the result of a grant going away.

Mr. Johnson asked if there were any efficiency initiatives they would like to discuss at this time. Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick distributed a handout detailing current initiatives as follows:

- **Police Prehiring Program** – Chief Heavey told the Committee that they are beginning the hiring process in advance of anticipated openings. This is designed to permit staffing near authorized strength levels.

- **E-Ticketing** – Captain Kordick explain this initiative. He told the Committee they now produce ticket violations electronically, instead of the old process of writing them out. This results in speedier ticket issuance through electronic data entry and reporting and also increases Police Officer safety.
- **POSS Re-launch** – Captain Kordick explained that this acronym stands for Police Officer Scheduling System (POSS) and assists the department in the shift scheduling of police personnel. Mr. Johnson asked about the impact of the new payroll system on this process. Captain Kordick stated that this process ties directly to the transition to the Automated Data Processing (ADP) payroll system and will result in better efficiencies.

2. **Fire Department** – The Fire Department budget was presented by Chief Peter Siecienski, Assistant Fire Chief Robert Kick and Deputy Training Chief Larry Roberts. Chief Siecienski started the presentation by highlighting recent accomplishments as follows:

- For the last seven and a half years, there have been no fire related deaths in the Town of Greenwich.
- The bids for the construction of the new Central Fire Station have been awarded. The Town will start construction in March 2014 and there will be a twenty-two month construction period.
- The new training facility will be completed in the Spring of 2014.
- The Glenville Fire Station four person staffing model has been a success.
- The breathing apparatus program has been completed.
- The Fire Department table of organization is fully staffed and the Fire Marshal's office is fully staffed. However, the current Fire Marshal will be leaving March 1, 2014.
- There have been fourteen new volunteer firefighter recruits.
- There is a new 30,000 gallon cistern tank located at the site of the Audubon Center.
- Two significant lawsuits filed against the Town of Greenwich and relative to fire operations have been settled in the favor of the Town.
- Through a rebid initiative for two new fire pumper trucks, a cost savings was realized.
- There has been a reduction in at-fault accidents.

At this point, Mr. Johnson told Chief Siecienski and Deputy Chief Kick that the Committee would like to go through the Fire Department budget and ask questions. The highlights of the discussions were as follows:

Fire Department – Administration. The first budget is the “201” account for Administration. Chief Siecienski in response to a question about increased staffing said this cost center contains only four fire personnel, including himself and Assistant Fire Chief Kick.

The Committee asked about the change in personnel detailed in the budget book. Chief Siecienski stated that the Administrative Assistant was upgraded from a union position to a Management and Confidential position, effective July 1, 2013. The fourth position is a clerical position.

Chief Siecienski told the Committee that the largest line item in this cost center was for water service. He said that there was an increase in water rates charged by the Aquarion Water Company that amounted to a 1.6% increase. Chief Siecienski added that the charges are not by usage, but are measured by linear feet of water pipe lines located throughout the Town of Greenwich.

Fire Department – Training. Deputy Chief Roberts explained there are two fire personnel in this division. The Committee asked about the increase in the Payment for Holiday Services line. Chief Siecienski explained that the Training Chief, Larry Roberts, was promoted and this increase is reflected contractually in the change in payments to him.

Mr. Johnson asked about the status of the new training facility. Chief Siecienski answered that the new training facility will be completed in April 2014. This prompted a number of questions from Mr. Ramer about paid firefighters and volunteer fire personnel training together. Assistant Chief Kick answered that currently and historically the volunteers don't train together. Mr. Ramer wanted to know why they don't train together. Assistant Chief Kick had stated that the reasons are twofold. First, the training is not done locally and secondly, training occurs in the daytime limiting volunteers who predominantly have full-time jobs in the day. Mr. Ramer wanted to know if that would change with the new facility being local. Assistant Chief Kick stated they would still be limited during day hours. Mr. Ramer was concerned and strongly stated they he felt volunteers and paid fire personnel should train together. Assistant Kick said they were looking at developing a two-shift schedule for training. Mr. Ramer still expressed concerns and advised the other Committee members that maybe some type of condition should be placed to ensure dual training of volunteers and paid fire personnel together.

When asked about the overtime account in the Fire Training budget, Deputy Training Chief Roberts stated that salary expenses, in the form of overtime, for fire training is budgeted in this division.

