



MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Monday, May 2, 2022 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Dan Ozizmir called the meeting to order at 4:03 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Dan Ozizmir, Chairman
Michael Basham, Vice Chairman
Nisha Arora, Clerk
William Drake
Laura Erickson
Karen Fassuliotis
Miriam Kreuzer
Leslie Moriarty
Jeffrey S. Ramer
Stephen Selbst
Leslie L. Tarkington
Absent: David Weisbrod

Staff: Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems Management, Finance Department;
Peter Mynarski, Comptroller, Lauren Elliott, Assessor, Heather Smeriglio, Tax
Collector

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Request for Budget Adjustments

ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

<u>Number</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
PW-4	Public Works	\$338,000	Additional Appropriation
	Z345 59560 21231		Senior Center Renovation

Ms. Tarkington reported that the Senior Center Renovations project consisted of two appropriations: \$700,000 was appropriated in FY 2018/2019 and \$450,000 was appropriated in FY 2020/2021 for a total appropriation of \$1,150,000. She added that of the overall total appropriated, a balance of \$997,956 remains after completing an electrical system upgrade and demolition and abatement of the current space to be upgraded. The remainder of the work to construct a new kitchen, serving and dining area on the southern side of the building was competitively bid, with only one bidder responding, Wernert Construction. The bid from Wernert

Construction was \$1,113,831, creating a shortfall of \$115,875. Ms. Tarkington reported that the Town has been working with The Friends of the Greenwich Senior Center, led by Chair Patricia Burns to solicit funds in the amount of \$338,000 to allocate the funding required and reestablish the 20% contingency.

Mr. Ramer asked who the beneficiary would be if the contingency was not entirely used up. Mr. Mynarski responded that it would be returned to the Town and the Friends of the Senior Center on a prorated basis.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ozizmir, to approve the additional appropriation of \$338,000 from the receipt of funds from The Friends of the Greenwich Senior Center for the renovations at the Senior Center the Board voted 11-0-0. Motion carried.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Ms. Elliott presented the Assessor's Report. She reported that the Grand List for October 1, 2021 has been completed. She added that a total of 658 Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) were received, and 62 larger commercial properties were not heard. The BAA changed 430 assessments, and 166 appeals were not changed. Ms. Elliott stated the notifications of the results of all the BAA hearings were mailed to each property owner on April 4, 2022 and property owners have two months to appeal to the Superior Court.

Ms. Elliott reported that her office is currently processing the Elderly and Local Tax Relief programs with a deadline of May 16, 2022. She informed the Board that 182 applications have been received and reminder letters are going out to an additional 84 potential applicants. The department is also making phone calls to remind those eligible to apply.

Ms. Elliott responded to additional questions and comments from BET members regarding comparisons to previous revaluations.

Ms. Fassuliotis stated that there still are 23 Superior Court cases pending from the previous revaluation and asked for an update. Ms. Elliott responded that a number of the litigants are not responding, and the Town will probably have to go to trial to settle.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington seconded by Mr. Ramer, to accept the Assessor's Report, the BET voted 11-0-0 (Weisbrod absent). Motion carried.

COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

Comptroller Mynarski presented the monthly Comptroller's report and offered a few comments prior to answering questions. He started by telling the BET that the Audit Committee will be discussing cybersecurity tomorrow morning at the May 3, 2022 Audit Committee meeting. He said that the cybersecurity team had been meeting virtually for the past two years and this will be the first in person meeting before the start of the Covid experience. He also told the BET that the Greenwich Public School System has just selected and hired their fractional Chief Information Security Officer who will attend that meeting. Secondly, Mr. Mynarski said that the Town will be receiving an additional \$141,954 from Superstorm Sandy that recently came to

light. Another comment was that the Town will also be receiving another \$382,000 from the August 2020 storm Isaias.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 11-0-0 to accept the Comptroller's Report. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Comptroller Mynarski presented the Treasurer's Report and commented that some of the reported numbers as of March 31, 2022 were stale. One example he gave was the dramatic downturn in the stock market that had a direct impact on the OPEB Fund, which had lost over \$3 million in April 2022 that was not reflected in the March 31, 2022 Treasurer's report. He added that \$15 million of ARP monies were being invested in longer term treasury bills as of April 1, 2022 and that funding for approved ARPA allocations would come from the second tranche expected in May/June. Mr. Mynarski commented that the large cash balance in the Sewer Maintenance Fund was due to a large fund balance. He reminded the BET that \$5 million of that balance would be transferred and used for the upcoming budget starting July 1, 2022.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 11-0-0 to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

BET Standing Committee Reports

No reports were scheduled

BET Liaison Reports

No reports were scheduled.

