

TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Cone Meeting Room
Tuesday May 9, 2006

Present:

Committee:

Stephen Walko, Chairman; Edward Krumeich, Michael Mason, Larry Simon

Staff:

Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Ed Gomeau, Town Administrator; Dr. Susan Wallerstein, Board of Education; Lloyd Hubbs, Robert Kalm, Joseph Roberto, Department of Public Works;

Board:

Nancy Barton, Jim Himes, Arthur Norton, William Finger, Alma Rutgers, Leslie Tarkington, Peter Tesei

Ex Officio Board Member: James Lash, First Selectman

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 P.M.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Simon, seconded by Mr. Krumeich, the ED-1 application was taken out of order on the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

ED-1 BOARD OF EDUCATION-Accept and Approval to Use-\$27,500

Request for approval to use:

\$19,000	to	E-03861-50960	Extraordinary Items
\$ 8,500	to	E- 0386-50960	Extraordinary Items
\$27,500	from		Grant

The Federal government has made funding available through State Departments of Education to reimburse public and non-public schools and districts for costs associated with educating students displaced and relocated due to Hurricane Katrina. Non-public schools are required to apply for funding through the local public school district. The Convent of the Sacred Heart has been approved for reimbursement in the amount of \$19,000 for thirteen students. Greenwich public schools have been approved for reimbursement in the amount of \$8,500 for four students, one of whom has special needs.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

PW-1 DPW-Additional Appropriation- \$375,000

Request for additional appropriation:

\$190,000	to	A-312-51100	Overtime Services
\$ 35,000	to	A-312-52300	Hired Equipment
\$150,000	to	A-312-53750	Materials
\$375,000	from		Contingency

This request is for an additional appropriation of \$375,000 to pay for costs associated with Highway operations. Several different issues such as Snow and Ice Control, Asphalt Paving, Teamster's Retroactive pay, Town-wide clean up of debris due to severe wind storms, Board of Education Infrastructure maintenance and estimated projection for overtime to the end of the fiscal year, have impacted Highway's operating budget for overtime.

In FY2005-06 the Teamster's increase in base salary was budgeted for, but not the increase resulting from additional overtime pay.

In response to a question from Mr. Walko as to how overtime is budgeted for DPW, Mr. Roberto responded that this is an unpredictable amount, and certain events such as a sudden storm, cannot be anticipated. Current year budget amounts are determined based on prior year(s) activity, and hours worked. The FY 2006-07 is increased within budget guidelines of approximately a 3% increase. If contractual costs increase by more than that 3%, the hours allocated to spend on overtime are decreased.

Mr. Walko expressed his concern that programs might not be completed. Mr. Roberto stated that he completes all of his programs. Mr. Walko suggested that several months from now, Mr. Roberto look into how overtime amounts are allocated in terms of hours and then determine the resulting cost. This will result in the costs required to complete a project as opposed to following the guidelines. This may be the only way to determine if projects can be completed and if there is an impact on operating costs.

For FY 2006-07, approximately \$18,000 has been allocated for asphalt paving in overtime. Mr. Walko asked if this amount is realistic for paving overtime, and Mr. Roberto stated that he would have to watch the numbers more closely.

Mr. Simon noted that the program should be designed to fit the needs of the DPW.

Mr. Mason pointed out that a storm could have a dramatically different effect depending on when it occurs. A storm event that occurs on a weekday afternoon will have less of a financial impact than one that occurs on a holiday, or a weekend. Mr. Roberto said that average records for the previous three years are examined. The average accumulation is looked at as well as actual cost per inch.

There is approximately \$97,000 budgeted for labor costs of snow and ice removal for the Board of Education.

Due to the limited construction season when repairing BOE infrastructure, the Highway Division had to expend \$20,000 to have summer repairs completed before the opening of school.

In response to a question from Mr. Walko, Mr. Roberto responded that the \$20,000 is a result of doing the mechanical sweeping, catch basin cleaning and fixing broken panels. This is done on an overtime basis (weekends) due to roadwork and other activities taking place during regular business hours. **(This is not the same \$20,000) I will clarify for final draft-vaz**

Mr. Simon noted that projects can be better coordinated to be done within budget. Mr. Roberto stated that requests from the BOE are not received until June. With the exception of a project on a capital level, Mr. Roberto does not at this time have a list of projects for this summer.

Mr. Krumeich questioned whether this reflected an increase in the scope of work that was requested and not budgeted for, or if it is a result of the way the work was planned to be done, on weekends and during evening hours.

M. Simon pointed out that there has to be better coordination between the projects that need to be done, the resources available and the budget required.

For the five remaining payrolls in the fiscal year, The Highway Division projects an estimate of \$62,000 in overtime will be needed, bringing the total for overtime salary costs to \$190,000. When this salary projection was made, it was based on eight remaining payrolls, and approximately \$6,500 on a bi-weekly basis, overtime only. A salary projection done today, using a figure of \$6,200 had a projected shortfall of \$206,000.

Mr. Roberto stated that crews need to go out on an overtime basis to deal with unforeseen situations such as debris and fluid cleanup resulting from a motor vehicle accident.