Fire Marshall – This account was quickly covered. Chief Siecienski stated there no changes except salaries.

Fire Fighting Force – The discussions on this division were extensive. Chief Siecienski and Assistant Chief Kick started out by saying this is where the increases in staffing are. They stated that there is a proposal to hire 9 new firefighters. The addition of these firefighters will enable the fire department to staff the Sound Beach and Byram fire stations with a minimum of 3 firefighters for every shift. They pointed out that it is critical since it expands the capability of fire personnel when they arrive at the scene of a fire. They added that the first few moments of a fire are the most dangerous since it is during this time that lives are saved and property can be protected. They said that a portion of this added expense can be offset by a federal grant that has been applied for over the next two years. They said that there would be an increase in five

Firefighters, from 67 to 72, and it would also result in the promotion of four existing fire personnel to the rank of Captain. Overall this results in an increase of 9 new firefighters.

There were many questions from the Committee members that centered on costs, possible other deployment options and the status of the proposed Northwest Fire Station.

Regarding the costs for the new firefighters and promotions to Captains, the following was learned:

- The upgrade of 4 fire positions to Captain would cost about \$22,400 each for a total of \$89,600. This is the difference in base salaries. There is an added cost for benefits of about \$3,360 each, totaling \$13,400. These costs can be reduced if the positions were hired in November 2014.
- It was determined that the total annual cost for the 9 new firefighters would be approximately \$1,057,950. This cost would be substantially reduced if the new firefighters were hired after January 1, 2015.

However, as the discussions continued, a lack of clarity on the startup costs and future costs generated a desire among the Committee members to obtain more cost information. It was decided that Assistant Fire Chief Kick would work with the Budget Director, Mr. Gieger, to determine all costs associated with this budgetary request that would satisfy the Committee members cost related questions.

There were a number of other deployment options discussed involving the Glenville Fire Station, recently staffed with four firefighters and the status of hiring another 16 firefighters to staff a new Northwest Fire Station. Fire Chief Sicienski stated firmly that he was opposed to reducing the Glenville Fire Station staffing level of four and returning them to floater status. Regarding the Northwest station, Chief Sicienski said response times to the northwest area are insufficient and the Town is continuing to evaluate alternative sites for the proposed Northwest Fire Station, as directed by the BET. He said that they will continue to keep the process on track as the current response times to that quadrant continue to be above all recommended standards. The Committee asked that the Fire Department provide a list of calls and responses to the northwest area over the last several years for further evaluation.

There were additional specific budgetary questions as follows:

- **Account #205-51380 (EMT Credits)** – Ms. Tarkington asked about the EMT Credit costs. Chief Sicienski answered that the Greenwich Fire Department personnel are not categorized as first responders. However, he said they can be commonly called upon to be first responders and as a result the Greenwich Firefighters are either Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certified. Deputy Chief Roberts said the stipends for holding these certifications are \$1,300 annually per firefighter.
- **Account #205-53310 (Personal Protective Equipment)** – Mr. Johnson asked about the sharp decrease in the budgetary request. Chief Sicienski answered that the costs were shifted to the capital budget. There is a five-year initiative for \$70,000 per year in the capital budget thereby reducing this line item.

- **Account #205-53550 (Mechanical Supplies)** - The Committee asked what was budgeted in this account. Chief Siecienski said it monies for the “keybox replacement program”. He specified that it is a program for firefighters to obtain keys to enter a burning building in the absence of its owners.
- **Account #208-51420 (Professional and Dental)** – Chief Siecienski told the Committee this was money for mandated physicals for Volunteer Fire Personnel.
- **Account #208-51490 (Professional & Other Services)** – Chief Siecienski explained this account is to pay the stipends for volunteers responding to fires.
- **Account #208-57100 (Healthcare Costs)** – Chief Siecienski explained this account is to pay a portion of the healthcare costs for eligible volunteer firefighters. It is based on a number of factors tied to the number of responses to fire related calls.

There was a short discussion on the contribution funding levels for the Round Hill and Banksville Fire Stations.

Mr. Johnson wanted to conclude the discussion on the Fire Department budget by asking Fire Chief Siecienski his thoughts on defined benefit versus defined contributions pension plans for newly hired firefighters. Chief Siecienski made it clear he was against defined contribution plans for firefighter personnel. He detailed how defined benefit plans act as recruitment tool and defined contributions plans act as a deterrent. He added that there are a number of towns that are losing freshly trained firefighters to towns that have defined benefits plans.

