

**TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
CAPITAL BUDGET REVIEW (except BOE) – FY14 BUDGET  
MINUTES  
Town Hall Meeting Room, 1st Floor – 9:00 A.M.  
Wednesday, February 20, 2013**

Present:

Committee: Joseph L. Pellegrino, William R. Finger, 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; Joseph Siciliano, Director of Parks And Recreation; Tom Greco, Manager, Business Services Operations; Peter Tesei, First Selectman; John Crary, Town Administrator; Drew Marzullo, Selectman; Joseph Roberto, DPW Highways Jeff Freidag, Superintendent, Marine and Facility Operations Division, Susan Snyder, Recreation Superintendent, Dustin Anderson, Administrative Manager, Office of the First Selectman, James Michel, DPW Chief Engineer, Richard Feminella, Waste Water Division Manager; Lauren Elliott, Assessor, Robert Shipman, Assistant Assessor; Mary Pepe, Director of Human Resources; Alison Graham, Employee Benefits Manager; Sue Rogers and Emily Sternberg, Representatives of the Junior League; Mark Kordick, Police Captain; Joan Sullivan, Director of Purchasing and Administrative Services; Allen Corry, Director of Parking Services, Bruce Spaman, Parks and Trees Division Superintendent and Tree Warden; Al Cava, Director of Labor Relations

Board: Michael Mason, Chairman, Mary Lee Kiernan, Sean Goldrick, Randall Huffman, Marc Johnson, Robert Brady

Mr. Pellegrino called the meeting to order at 9:03 A.M and welcomed everyone to the Capital Budget Review on the 2013–2014 Operating and Capital Budget.

**Department Speakers and Topics Covered**

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT – REVENUE AND FIXED CHARGES PRESENTATIONS** – The meeting began with Assessor Lauren Elliott and Robert Shipman, Assistant Assessor. Ms. Elliott distributed a document entitled “Number of New Residential Dwellings per Year and Related Grand List Annual Growth Statistics”. Ms. Elliott pointed out to the Committee that the Grand List was being impacted by a decreasing number of new residential dwellings. Mr. Johnson mentioned that in his experiences he feels there is a pent up demand for house sales and that recent statistics have been impacted by the recession and thinks it may turn around.

Mr. Pellegrino asked Ms. Elliott about the status of revaluation litigation and where we stand on those settlements. Ms. Elliott answered that we are almost current from those filed against the list year of 2010 with five left to settle.

The conversation then turned to the potential impact of the Governor's recent budget request regarding lost revenue on the Town of Greenwich from the potential phasing out of motor vehicle taxes assessed below \$20,000. Ms. Elliott and Mr. Shipman compiled statistics that indicated that the Town would lose approximately \$6,151,407 from lost motor vehicle taxes if the phase out was enacted for the budget year of 2013-2014. Ms. Elliott informed the Committee that she has already signed the Grand List and doesn't know how such a decision by the State of Connecticut would be implemented under such a scenario. She added that, if such legislation was enacted, it would probably take place for the fiscal year 2014-2015 and may be phased in. She reminded the Committee that this potential change only affects motor vehicles with an assessed value of under \$20,000.

At this point, Alison Graham, Employee Benefits Manager, with assistance from Mary Pepe, Director of Human Resources, gave a presentation on the Town of Greenwich budget for healthcare. Ms. Graham told the Committee that the Town is currently under a contract with Cigna that will expire on December 31, 2013 and distributed the Healthcare Budget for 2013-2014 Fiscal Year. Ms. Graham told the Committee that she was assisted by Roland Gieger, Budget Director, and Ovation Benefits in preparing the budget request. Ms. Graham stated that the budget request assumes a 20% increase for the period covering January 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014. The projected costs for healthcare covering the period of July 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013 are already known because the rates have been set, per the existing contract with Cigna.

When asked, Ms. Graham offered that she expects a series of one-year contracts with the new vendor because of the volatility in the healthcare markets due to a number of unknown factors. Ms. Graham informed the Committee that she expects higher annual increases because of the Town's utilization rates. Mr. Cray added that the Town is hurt by having a work force that is 4 to 5 years older than the average work force.

