



MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Monday, April 19, 2021 in a virtual Zoom webinar, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Michael S. Mason called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M.

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: Lauren Elliott, Assessor; Department; Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems Management, Finance Department; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller

RTM: Nancy Better, (D-11); Irene Dietrich, (D-8) Health & Human Services

Public: Ken Borsuk, Reporter, *Greenwich Time*; Jennifer Kutai, Caroline Lerum, Horst Tebbe, GCTV

### **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Upon a motion by Ms. Fassuliotis, seconded by Mr. Mason, to revise the Agenda Resolutions under the NEW BUSINESS item to combine Resolution 2,3,4 as one motion on behalf of the Law Committee. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

### **Request for Budget Adjustment**

### **ROUTINE APPLICATIONS**

<u>Number</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
<b>PW-4</b>	<b>Public Works</b>	<b>Release of Conditions</b>
\$530,000	B345 595060 20135, 21233	Eastern Greenwich CC Design

Ms. Tarkington reported the Budget Committee had been requested to release conditioned funds from FY20 and FY21 to complete the remaining 70% of building design, construction plans and specifications of the future Eastern Greenwich Civic Center EGCC) for the RFP bidding process.

The funds were conditioned upon the review and acceptance by the BET of a report which confirmed completed municipal improvement and site plan approvals. Planning and Zoning and Land Use approvals have been received and the time for appealing the decisions has elapsed. The Budget Committee voted unanimously to recommend the release of condition on the \$530,000 to recommend the application to the full BET as a routine application.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Drake, to approve \$530,000 for final designed plans for the EGCC. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

### **ASSESSOR'S REPORT**

The Town Assessor, Ms. Elliott, highlighted the following items from her written monthly report: the Senior and Disabled Property Tax Relief Program has received 214 applications to date and the receipt of additional applications is anticipated before the May 15 deadline. The State Office of Policy and Management has formally granted a waiver without penalty for the 2020 ReVal until October 2021 based on the circumstances of the pandemic.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Assessor's Report. Motion carried.

### **COMPTROLLER'S REPORT**

Comptroller Mynarski asked if there were any questions about his monthly written report and commented that he would defer his remarks about COVID-19 grant reimbursements to the new business agenda item.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Ms. Krumeich, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Comptroller's Report. Motion carried.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Duus, the Board voted 11-0-1 to accept the Treasurer's Report. (Abstain: Krumeich). Motion carried.

### **BET Standing Committee Reports**

No reports were scheduled.

## **BET Liaison Reports**

No reports were scheduled.

## **BET Special Project Team Reports**

- Fire Study – Mr. Mason reported that the Matrix Study and the Public Hearing to share the results had been completed. An internal Strategic Planning study is currently underway, and the results will be presented to the BET and Public upon its conclusion.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

No Old Business was scheduled for discussion.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Appointment of a special project team to address reducing Pension Fund Liability**

Mr. Mason appointed Mr. Duus, Ms. Kreuzer, Mr. Weisbrod, and asked Mr. Drake to lead the Special Project Team to find solutions for the Town's ever increasing pension obligation. Mr. Duus proposed that whereas the Investment Advisory Committee had discussed a Pension Obligation Bond option, the scope of the new Special Project Team was broader. He suggested input from both the HR and IAC Committees would be welcome and noted that both Ms. Kreuzer and Mr. Drake were members of both Committees. The Project Team would review the DROP and pension buyout options and gather expert information. The project team will begin their work immediately.

- **Motion to amend Additional Provisions Resolution**

Ms. Fassuliotis reported that the Law Committee proposed amendments to the Budget Resolutions and noted that in this meeting, the following three motions were combined and voted on as a single motion.

- ***Motion to add a Resolution regarding COVID grant receipts***

The Law Committee revised the Resolution to include reimbursement and grants from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) as appropriations to be approved by the BET and RTM. The funds that BOE receives from reimbursements and grants are also approved for use by the BET and RTM.

- ***Motion to amend the Resolution regarding GEMS in-kind and cash gifts***

Although one-time in-kind and cash gifts are not typically recognized in a Resolution, because the Town is the beneficiary of GEMS' gifts in a contract signed by the First Selectman, the RTM has the authority to accept the gift. The GEMS Station #4 building and land will be owned by the Town and invoices for the construction will be signed-off by the Office of the First Selectman.

Mr. Drake made a motion to amend the text of the Resolution, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to delete the reference to GEMS in-kind gifts of furniture, fixtures and equipment and A&E construction drawings. The BET is only

appropriating the cash gift of \$200,000. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- ***Motion to add a Resolution that requires that the addition or reclassification of any job with impact on the budget salary or pension lines be reported to the BET***

Ms. Fassuliotis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to approve the three Additional Provisions Resolution as amended. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- **Discussion concerning the allocation of expected COVID funds**

Mr. Mason asked the Board to assist him to outline the goals and objectives for the anticipated receipt of COVID funds and consider their allocation and potential beneficiaries. He suggested that representation from the Town's Boards and Commissions, Town officers, the First Selectman and representation from the BET might be called together when more federal information was forthcoming from the U.S. Treasury. Mr. Mason asked to receive suggestions for future discussion. Ms. Moriarty called for a thoughtful plan to understand the opportunities to determine the strategic priorities and obtain input from the bodies that typically recommend uses of the funds. She recommended formulating a process with inclusion, transparency and accountability for the funds. Mr. Weisbrod proposed following the Community Development Block Grant model which might accelerate the process while awaiting federal directives for allocating the grants.

### **Chairs Report**

Chairman Mason updated the BET on the following topics:

- Mr. Mason asked the BET members to be available to visit RTM Districts and Committees meetings before the RTM budget vote.
- Mr. Mason alerted the Board that a presentation on the results of the Special Education study would be offered shortly.

### **Approval of BET Meeting Minutes**

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to approve the Minutes of the Regular BET Meeting of March 15, 2021, the Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Ms. Krumeich, to combine March 29, March 30 and April 1 for voting purposes. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Mr. Duus, to approve the Minutes of the March 29 Public Hearing, the March 30 Budget Workshop and the April 1 Decision Day 1. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Mr. Duus, to approve the Minutes of BET Decision Day 2.

Ms. Moriarty made a motion to amend the Minutes of April 6, Decision Day 2, seconded by Mr. Mason, to accept the Bonding Resolution as amended for the amount of \$56,741,000 as shown on the Zoom virtual meeting screen as a shared document. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

Upon a motion by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. Kreuzer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary

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William Drake, Clerk of the Board

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Michael Mason, Chairman

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation is on Monday, May 17, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.