3. **Law Department** – This item was taken up out of sequence, due to the length of the Fire Department budget presentation discussions.

The Law Department Budget was presented by Town Attorney John Wayne Fox who stated that his budget was up 3.0%. Mr. Fox was invited by the Budget Committee because of his request for one additional position, a paralegal. Mr. Fox explained that the caseload for the Greenwich Law Department was large, generating a good deal of backup assistance from legal staff. Mr. Fox detailed the makeup of his own law firm staffing and stated that he felt that adding another paralegal would not put his department’s staffing out of line with other legal departments.

The Committee recessed for lunch at 1:30 P.M. and reconvened at 1:45 P.M.

4. **Libraries (with Capital)** – The Library budgets were presented by Ms. Mahoney, Ms. Omerod-Glynn and Mr. McCarthy. Ms. Mahoney began by stating that the Greenwich Library request was for \$7.9 million, representing an approximately 2.3% increase over the current year’s appropriation. Ms. Kiernan requested that Ms. Mahoney be recognized at this time for her contributions to the Greenwich Library system.

Ms. Mahoney noted that the Greenwich Library has been named a five-star library for the fifth time by Library Journal and it is the sixth time in as many years that Greenwich Library has been recognized as an outstanding library. She also stated that the 2014-2015 Greenwich Library budget is the foundation that will provide the Town with the opportunity to move forward with the initiatives of its Strategic Plan within the town’s guidelines. Ms.

Mahoney said that the first year of the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan is focused on strengthening the technology infrastructure and introducing software to provide a clear return on investments in collections and measureable outcomes.

Ms. Mahoney stated that the Greenwich Library wanted to ensure its patrons and staff has access to established and emerging technologies and the opportunity to achieve technological literacy. Ms. Mahoney went further by saying that the use of downloadable eBooks, audiobooks and other materials has experienced exceptional growth. The Library has introduced a number of products, the latest being Hoopla and an instant streaming digital product offering free video, music and audiobooks that you can watch on your smartphone, tablet and computer. She added that the Technology Center continues to offer many programs that range from teaching customers how to sue their new tablet to resume writing.

Ms. Mahoney went on to say that the Library will continue to expand and curate its collections and provide easy access to Library resources. With the rollout of BiblioCommons, library users will be able to search the Library's catalog for materials with a Google and Amazon-like feel. The BiblioCommons application allows for more precise faceted searching and user commenting, tagging and it enables rich connection around library collections, connections between users and the content, conversations, and communities they are most interested in. Ms. Mahoney added that the Bibliomobile mobile application will be available within the year.

The conversation turned to the \$1.4 million capital request for exterior masonry repairs. Ms. Mahoney stated that the building was constructed in 1932 and water has been penetrating the building envelope for many years. She added that the water infiltrating the wall system is beginning to rot and corrode structural elements. The unseen damage to structural elements continues, and is causing bricks and limestone to crack, resulting in increasing amounts of infiltration of water. Mr. Johnson asked what type of project management system was envisioned for this project. Ms. Mahoney discussed the involvement of the Library's Buildings & Grounds Committee and their hiring of a project management consultant. Mr. Johnson advised Ms. Mahoney and Ms. Omerod-Glynn to work with Town Administrator, John Crary, to ensure compliance with Town purchasing procedures.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. McCarthy if he wanted to make any comments. Mr. McCarthy started by commending the departing Ms. Mahoney and that he really enjoyed working with her over the last five years.

Mr. McCarthy stated his budget is only up 1.7% and like the Greenwich Library, the Perrot Memorial Library was looking on how to best utilize the space they currently have to work with.

There was a short discussion on one budget request item, \$30,000 for Account #51460 (Professional Services – Dat/Word). It was quickly determined it was a classification error offset by a reciprocating decrease in a similar account.

- 5. Social Services Department** – The Department of Social Services (DSS) budget was presented by the Commissioner of Social Services, Alan Barry, who started out by stating the DSS mission. Dr. Barry told the Committee that the mission of his department is to enhance the quality of life of Greenwich residents by helping them meet basic needs, such as; food, shelter, personal safety, and health care. In addition, he offered that the DSS

strives to provide access to services that foster self-sufficiency and economic independence.