Mr. Pellegrino asked Ms. Graham if she feels that the employee contributions for healthcare are low. Mr. Graham, using her past experience working for the Town of Darien and conversations with the Town's consultant, said yes.

Mr. Mason stated that this is the single biggest line item in the budget and the Town needs options to address uncontrollable annual increases and the impending excise tax increases in year 2018 from the Health Care Affordability Act. He told Ms. Graham that the Town needs to look at buyout options and asked what the Town is doing to address this problem. Ms. Pepe responded that they are keenly aware of the issues surrounding future healthcare impacts on the Town. She added that they have impaneled a group to study such issues. Ms. Pepe said the group consists of Town employees and members from the BET, RTM and one member from the Retirement Board. In addition, Ms. Graham said that the Town has been very proactive by rolling out a series of wellness programs. There was a pilot program to Management and Confidential employees and several unions initially.

Ms. Graham distributed a document entitled "Calendar 2013 Town of Greenwich Enrollment". The document detailed employee enrollments by category. Ms. Graham explained its contents and noted that there has been a migration to Health Savings Account (HASA) plans.

Mr. Pellegrino asked how many years the Town has been in the HSA plans. Ms. Graham said it started out as a very small group but has become a much larger group in the last two years and currently has 1,377 enrollees.

Mr. Ramer asked about benchmarking with other towns and how we stand against other municipalities. Ms. Graham stated we are ahead of the curve relative to other municipalities and we are one of the first towns to start enrolling into HSA plans.

Mr. Finger asked if utilization figures were available from last year. Ms. Graham answered that the figures will be available next month for calendar year 2012.

Ms. Graham concluded by saying that they currently have a Request for Proposal out for brokerage services for the healthcare program.

**BYRAM POOL** - Emily Sternberg, President of the Junior League, and Susan Rogers appeared to speak to the Byram Pool Capital Project. Ms. Sternberg distributed a manual with photographs of different sites they visited that had municipal operating outdoor swimming pools. The sites visited were; Westport, CT, New Canaan, CT, Scarsdale, N.Y., Harrison, N.Y. and Bedford, N.Y. and a discussion ensued about their thoughts on visiting such sites.

Mr. Gieger informed the Committee that there was an initial appropriation for \$55,000 for the purpose of conducting surveys, preliminary engineering and preparing schematics for the proposed Byram Pool in April 2008. Mr. Gieger stated that \$14,330 was spent against this appropriation and \$40,670 in funding lapsed.

Mr. Gieger informed the Committee that there was another appropriation for \$100,000 for fiscal year 2011-2012 and \$35,601 had been spent with a balance of \$64,399 unspent. He said the appropriation was for preliminary design of the renovated Byram Pool. Mr. Pellegrino then stated that there is a game plan in place. He said with the approximately \$65,000 unspent and an appropriation for fiscal year 2013-2014 of \$200,000 the project can be moved through the approval process and asked if Mr. Siciliano and Ms. Siebert agree with that plan. Mr. Siciliano responded that they need to get a number of approvals starting with the State of Connecticut Department of Health and all of the appropriate Town approvals, but said it is doable. Ms. Siebert concurred and said we have enough to go through the approval process.

Mr. Pellegrino then asked Ms. Rogers and Ms. Sternberg if this answer was enough to start the fund raising process for the Junior League. They both said yes. Ms. Sternberg added that the Junior League's membership would be meeting March 6<sup>th</sup> to decide whether to approve \$20,000 to supplement Town monies for design, contingent upon the Town approving the \$200,000 budget request for the Byram Pool.

Mr. Finger questioned if we are appropriating \$200,000 to be supplemented by an additional \$20,000 from the Junior League or whether we are appropriating \$180,000 with the \$20,000 supplement. The question was not adequately answered at this time.

Mr. Johnson asked if there would be an incremental cost of hiring additional employees to supervise the pool. Mr. Siciliano answered that it would be supplemented with temporary salaries and not full-time employees.

