



MINUTES of the Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 in a hybrid virtual webinar format, Greenwich, CT.

Chair Michael S. Mason called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M., after which the members pledged allegiance to the flag.

Board members in attendance:

Michael S. Mason, Chairman
Karen Fassuliotis, Vice Chairman
William Drake, Clerk
Andreas Duus III
Laura Erickson
Debra Hess
Miriam Kreuzer
Elizabeth K. Krumeich
Leslie Moriarty
Jeffrey S. Ramer
Leslie L. Tarkington
David Weisbrod

Staff: Daniel Carlsen, Senior Management Analyst, Office of the First Selectman (OFS); Angela Gencarelli, Ass't Budget & Systems Manager, Finance Department (Dept); Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems, Finance Dept; James Heavey, Chief, Police Dept; Barbara Heins, Executive Assistant, OFS; Brian Koczak, Ass't Chief, Fire Dept; Jenny Larkin, Information Technology (IT) Dept; Joseph McHugh, Chief, Fire Dept; James Michel, Deputy Commissioner, Dept of Public Works; Peter My-narski, Comptroller

BOE/GPS Peter Bernstein, Chairman, Board of Education (BOE); Dr. Toni Jones, Superintendent, Greenwich Public Schools (GPS); Sean O'Keefe, Chief Operating Officer

Selectmen: Jill K. Oberlander, Select-person

Other: Ken Borsuk, Reporter, *Greenwich Time*; Richard Kaufman, Reporter, *Greenwich Sentinel*; Laurence Simon, Chair, The Nathaniel Witherell Board of Directors; Horst Tebbe, GCTV: The Webinar attendee audience ranged between 60 to 85 people during the length of the meeting

Mr. Mason indicated that today's meeting is a continuation of the April 1, 2021 BET Decision Day meeting. He stated what had been accomplished: departmental budgets through external entities, libraries, Parks and Recreation, and what would take place on this continuation BET Decision Day agenda beginning with Capital. He noted that during the first part of BET Decision Day, the Board had reduced expenses by \$2,885,000 and added new revenue of \$87,500. At the conclusion of Capital, stand-alone funds, e.g., School Lunch and Parking Funds, maintenance or improvements, and Resolutions will be discussed. Thereafter, the Capital Tax Levy, borrowings, the means of financing the Budget and then a vote on the FY22 Budget will conclude the meeting.

PROPOSED FY22 BUDGET

CAPITAL BUDGET General Government

312-22323 DPW-Engineering Brookside/Glenville Rd. Intersection Improvements Condition in the amount of \$100,000

Ms. Erickson made a motion to reconsider the previous item, seconded by Mr. Ramer in order to vote on the proposed language of the amendment. Motion to reconsider passed 12-0.

- Motion to Amend by adding a condition: Mr. Weisbrod made a motion, seconded by Ms. Fassuliotis: Release of funds subject to DPW providing detailed and updated project rationale and budget to the satisfaction of the BET and a report by DPW to the BET evidencing the department's engagement and dialogue with the community, any feedback received, and a discussion of changes made to the project, if any, by DPW as a result of that dialogue and feedback. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

DPW- Streets & Bridges Greenwich Ave. Intersection Improvements (\$500,000)

Reason: Proposed detailed intersection improvement projects on Greenwich Avenue at intersections have not been provided. Impact on the taxable value of Avenue, reduction of parking spaces and other considerations should be made with public input including abutting property owners, residential dwellers, retail tenants (including restaurants) and public users of central Greenwich especially those located within the central Greenwich corridor.

- **Motion:** Ms. Tarkington made a motion, seconded by Ms. Fassuliotis, to delete the project until detailed plans, budget and public dialogue has taken place. The Board voted 3-9-0. (Opposed: Drake, Erickson, Hess, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Mason, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion failed.

DPW- Streets and Bridges Greenwich Avenue Intersection Improvements \$500,000, condition

- **Motion:** Ms. Tarkington made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hess, to condition the \$500,000 subject to release by the BET upon receipt and acceptance of a detailed plan for proposed intersection projects and confirmation by DPW of outreach to the community including residents and street retail of the proposed plan. The Board voted 1-8-3. (Opposed: Drake, Erickson, Hess, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer,

Weisbrod) (Abstain: Fassuliotis, Mason, Tarkington) Motion failed.