BET Special Project Team Reports

Ms. Moriarty gave an update on the Greenwich High School Entry Building Committee Project. She noted that the Committee had 26 meetings to date and one more planned for Wednesday. Mrs. Moriarty stated that the GHS Entry Project had received approval on January 27, 2022 from the Planning and Zoning Board for Municipal Improvement and Site Plans. The next step would be to work with the Architectural Review Board regarding landscaping issues. The Board of Education approved final plan specifications on the project on April 6, 2022 with a cost estimate of \$2,430,345. She added that the cost estimates leave about \$320,000 for contingencies.

The Bonding Commission approved this project for 20% state reimbursement of eligible costs received in writing on April 21, 2022. The project is planned to go out to bid and the construction would take about eight months.

OLD BUSINESS

No topic was scheduled for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

Tax Collector 2006 Real Estate Delinquency Report

Ms. Smeriglio, Town of Greenwich Tax Collector came to the BET for purposes of writing off old real estate receivables from the Grand List of 2006. The State Statutes mandated that property tax receivables older than 15 years are deemed uncollectible. Ms. Smeriglio presented the BET with a list of 10 properties from the Grand List of 2006 that she considered uncollectible. Mr. Ramer presented a series of alternative uses for the different properties.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 11-0-0 to move to suspense \$36,796.94 of various real estate properties bases on the recommendation of the Tax Collector. Motion carried.

Vote to Reappoint RSM US LLP as Town Greenwich External Auditors

Mr. Mynarski informed the BET that a Request for Proposals (RFP) was initiated in December 2021 to hire outside auditors to conduct the annual audit of the Town. He said the contract was lapsing as of June 30, 2021. As a result of the RFP, there were two proposals received. The BET Auditing Committee scored the two proposals and selected the low bidder who happened to be the current incumbent performing annual auditing services. Mr. Mynarski said the contract was for a five-year period consisting of a two-year period following by three one-year option years.

On a motion by Mr. Basham, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 11-0-0 to reappoint RSM US LLP for another five-year period. Motion carried.

BET Professional Fees – FY22/FY23 – Potential Uses – First Read

Mr. Ozizmir told the BET members that there was approximately \$130,000 to \$140,000 left in the current year budget for BET sanctioned studies. He stressed that this topic was for a first read tonight. As a result, there were a few initial suggestions; 1) Ms. Tarkington requested a follow up to the Blumshapiro Greenwich Public School Capital Project Operational Assessment, 2) Mr. Ozizmir stated we would like to do a study of the relationship between paid and volunteer fire personnel 3) Ms. Arora would like to see work done in the area of cost estimating of the larger school capital projects and 4) Ms. Erickson suggested looking at options for staffing the Finance Department which is stretched thin given its responsibilities.

Mr. Mynarski gave the Board a number of examples of past BET funded projects.

Approval of BET Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ozizmir, the Board voted 11-0-0 to the Minutes of the BET Special Meeting held on March 1, 2022 as amended for one scrivener's error on Page 1. Motion carried.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Board voted 11-0-0 to the Minutes of the Regular BET Meeting held on March 24, 2022. Motion carried.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Ms. Erickson, the Board voted 11-0-0 to the Minutes of the BET Public Meeting held on March 28, 2022. Motion carried.

There was a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded to Mr. Ozizmir to move approval of the March 29, 2022 BET Special Meeting minutes. During the discussions Ms. Moriarty requested that a portion of the minutes be amended to remove comments from Ms. Arora and additionally to add comments from members that were not included.

Upon a motion by Ms. Fassuliotis, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 11-0-0 to defer and continue discussion on the March 28, 2022 BET Special Meeting minutes to the next meeting. Motion carried.

Chair's Report

Mr. Ozizmir, as BET Chairman offered the following remarks:

- Mr. Ozizmir expressed thanks to the Finance Department staff and all members of the BET for their efforts in passing the Proposed Budget which is now before the RTM.
- Mr. Ozizmir thanked Mr. Weisbrod and Mr. Basham for their work on the Capital Projects assignment. He further explained that the First Selectman & Town Administrator wanted to streamline the Capital Projects process by creating a committee of town employees only, and BET liaisons are no longer required.
- Mr. Ozizmir added that the BET will be working on the Debt Policy, Fund Balance Policy and updating the BET Policy and Procedures Manual going forward.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. Selbst, seconded by Ms. Kreuzer, to adjourn the meeting, the Board voted 11-0-0 to adjourn at 5:37 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary

Nisha Arora, Clerk of the Board

Dan Ozizmir, Chairman