Mr. Ramer asked about the issue of providing a diving well for the proposed Byram swimming pool. Mr. Siciliano said a diving well is not in the plans and an extended discussion ensued about not having diving boards in the plan design for the swimming pool and the general consensus was that it was not needed. Mr. Pellegrino asked Ms. Sternberg and Ms. Rogers if they felt it would be a problem to not have a diving board for the proposed pool. They both responded that they didn't think it would be a problem.

Mr. Crary informed the Committee that he had an extensive background in swimming pool management, especially at Scarsdale, NY, where he formerly was employed. He added that he thought the biggest challenge to this project is going to be parking availability. He said the Byram Park area with a marina, recreational area and ball fields will present a challenge with the addition of a larger pool than they currently have.

Ms. Kiernan asked if someone could provide the BET with a breakdown of the costs that amount to \$7.5 million. Ms. Siebert responded that Al Monelli already has that and she would forward the breakdown to the BET. Ms. Kiernan asked a second question about the Junior League fundraising efforts. Ms. Kiernan asked specifically if the fundraising was for the costs of the swimming pool only or all of the facilities. Ms. Sternberg said she wasn't sure and would get back to the BET.

The topic of having a diving well was revisited with a comment from Mr. Johnson that reminded everyone that there are a number of pools already in town and mentioned the YWCA and YMCA as having them.

Mr. Goldrick commented that this is a municipal pool and the Town should take the lead on this project and appreciated the support the Junior League was lending. However, Mr. Goldrick stated that the Town should not scrimp on this project and get it right the first time. Otherwise, the Town will be spending a lot more money to get it right the second time around.

In response to a comment by Mr. Goldrick that admission fees are charged for use of the public pool in New Canaan Mr. Finger asked about financial support for the operating of the swimming pool. Mr. Finger asked if there would be admission fees. Mr. Crary advised that in Scarsdale, New York the pool is subsidized with an annual \$400 to \$500 membership fee. A number of BET members expressed concerns about charging additional fees above the regular beach card fee. Mr. Siciliano added that if the Town decides to charge too much in fees for this program, it will defeat the purpose of having a community pool. Mr. Finger stated that he did not want to see the Town charging add-on fees for the use of this pool.

Ms. Tarkington requested additional information to be provided; such as operating costs and the projected construction costs for each phase of the project. She commented that this information had been requested in discussions one year ago also.

## **GENERAL FUND**

- **Radio System – Status of Consultants** – Mr. Pellegrino asked about the status of the Trunked Radio System Replacement Capital Project for \$2,500,000. Mr. Crary responded by saying that they have issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) that resulted in the selection of a vendor, Trott Communications. Unfortunately, Mr. Crary told the Committee that the contract is held up in the Purchasing Department. Mr. Pellegrino asked about why the request for \$2.5 million. Captain Kordick said he didn't know where that figure came from, since they haven't hired a consultant yet. Captain Kordick told the Committee that they need a consultant to do a needs analysis and then develop the RFP before arriving at a calculated cost for the project.

Mr. Pellegrino asked if the \$2.5 million request was reasonable. Mr. Crary answered that the original request was for \$5 million but reduced the figure to get the total Capital Improvement Project (CIP) request down to an acceptable budgetary level. Mr. Crary did add that he felt that \$2.5 million for next year is doable. Mr. Pellegrino asked if we could

reduce the figure by putting it into the Capital Non-Recurring Fund and appropriate the money when we know the amount to appropriate. Mr. Cray reminded the Committee that they can't go out to bid without an appropriation in place. Mr. Pellegrino asked if this project could be bonded over a longer length of time. Mr. Mynarski responded and said it could, but would call for a change in policy between the BET and Representative Town Meeting to change from five year bonding to a longer bonding period.

As the discussion on the Radio System was concluding, Mr. Pellegrino asked Captain Kordick if having 9 policeman assigned to dive teams was the optimum number. Captain Kordick explained that it is necessary to have two dive teams being on call with a requirement for a two person backup to the two divers in the water as a matter of safety. In addition, Captain Kordick explained that the divers train every other Tuesday and they are mostly assigned to the Police Marine Unit, being on call in addition to their regular duties. It was mentioned that the Sound Beach Volunteers have 11 fully trained divers that responded to about five or six incidents over the last five years. Captain Kordick reminded the Committee that the Police Divers respond differently than the Fire Volunteers. They not only respond to recovering bodies in the waters, but also collecting evidentiary materials.