Dr. Barry said that the department works to achieve the aforementioned mission statement by helping clients avoid emergencies such as housing eviction and utility shut-offs. They assist with medical bills by helping with short-term Town financial assistance and applying for state and federal support programs. He also added that the department promotes collaborative community partnerships that help equip clients with education and employment skills to become more self-sufficient.

Dr. Barry told the Committee that the department is completing the first year of its renewed 3 year Strategic Plan with an emphasis on the following goals:

- Serve as a “bridge” linking clients to available community resources to support basic needs and assist in progressing towards self-sufficiency.
- Provide a mix of programs and services that are directly linked to client demographics as well as current and projected client service needs.
- Collaborate with community agencies to optimally deliver programs and services.
- Continue to enhance the Department’s organizational model to effectively fulfill its mission and achieve its goals in a cost-effective manner.
- Strive to be a leader in delivering social services.

Dr. Barry informed the Committee of staffing changes as follows:

- Under the Greenwich Youth Coordinator Program (GYCP), there was a .15 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) increase for a collaborative project with the Greenwich Land Trust and the Resource Foundation. Seven youth participants will work full-time in a 6-week intensive conservation program under the direction of the Greenwich Land Trust and salaries funded by the Resource Foundation. The DSS will be providing the supervisory position and van transportation.
- Homemaker Service: Increase in hours for a part-time Homemaker staff (.31 FTE increase). This is due to an increase in the number of Homemaker clients from 96 served in fiscal year 2011 to 126 clients in fiscal year 2013. The number of actual hours compared to budgeted hours was over budget by 554 hours.

Dr. Barry then told the Committee that the DSS was not happy with the current software system, Evolv. He stated that the DSS has been operating with the DeFran Evolv software system for 13 years as the management information system. Evolv gathers, analyzes and disseminates information concerning all aspects of the department’s activities. Dr. Barry added that the information, data and reports provided by Evolv help guide the decision making of the Departments’ Board and Administration and presents critical feedback to staff on their performance and progress working with clients. As time went by, the program was not keeping up with technology upgrades and the design was adapting more to a health care medical record information system. Dr. Barry reported that last year DeFran was acquired by another company, NetSmart and Evolv’s future is unclear. As a result, the DSS

Board hired a consultant to complete a comprehensive review of the Evolv program. The Consultant's conclusion was that Evolv is not a good fit for the DSS and recommended moving to another software application platform and investigate the use of a cloud system for support and maintenance. The Board approved the formation of a Management Information System (MIS) Committee to begin the process of investigating appropriate software systems and a funding request was submitted for a software system in the capital improvement budget.

Dr. Barry concluded his remarks by telling the Committee that there were two budgetary changes that affected the DSS budget, The first change was to move the Youth Coordinator position to the Town External Entities Account for \$27,000 and secondly, the Kids in Crisis TeenTalk Program was moved to the Town External Entities Account for \$9,000. He stated that with these changes the overall budget came in with a 1.9% increase with no other substantive changes.

At this point, it was noted that there was a contingent from the Transportation Association of Greenwich, Inc. (TAG) in the audience. Although not scheduled or invited to attend, the Committee allowed TAG representatives to make a short presentation.

- 6. TAG** - Mr. Boutelle opened by saying that the contribution request to TAG was up 54.5% or \$91,700 from the previous year's request of \$168,300. The budget was presented by Mr. Boutelle and Mr. Miller. They explained that TAG has experienced a significant change in its mix of passengers and accompanying revenues and expenses over the last 7 years. A large portion of the growth has been to support Greenwich residents who reside outside the Easy Access corridor. This has led to higher average trip costs and lower reimbursement rates from the addition of two additional programs that the Town of Greenwich sought to outsource.

They pointed out the over the past seven years TAG revenue has increased by 24.3% due mostly to a 34% increase in program fee revenue. During the same period, the Town of Greenwich support has grown by 10%. TAG's total costs have risen by 27% driven by a 64% increase in fuel costs, a 65% increase in repairs and maintenance on vehicles and a 25% increase in insurance costs.

Due to the unexpected visit from TAG representatives, the Committee members requested more detailed statistical information of which TAG representatives agreed to supply.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary

Marc V. Johnson, Chairman