DPW– Streets and Bridges Greenwich Avenue Intersection Improvements: \$500,000, condition

Reason: Greenwich Avenue and the surrounding area is of major importance to the Town. In the spring of 2021, the Town embarked on a revamp of the Elm St. intersection. DPW would like to learn and leverage from the Elm St. project to expand to other prospective intersection improvements which may include Putnam Ave, Amogerone Crossway, Lewis St., Bruce Place, Fawcett Place/Grigg Street and Railroad Ave. to address safety concerns and improve overall aesthetics. Major intersection intersections are budgeted at approximately \$200K and this condition would cover two intersection upgrade projects

It is understood that the Arch St./Havemeyer intersection falls outside the scope of this capital item.

- Ms. Erickson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to condition the \$500,000: Subject to BET review and approval of 1) conceptual plans and an itemized budget for intersection improvements and 2) DPW will provide a written report on community engagement, including public hearings and other outreach efforts to include abutting property owners, residential dwellers, retail tenants (including restaurants) and public users of central Greenwich especially those located within the central Greenwich corridor area. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

DPW - Streets and Bridges – CMAQ Program \$1,400,000

Reason: To condition the Glenville Road Corridor Improvements project for funds in excess of the CMAQ reimbursable grant of \$2 million, of which \$1,600,000 remains available, for information that supports the cost over-run and/or resizing of the Glenville Road Corridor Improvements to the amount of the CMAQ reimbursement grant.

- **Motion:** Ms. Tarkington made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duus, to condition the release by the BET of \$1.4 million upon 1) Explanation of DPW as to the details of the project costs both at the time of the original approval and currently, and 2) a budget for the specific items DPW plans to implement during construction and 3) BET approval of the budget proposed. The Board voted 5-7-0. (Opposed: Drake, Erickson, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion failed

DPW – Waste Disposal Holly Hill Resource Recovery Facility (\$350,000)

Reason: The HHRRF plans continue to adapt to resident and RTM changing disposal initiatives. Revenue streams and differentiation of disposables are unstable based on lobbying and constituency groups. Therefore, plans for Holly Hill are premature. In addition, total outsourcing of waste disposal should be evaluated.

- **Motion:** Mr. Mason made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to delete the \$350,000 until further operational plans can be evaluated. The Board voted 7-6-0. (Opposed: Erickson, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion passed.

DPW Building Construction & Maintenance Eastern Greenwich Civic Center \$18,677,000

Reason: After confirmation of 100% completed construction drawings and confirmation of required P3 funding to permit Eastern Greenwich Civic Center to proceed with demolition of the existing facility and construction of the new EGCC.

- **Motion:** Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mason, to condition subject to release by the BET upon review and acceptance of substantial Public Private Partnership(s) donation agreement(s) to include funding amount, funding timeline, and conditions; and an operations plan including potential tenants and user fee schedules; and release of funds upon review and acceptance of final bids including contingencies. The Board voted 7-6-0. (Opposed: Erickson, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion carried.

DPW Building Construction & Maintenance Hamill Skating Rink \$950,000 condition

Reason: After a two-step RFQ-RFP process, SLAM Collaborative has been awarded the design contract and work is underway. 30% of the design funding has been appropriated and released for the replacement of the Hamill Skating Rink. The capital appropriation of \$950,000 will fund the remaining 70% of architectural design, municipal improvement and land use approvals in FY22.

Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mason, to condition this item: Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon Municipal Improvement and Preliminary Site Plan Approval by the Planning & Zoning Commission, these approvals to be confirmed after the relevant appeals periods. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Fleet Department 380-912 22345 DPW Loader (\$420,000)

Reason: Defer new DPW Loader as current model is serviceable.

- **Motion:** Mr. Duus made a motion, seconded by Ms. Fassuliotis, to delete the DPW Loader from the Capital budget. The Board voted 7-6-0. (Opposed: Erickson, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion carried.

Fleet Department 380-912 206 22345 Fire Department Rescue Pumper (\$850,000)

Reason: Pumper acquisition to be deferred pending release of Fire Department strategic plan with detail for management operations, and stations, and equipment to permit proper equipment to execute the strategic plan.

- **Motion:** Mr. Mason made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to defer the \$850,000 acquisition of the Fire Rescue Pumper for one year while ongoing dialogue about the studies continues. The Board voted 7-6-0. (Opposed: Erickson, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion carried.

External Entity – Contribution GEMS Station #4 - \$1,410,000

Reason: BET Budget Committee transferred GEMS Station #4 construction and attached garage to DPW Building Construction & Maintenance. This reverses the transfer and retains GEMS Station #4 within the Town Department as an External Entity project with Town purchasing RFP and invoice payments approved by the Town Administrator, and construction oversight by DPW Building Construction & Maintenance as documented in an agreement. To condition the application for the GEMS Board agreed public private partnership contribution to the construction of GEMS Station #4 of \$200,000. GEMS will pay for furniture, fixture, and equipment ("FF&E") costs of \$330,000.