- **Document Imaging: Discussion** – Mr. Pellegrino asked about the status of the Document Imaging Capital Project for \$186,000. Ms. Sullivan responded first by saying phase one was completed in 2011. Ms. Sullivan explained the reason for the request. She said the amount being requested will cover the cost for Town departments' back file conversions. Mr. Cray added that the indexing portion of the project needs to be completed. Mr. Pellegrino asked about end-user satisfaction. Ms. Sullivan responded that feedback indicated that the users are generally happy and the conversion is working. Mr. Pellegrino asked about the percentage of completion. Ms. Sullivan answered that about 50% of the users have been converted, using the Finance Department, Purchasing and Nathaniel Witherell as examples.

Mr. Pellegrino asked if the \$186,000 request would complete the project. Ms. Sullivan said no, this will not complete the project. Mr. Pellegrino and Mr. Finger both asked about how many additional funds would be required to complete the project. Mr. Cray and Ms. Sullivan could not quantify the total remaining costs needed to complete the project.

- **Replacement Telephone System for Sound Beach Fire House; Discussion** - Mr. Pellegrino asked about the cost of \$30,000 for this project. Ms. Sullivan responded by saying the cost includes installation of all equipment, programming and training.

## **PARKING SERVICES**

- **Plaza Gate & Multi-Space Pay Stations** – Mr. Pellegrino asked Mr. Corry, Parking Services Director to explain the need for a gating system at the Greenwich Plaza Parking Garage. Mr. Corry started by saying that this is part of a four year security upgrade plan that previously added CCTV cameras and lighting upgrades. He added that the gates will eliminate the speeding taxis through the garage and access to sit to wait until they call for fares. The system will also prevent non-permit holders from accessing the garage and parking enforcement.

Ms. Tarkington asked about existing cameras and whether they could be monitored provided by the Ashforth Company, the use of speed bumps whether he was evaluating and putting in a gate at the Town Hall Garage. Mr. Corry responded by saying that cameras will not stop speeders, they don't have speed bumps in the Plaza Garage and yes, they are considering putting up a gate at the Town Hall Garage.

Mr. Finger asked Mr. Corry if it would be worthwhile to approach the owner of the taxi company to complain about the speeding taxis and generally expressed his concern about this appropriation without exploring other remedial options. Mr. Ramer concurred with Mr. Finger's non-support for this expenditure.

At the conclusion, Mr. Mason asked Mr. Corry if he could supply the BET with Homeland Security literature on parking garage safety and funding possibilities.

At this point, the discussions were directed toward the Parking Multi-Space Pay on Foot Station Capital Project for \$105,000. Mr. Pellegrino asked Mr. Corry to explain the request. Mr. Corry stated that they currently have 7 outdated stations at the Island Beach and Horseneck Lots that are not user-friendly that need replacing. He added that the plan would be to move these 7 pay stations to sites adjacent to Greenwich Avenue. They would replace parking meters. Mr. Finger expressed a concern with the current pay stations in that they are too difficult to understand to operate, especially if someone was in a hurry to catch a train. He did not favor moving outdated pay stations from one point in town to another. Mr. Pellegrino asked about Luke Pay Stations displayed in the budgetary request backup and whether they were the best product available. Mr. Corry responded that they can make that determination through the RFP process. Mr. Corry was asked about putting pay stations on Greenwich Avenue and responded that feedback he gets indicates that parking meter payers generally like paying at their parking site and would not prefer walking to a pay station.

Mr. Ramer asked how much the new machines would cost and if there is a discount available. Mr. Corry answered that the machines should cost about \$15,000 each and they would probably get a 10% discount on the old pay stations, if traded in.

Mr. Pellegrino concluded this session with Mr. Corry by telling him to rethink his position on the request for gates at the Plaza Garage. Mr. Pellegrino advised Mr. Corry that he doesn't think it has the support to be accepted by the BET members.

