

**TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

Cone Meeting Room

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

Committee

Present: Marc V. Johnson, Chairman; Mary Lee Kiernan, Jeffrey S. Ramer, Leslie L. Tarkington

Board: Michael Mason, BET Chairman, Arthur Norton, Randall Huffman, Nancy Weissler, John Blankley, Sean Goldrick

Selectmen: Peter Tesei, First Selectman; David Theis, Selectman

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Joan Sullivan, Director Purchasing & Administrative Services; Denise Savageau, Conservation Commission Director; Gus Lindine, Athletic Director Greenwich High School; Irene Parisi, Ass't Superintendent Greenwich Public Schools; Alan Monelli, Superintendent of Building Construction & Maintenance; Ben Branyan, Board of Education Managing Director of Operations; Phil Dunn, Director of Digital Learning & Technology;

Other: Steve Leaden, Telephone System Consultant; Ann Young, Board Member Greenwich Preservation Trust; Nola Alman, DLE Consultant & DLE Project Manager; John Chadwick, Chairman Retirement Board; Laurence Simon, Member Retirement Board; Michael Wacek, RTM District 11 Member; Ben Wurst and James Plewniak, Eagle Scouts, Greenwich Boy Scouts

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Chairman's Remarks: Mr. Johnson, as the new Committee Chair, welcomed the many members of the public in attendance. He thanked returning Committee members Ms. Tarkington and Mr. Ramer and new Committee member Ms. Kiernan for their willingness to serve, and Mr. Tesei, Mr. Mynarski and Mr. Geiger for their interest and support of the Budget Committee.

**REQUESTS FOR BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS**

PUR – 2 Purchasing Release of Conditions \$150,000

Release of Conditions:

\$ 150,000 to A10651490 Consulting Services–Telephone System

Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Leaden requested release of funds based on the need to finalize the Request for Proposal and begin implementation of the contract bidding process. It was estimated that between 8 – 12 responses could be anticipated, with the possibility of receiving as many as 20 bids. The vendor selection process is estimated to take 60 – 90 days. Implementation of new telephone equipment to the core group of Town Hall, Nathaniel Witherell, and all libraries (1900 phone units) is expected to take 6 – 8 months. This would allow for 2 months of redundancy. Roll out within BOE facilities would take place approximately two years later. The presenters assured the Committee that cloud –based options, involvement

by the TOG IT Department and compatibility with other Town systems such as the 311 system would be important parts of the RFP process.

On a Motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Ms. Kiernan, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the release of funds and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a non-routine application.

CC-1 Conservation Additional Appropriation \$8,757  
Additional Appropriation:  
\$8,757 to F172 51440 SEP Grant – Tidal Restoration

Ms. Savageau reported that a grant was received from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for tidal restoration at Greenwich Point. By addressing proper flushing of tidal marshes they hope to mitigate a rising mosquito problem.

On a Motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Kiernan, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

ED-4 BOE Approval to Use  
Approval to Use:  
\$ 10,000 to F606 1637 53700 Building & Construction Materials

Mr. Lindine requested the approval to use foundation grant money to construct storage for athletic equipment at Greenwich High School. Project is expected to be completed by March, 2014.

On a Motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Kiernan, the Committee voted 4-0 - 0 to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

ED-5 BOE Approval to Use  
Approval to Use:  
\$ 11,000 to F606 1641 53100 & 52100 Teaching Supplies & Travel Expenses

Ms. Parisi requested the funds for classroom curriculum and instructional materials for the Chinese language program at GHS. The grant has been offered by the Asia Society Confucius Classroom Network and is dedicated to building the field of Chinese language teaching and learning.

On a Motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Kiernan, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

PW-2 DPW Release of Conditions – \$20,000,000  
Release of Conditions:  
\$20,000,000 to B345 59560 14144 Central Fire Station

Mr. Monelli reviewed the components of the \$20m project to build the new Central Fire Station. Construction is to begin in March and last for 22 months. He mentioned that 14 contractors

submitted bids with 3 bids lower than the budgeted construction cost of \$17.5m. Mr. Monelli plans to complete background checks on the low bidder and draw up contracts over the next few weeks. The Committee discussed the amount of contingency budgeted and if the amount of savings from the lowest bid should be added to the contingency fund.

On a Motion by Ms. Tarkington seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Committee voted 4-0-0 that the excess of funds between the low bid and the budgeted construction cost of \$17.5m be added to the project's contingency fund.

On a Motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Kiernan, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the release of funds subject to the condition that the excess of funds between the low bid and the budgeted construction cost of \$17.5m be added to the project's contingency fund and forward its recommendation to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a non-routine application.

PW-3	DPW	Release of Conditions – \$100,000
Release of Conditions:		
\$ 100,000	to	B345 59560 14146 Seaton House Demolition

Mr. Monelli requested funds that had a subject to release by the BET until 9/30/13 pending an acceptable alternative to demolition. To date, no interested parties had come forward with proposals to save the dilapidated structure. Mr. Monelli described the horrible condition of the former Seaton House and the frequent vandalism to which neighbors have complained.

Ms. Savageau, Ms. Young and Eagle Scout Plewniak spoke about the historical significance of the Seaton property. Mr. Monelli proposed developing a plan for historically sensitive demolition that would respect the foundation, gardens, terrace and woodland.

On a Motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Kiernan, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to add the conditions that: a historically sensitive demolition plan be developed and implemented; and all necessary approvals be obtained under the Municipal Improvement guidelines of section 99 of the Town Charter.

On a Motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Kiernan, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the release of funds, subject to the conditions that: a historically sensitive demolition plan be developed and implemented; and all necessary approvals be obtained under the Municipal Improvement guidelines of Section 99 of the Town Charter; and forward its recommendation to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a non-routine application.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

Report of Status of Current Economic Conditions

Mr. Gieger gave a report of the status of current economic conditions, highlighting increased revenues from conveyance taxes and building permits. He also updated the Committee on expenditures, stating that Town spending is trending the same as last year for the same period.

Digital Learning Update

Mr. Branyan, Mr. Dunn and Ms. Alman updated the Committee on the project's progress to date. They highlighted planning, preparation and implementation of Phase I including teacher training and roll out to Hamilton Avenue and Riverside Elementary Schools. The presentation explained the goals, methodology of evaluating success and measuring improved student outcomes as well as how the investment in the digital learning infrastructure would advance Greenwich's education system. They reported that the Project Team and consultants had identified savings that reduced the estimated cost from a 5-year project with a cost of \$17.7m to a 6-year project costing \$13.8m.

Approval of the July 1, 2013 Retirement System of the Town of Greenwich Actuarial Review and Analysis

Mr. Mynarski introduced and distributed the Actuarial Report compiled by the Boomershine Consulting Group. He reviewed the pension fund's recent performance and specifically, current unfunded liabilities and annual required contributions. Mr. Chadwick, Mr. Wacek and Mr. Simon made comments in support of following the Retirement Board's plan to reduce the assumed investment rate of return for the next fiscal year to 7.25%. Mr. Mynarski commented on recent meetings with the three major credit rating agencies and what they look for in evaluating a municipality's management of its pension funds.

On a Motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to accept the report of the Retirement Board and reduce the assumed investment rate of return for the next fiscal year to 7.25%.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Budget Committee Regular Meeting, December 12, 2013

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to accept the Minutes from the December 12, 2013 Budget Committee Regular Meeting.

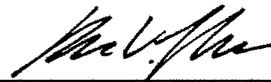
There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 P.M.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 6:00 PM in the Cone Room.

Respectfully submitted,



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Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



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Marc V. Johnson, Chairman