- **Motion:** Ms. Tarkington made a motion, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to condition the subject to release by the BET upon confirmation of the receipt of \$200,000 from GEMS. The Board voted 11-1-0. (Opposed: Ramer) Motion carried.

Schools- Central Middle School Expansion/Renovation Feasibility Study (\$102,000)

Reason: To determine need for renovation to or replacement of the Central Middle School facility

- **Motion:** Mr. Mason made a motion, seconded by Mr. Drake, to delete or defer \$102,000 for a feasibility study of Central Middle School in order that the BOE can prioritize its capital projects. The Board voted 7-6-0. (Opposed: Erickson, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion passed.

Schools- Board of Education – HVAC (\$7,000,000)

Reason: Unbundling HVAC Accounts to facilitate cost tracking and increase transparency in the capital accounts. HVAC can be bid bundled by vendor but must institute separate project accounting by school as noted in accounts to be assigned.

- **Motion:** Mr. Mason made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to unbundle the purchase of HVAC equipment for three schools plus several additional various BOE/GPS locations. The Board voted 7-5-0. (Opposed: Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod) Motion carried.

Schools- Board of Education – HVAC (\$725,000)

- **Motion:** Ms. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to add contingency amounts for each of the four HVAC projects. The Board voted 6-6-0. (Opposed: Duus, Drake, Fassuliotis, Hess, Mason, Tarkington). Motion failed.

Schools - Julian Curtiss School Expansion/Renovation (\$1,500,000)

Reason: To provide \$200,000 funding for the BOE to have resources to revise the Education Specifications for the Julian Curtis Elementary School. The current Educational Specifications specifically adds/increases expanded space and

programming increasing the project cost estimates. The BET expects to consider a subsequent appropriation for completion of construction documents for the revised Educational Specification.

- **Motion:** Mr. Mason made a motion, seconded by Mr. Drake, to reduce \$1.5 million until further dialogue with the BOE on the Education Specification for Julian Curtiss Elementary School. This leaves an appropriation of \$200,000. The Board voted 7-6-0. (Opposed: Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer, Weisbrod, Erickson). Motion carried.

Parks & Recreation Field Improvements

Reason: The study of the Town's fields was recently completed, which identifies the current condition of each field and ideas for improving their playability, which is an important goal for many residents. The information in the study, which may require some additional work, is currently being reviewed by Parks & Recreation Department and the Parks & Recreation Board and other interested parties. This requests \$150,000 to begin implementation of some of the recommendations once the specific project or projects are selected. The condition is being proposed to request information on the study and the specific use of the funds prior to their release.

- **Motion:** Ms. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Ms. Kreuzer, to condition the release of funds upon Parks & Recreation presentation of the key findings of the study and next steps towards development of a Field master plan, and that the BET review and approve the specific use of the \$150,000 appropriation. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

CAPITAL BUDGET General Government - General Fund capital was reduced by \$3,562,000. This results in Bond/BAN interest expense being reduced by \$114,000.

OTHER FUNDS

Sewer Maintenance

Reason: The final Grand List resulted in a small increase to the taxable value. The Sewer Maintenance Mill Rate should be reduced from 0.400 to 0.398. There was no change to the Sewer Improvement Mill Rate.

Nathaniel Witherell Installation of Backflow Preventer (\$50,000)

Reason: The FY22 capital plan contains a \$50,000 project to install a water backflow preventer. In March 2021, the waterline failed and had to be repaired. During the repair, a water backflow preventer was installed. Therefore, this project can be removed from the capital budget.

- **Motion:** The Board unanimously approved the removal of the request for \$50,000 for a water backflow preventer at the Witherell from the Capital budget.

Parking Services Fund \$1,000,000

Reason: To condition the operations of the Parking Fund as it returns to a new normal, FY22. To ensure that COVID-19 Funds including Grants and other Federal and/or State reimbursement programs when received by the Parking Fund are credited, when appropriate, to cover COVID-19 expenditures due to COVID-19 Executive Orders in the Parking Fund for FY20, FY21 NS fy22. To identify where the Parking Fund has contributed human resources to support the COVID-19 initiatives, and that the Parking Fund is appropriately reimbursed for its support/expenditures.

- **Motion:** Ms. Tarkington made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duus, to condition the release of the \$1,000,000 upon review and acceptance by the BET of a report in January 2022. The report should provide information on expenditures for other departments in FY20, FY21 and FY22 and receipt of any Grants and other Federal and/or State reimbursement programs and how they are applied. The Board voted 5-4-3. (Opposed: Kreuzer, Krumeich, Ramer, Weisbrod) (Abstain: Drake, Erickson, Mason) Motion carried.