The Budget Committee recessed for lunch at 12:30 P.M. and reconvened at 12:45 P.M.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

- **Traffic Signal Software: Information Technology Role** – Mr. Pellegrino asked if the Traffic Signal Software Upgrade for \$130,000 is supported by the Town's Information Technology Department. Mr. Roberto said no. Mr. Roberto explained that they want to replace the current system in place, which is a DOS-based system that has been obsolete since the early 1990's. He added that the upgrade to the software would enable the Highway Division to configure and monitor the Town's traffic signal system from a single location, a method more in line with today's technology.
- **Board of Education Parking Lots** – Mr. Pellegrino asked about the request of \$300,000 for Board of Education Parking Lots and Sidewalk Maintenance Program and if it was new. Ms. Siebert stated it was not new, but they decided to make it programmatic. Ms. Siebert told the Committee that in 2011-2012, the Highway Division, with input from the Board of Education conducted a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) rating and cost estimation to create a programmed schedule to repave BOE lots. Ms. Siebert added that three lots have been completed; North Mianus School, New Lebanon School and the Havemeyer lot. This request is to pave the Western Middle School lot.

- **Central Fire Station – Public Safety Complex** – The Committee wanted to discuss the current status of the Central Fire Station project. Ms. Siebert reported that design plans were 75% complete and they should be completed by May 2013.
- **Emergency Generator Upgrade** - Mr. Pellegrino asked if the request for \$125,000 should still be included in the budgetary request for fiscal year 2013-2014. Ms. Siebert responded that with the recent additional appropriation for more generators in the current year, this item should be deleted.
- **Grease Trap Program** - This request is for the replacement of grease traps in Town owned commercial kitchens. Ms. Tarkington asked if the Senior Center is included. Ms. Tarkington was told no, and she responded by saying they should be included.
- **Heating System Upgrade – Old Greenwich Civic Center** - Mr. Pellegrino asked the status of the heating system and if there is a placeholder to renovate the building. Ms. Siebert said that they are proposing to replace the boiler, condensate tank and heat exchanger with new equipment, along with its interconnecting piping. She also said the radiant floor heating system and window convectors along with the distribution piping at the front of the building will also be replaced. Regarding the renovation of the Civic Center, Ms. Siebert said there is \$12 million as a place holder in fiscal year 2020-2021. Ms. Siebert also said that Mr. Alan Monelli is projecting there will be a new hot water system request two years from now for \$650,000.
- **Department of Public Works Bridge Program** – Mr. Pellegrino asked Public Works officials what they accomplished for fiscal year 2012-2013, relative to the Town bridges. Mr. Thompson referred the Budget Committee to page 8 of the Infrastructure Report, Town of Greenwich, Department of Public Works, Bridge Program FY 13-14. Page 8 listed both projects completed or under construction for FY 2012-2013 and projects in design (Grant Funding Approved) for FY 2012-2013.
- **Asphalt Paving Program** – Mr. Pellegrino noted that the paving program had a consistent annual request of \$2.5 million and asked if there should be an escalator built into the program. Mr. Roberto said it would be a good idea if the Town could afford it. Mr. Finger asked if it was possible for the paving program to do \$5 million in paving per year. Mr. Roberto said that it could reach that level if they built the annual amount up incrementally each year. In response to a question from Mr. Goldrick, Mr. Roberto stated that the program was reduced from \$3 million per year about 10 years ago. Ms. Siebert added that with less money the conditions of the road have not really deteriorated. Mr. Ramer asked Mr. Roberto what he thought the right level of annual funding would be for the paving program. Mr. Roberto answered that he felt the right number today should be \$3.5 million building it up to a point of spending \$5 million per year.
- **Sewers** - Mr. Pellegrino asked about the status of the Old Greenwich Common Force Main Improvements Program and the status of the sewer system overall. Mr. Feminella said he is happy to report that they are meeting the requirements of the Consent Decree and that everything is going well overall. Ms. Siebert did point out that they do have challenges in the area of maintaining the Pump Stations, in light of damages sustained from Hurricane Sandy. Ms. Tarkington had questions about charges to the Sewer Maintenance Fund and stated that we need to rethink what we charge to the Sewer Maintenance Fund.