Another contributor is overtime for the Highway Operations Manager, the Program Manager and the Superintendent are eligible for overtime during emergency call out situations. Previously, LIUNA employees were paid straight time during emergency call outs.

Snow and Ice Control has also cut into the sand and salt stock. November 2005 was the start of the snow season, and there was approximately \$427,000 in salt and sand inventory. This winter \$267,000 was used, leaving \$160,000 in inventory. At this year's prices, it is estimated to cost \$256,010 to restock inventory. A \$150,000 appropriation is requested to cover this cost which will allow DPW to restock the maximum amount for salt and sand and still have \$99,275 left in the 2006-07 budget for interim replenishment if necessary.

Mr. Gomeau commented that some years all of the materials are used, and some years only half. There is no average amount used. In response to a question from Mr. Walko as to why money is appropriated now as opposed to needing it next year, both Mr. Lash and Mr. Gomeau said that if you wait until you need the materials to buy them, it is already too late. They are either in short supply or sold at a very high price.

Mr. Walko suggested that the Highway Division set a policy, and asked that more information be provided about inventory management for sand and salt.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a non-routine application.

PW-2 DPW-Transfer- \$50,000

Request for transfer:

\$50,000	to	A-351-51010	Regular Salaries
\$50,000	from		Transfer

This request is for the transfer of funds in the amount of \$50,000 from DPW Administration to DPW Building Inspection. These funds are due to a shortfall in our salary lines. The shortfall was caused by 1) increased use of temporary inspectors and overtime for full time inspectors in an effort to reduce response time for requests for service, 2) temporary clerical staff and overtime for full time clerical staff to manage the workload created by a vacant Administrative Staff Assistant II position, and 3) a salary increase for the temporary inspectors arising from the need to attract candidates and to keep the Town competitive with neighboring towns.

The availability of funds in DPW Administration is due to the vacancy of the Administrative Coordinator position.

In response to a question from Mr. Walko about gauging whether we have sufficient staff in the Zoning Inspection area, Mr. Gomeau said that there are weekly statistics of inspections completed based on those requested. As of May 8, 2006 the delay times were as follows: for building inspections, 3 days; electrical inspections, 10 days; and plumbing/HVAC inspections, 10 days. Efforts to improve delay times include consolidation of some inspections.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

PW-3 DPW-Additional Appropriation- \$159,000

Request for additional appropriation:

\$159,000	to	A-321-52510	Waste Removal Services
\$159,000	from		Contingency

This request is for an additional appropriation to pay for the towns estimated waste removal services through June 30, 2005. A projected shortfall in the amount of the request was caused by higher than anticipated MSW tonnage and higher than anticipated Organics tonnage due to the severe wind storms experienced earlier in the year.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

PW-4 DPW-Additional Appropriation- \$163,500

Request for additional appropriation:

\$163,500	to	A-345-52220	Electrical Services
\$163,500	from		Contingency

This request is for funds to pay for the higher than anticipated utility costs for town buildings through June 30, 2006.

Last year saw a 22.5% increase in electric rates. This increase was not anticipated when the FY 2005-06 budget was prepared. \$500,500 had been expended as of March 30, 2006 out of a total budgeted amount of \$587,000. \$250,000 is projected to be spent through June 30, 2006. The resulting variance of \$163,500 is the requested amount of the appropriation.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion by Mr. Simon, seconded by Mr. Krumeich, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the April 11, 2006 Regular Budget Committee Meeting.

Draft Policy for Cost of Living Adjustment for Pension

Mr. Walko had distributed the draft policy for review and revisions. This item will be moved to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for a first reading.

2006-2007 Contingency and Mill Rates for the General, Sewer Maintenance and Sewer Improvement Funds

The Committee agreed to a reserve for contingency of \$7.8 million. Mr. Simon recommended a General Fund mill rate of 7.50. Because Mr. Gieger did not have the Grand List information for the sewer district, the Budget Committee was unable to recommend a mill rate for either the Sewer Maintenance or Sewer Improvement Fund. Mr. Gieger will supply this information prior to the BET meeting on May 15, 2006. The Budget Committee agreed to a Special meeting at 6:45 P.M. on Monday May 15, 2006 to recommend the Sewer Mill rates to the full BET.

Discussion of 2006-2007 subjects to release

Mr. Walko explained that he was approached by the Chairman of Nathaniel Witherell to discuss their subject to release. The Board of TNW had requested that the subject to release in the 2006-07 budget be retracted. Mr. Walko indicated that a retraction was not planned, and that the Budget Committee or the BET may not have the authority to do that. He was asked to present this to the Budget Committee, and will discuss this with the Chairman of the BET. Because the RTM has already voted on the budget, with conditions, a retraction may not be possible at all. Mr. Lash observed that the Budget Committee members should consider spending more time communicating with TNW, prior to meeting with them as the Budget Committee. Ms. Rutgers agreed, saying that she and Ms. Tarkington had made many efforts to communicate with TNW, but that the TNW Board has been less than receptive.

There being no further business before the committee, upon a motion by Mr. Simon, seconded by Mr. Mason, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Zebrowski, Recording Secretary

Stephen G. Walko, Chairman