MEANS OF FINANCING

Funds to be Financed

Sewer Improvement	\$ 4,320,000
Nathaniel Witherell	\$32,000,540
School Lunch Fund	\$ 4,281,200
Parking Fund	\$ 2,000,950
Traffic Engineering	\$ 1,324,675
Griffith E. Harris Golf Course	\$ 1,943,889
Retirement	\$ 1,839,017
OPEB	\$ 8,361,000
Shellfish Commission	\$ 51,600
Harbor Master	\$ 62,100
Parking Fund (State portion)	\$ 361,400

The Board reviewed the means of financing the FY21 Budget: Property Taxes; State & Federal Aid; Transfers from Other Funds; Transfer from Unrestricted Fund Balance; Borrowings and Tax Levy.

BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Mason recommended that the Budget Resolutions be referred back to the Law Committee and considered at the BET April 19, 2021 meeting.

BUDGET SCHEDULES

Capital Tax Levy Increase by \$2,885,000

Reason: The ability to fund the capital plan is dependent on the fiscal discipline of the BET to increase the capital tax levy by greater amounts than has been recently approved. An increase of an additional \$2,885,000 in the capital tax levy in FY22 which is the amount that was reduced by actions of this Board in the operating budget, along with annual increases of \$4 million -\$5 million per year for the next few years, will enable funding most of the requested capital projects in the next 10 years.

- Motion: Ms. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ramer to increase the capital tax levy by the \$2,885,000. The Board voted 6-6-0. (Opposed: Drake, Duus, Fas-suliotis, Hess, Mason, Tarkington) Motion failed.

Use of Fund Balance Decrease by \$3.0 million

Reason: The concern is that there is an over-reliance on unrestricted fund balance to balance the budget in the Recommended FY22 Budget. The Recommended FY22 Budget uses \$19.8 million to close the budget gap which is 32% more than FY21B and 61% more than FY20B. This significantly higher use of fund balance use of fund balance to close the budget gap is concerning as the departments are returning less budget funding and causes significant budget pressure next year with the possible outcome that capital funding or operating expenses will not be properly supported. This level of use of fund balance is not sustainable. It would be more appropriate to use a lower amount of fund balance to cover the budget. This motion is to reduce the use of fund balance to \$17.2 million, which would increase the required amount of property taxes to cover budgeted expenses. Assuming no other changes in the Total Amount to Be Funded, the mill rate would be 11.790 or a 1.73% increase over FY21B, similar to the level of the Proposed FY22 Budget from the First Selectman.

- Motion: Ms. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to decrease use of Fund Balance by \$3.0 million. The Board voted 6-6-0. (Opposed: Drake, Duus, Fas-suliotis, Hess, Mason, Tarkington) Motion failed.

Bonding Resolution

Reason: The GHS and WMS soil remediation projects are forecast to cost \$34 million over the next few years. These projects are like land purchases with unlimited useful lives. The size of these investments, which are about the combined cost of EGCC and Hamill Rink and higher than the cost of a school renovation project, will have the impact of crowding out other infrastructure projects in the years when the Town is forecast to have higher expenditures to address our aging infrastructure. Given the large capital plan and the relatively low cost of debt, it is a smart financial strategy to utilize longer maturities for this specific

project while meeting the needs of the community. The Resolution is worded to allow for up to 20-year financing, so that maturities shorter than 20 years can be utilized if it is deemed the more appropriate financial strategy at the time of issuance.

- **Motion:** Ms. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Ms. Kreuzer, to add Bonding Resolution for \$10 million for the GHS Soil Remediation Project for up to 20-year maturities and modify the bonding amount in the 5-year Bonding Resolution. The Board voted 6-6-0. (Opposed: Drake, Duus, Fassuliotis, Hess, Mason, Tarkington) Motion failed.
- **Motion:** Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to accept the FY2021-2022 Budget as amended by the BET:

Operating	\$399,427,234
Capital Projects	65,339,000
Debt Principal and Interest	41,250,000
Sewer Contribution	1,270,000

The Board voted 7-6-0. (Opposed: Erickson, Kreuzer, Krumeich, Moriarty, Ramer Weisbrod). Motion carried.

- **Motion:** Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington to accept the Bonding Resolution as amended. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Mr. Mason suggested that each member of the BET might wish to make a final comment to conclude the BET Budget Decision Day. After all members had an opportunity to speak about this years' experience. Mr. Mason expressed his thanks to the Finance and IT Departments for their assistance and thanked the BET the volunteer hours they invested in the process and their commitment to the Town.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to adjourn the meeting at 2:20 P.M. The Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

William Drake, Clerk of the Board

Michael S. Mason, Chair