**LABOR RELATIONS** – On a motion made by Mr. Finger, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Committee voted 4 to 0 to go into Executive Session at 2:03 P.M. to discuss the role of the BET in relation to Town Labor Relation issues. Those in attendance were: BET Members Pellegrino, Tarkington, Finger, Ramer, Goldrick, Huffman, Brady, Chairman Mason and Kiernan. In addition, those attending were Messrs.' Mynarski, Gieger, Cava and First Selectman Tesei.

On a motion made by Mr. Finger, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, The Committee voted 4 to 0 to come out of Executive Session at 3:10 P.M.

No further discussion was held relative to Labor Relations issues.

**PARKS AND RECREATION** – At the start of the session, Mr. Siciliano took the time to introduce Ms. Susan Snyder to the BET Budget Committee and others in attendance. Ms. Snyder is a recently hired Superintendent of Recreation.

- **Christiano Park Tennis Court** – Mr. Greco started the discussions on the Christiano Park Tennis Court renovation. Mr. Greco distributed a statistical compilation of tennis utilization over the last three years to support the fact that interest in tennis activities is consistent and not waning. Mr. Siciliano told the Committee that he had met with the Chickahominy Neighborhood Association and one of their concerns was maintaining the Christiano Parks Tennis Court. Their concerns centered on the fact that the tennis court had fallen into a state of disrepair. Mr. Siciliano concurred with the Association's concerns and submitted the request for \$82,000 to repair the courts.

Mr. Ramer asked how many tennis courts are in Town. Mr. Siciliano answered there are 36 tennis courts in town. He said there are 17 courts at Town schools and 19 courts in Town parks. Mr. Greco added that the Old Greenwich Recreational Community Center (OGRCC) group was the biggest renter of the courts each year.

- **Trees At Risk Program** – Mr. Spaman gave the Committee an overview on the Trees at Risk Program. Mr. Spaman stated that the original program was a three year program increased to a four year program. He told the Committee that a consultant was hired in 2006 in identify trees that are unhealthy or at risk of fallen down. The consultant reviewed an inventory of 8,000 trees that resulted in identifying 741 trees that were at risk. Mr. Spaman said that the request for \$325,000 is for the third year of the program and so far 364 of the 761 identified trees at risk have been removed to date.

Mr. Spaman noted that \$493,000 had been appropriated in the first two years of the program and \$462,654 had been spent to date. Mr. Ramer noticed that, of that total, \$137,186 had been spent on the Greenwich Police Department Blue Payroll to ensure safety at the various road sites where trees were being removed. He questioned whether that amount could be reduced by using non-police flaggers. Mr. Siciliano told him there was nothing that could be done to alleviate the problem. Mr. Siciliano told the Committee that the Police contract ensures them the rights to these jobs and they have had no success with the Police Department in the past to share these duties with certified flaggers.

Mr. Goldrick asked Mr. Spaman about replanting of damaged trees at Binney Park. Mr. Spaman said they work with the Tree Conservancy and there is a plan to replant a number of trees in the future.



**Fixed Charges Presentation** - The Fixed Charges Presentation was originally scheduled for 9 A.M. to 10 A.M. Time constraints preempted the presentation until this time. The fixed charges review was presented by Mr. Mynarski. Mr. Mynarski methodically went through the various fixed charges presented on pages 139 through page 147 in the First Selectman's Budget for Fiscal Year July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014. During the presentation there were only two items that prompted an extended discussion.

The first item was the budgeted item of \$150,000 for Police Department personnel's use and payment of compensatory time. The Committee expressed frustration that the promises made by the Police Department to reduce the compensatory time liability were not being met. As a result, there was a suggested proposal to cut the item out of the budget.

The second item was the amount budgeted for Non Public Schools Costs. It was brought to the attention of the BET that there was previously 1.7 positions budgeted for Private School Nurses. That amount was increased by two and this also resulted in a suggested proposal to cut back to the original 1.7 positions.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joseph L. Pellegrino, Chairman

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Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL