



TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW FY2022-2023 Budget - DAY #2 Minutes - BOE

Hybrid Virtual and Town Hall Meeting Room
Thursday, February 3, 2022

- Committee: Leslie L. Tarkington, Chair; Nisha Arora, Laura Erickson, Leslie Moriarty
- Staff: Agnes Cawai, Assistant Budget & Systems Manager, Finance Department (Dept); Don Conway, GCTV: Roland Gieger, Budget & Systems Director; Jenny Larkin, Information Technology Dept; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller, Abby Wadler, Assistant Town Attorney, Law Department
- BET: Dan Ozizmir, BET Chair; Michael Basham, William Drake, Karen Fassuliotis, Miriam Kreuzer, Jeff Ramer, Stephen Selbst, David Weisbrod
- BOE/GPS: Kathleen Stowe, Chair, BOE; Dr. Toni Jones, Superintendent, GPS; Christina Downey, BOE; Karen Hirsch, Secretary, BOE; Karen Kowalski, Vice Chair, BOE; Sean O’Keefe, Chief Operating Officer, GPS; Michael Ting, Chief Technology Officer, GPS; Dan Watson, Director of Facilities, GPS

Budget Committee Chair Tarkington called the Meeting to order at 9:06 A.M. and welcomed the audience to the BET Budget Committee Departmental Meeting dedicated to the Board of Education recommended FY2022-2023 Operations and Capital Budgets. Ms. Tarkington introduced members of the BET Budget Committee, and Finance Department staff who support the process.

BET Budget Committee Departmental Review Hearings are live broadcast by GCTV Channels 79, 24, and YouTube, and Zoom. The schedule of the Budget Committee’s Departmental Review Meetings is available on the Town website.

Budget Committee Chair Tarkington welcomed members of the Board of Education and GPS Administration and invited Ms. Stowe, Dr. Jones, and Mr. O’Keefe to share how the upcoming year’s budget was planned so that the Budget Committee could better understand its proposed operating and capital requests.

BOE Operations Plan FY2022-2023 Budget

Board of Education Chairman Stowe recognized the Administration and faculty for extraordinary accomplishments achieved during the COVID-19 pandemic. The foresight of Greenwich’s early digital learning implementation enabled access for both in-person and remote learners to instruction five-days per week while GHS offered hybrid learning to a rotating student population.

Mr. O'Keefe introduced the Board of Education FY2022-2023 Operating Budget for Greenwich Public Schools of \$176,693,242, an increase of \$4,850,645 or 2.82% exceeding BET Budget guidelines of 2.65% by 0.17%. Budget drivers and their percentage of the Operating Budget increases are: salaries and other contractual payments, \$3 million (62.9%), special education \$500,000 (10.3%), transportation \$1,067,952 (22%), summer school \$300,000 (6.2%), utilities and services \$89,490 (1.8%), and all other (net) -\$155,078 (-3.2%). He explained the additional headcount requests: 2 custodians to reduce overtime and better meet the school standard of "high-end hospital cleanliness"; 5 math interventionist certified teachers; 5 special education teachers; a reduction of 5 non-certified classroom teachers; and, funding a nurse at Eagle Hill School.

Dr. Jones shared that many of the PCG recommendations to improve SPED services have been implemented or are planned for in the FY23 budget and commented on academic programming changes including how the PCG Special Education Study will be translated in metrics for determining achievement, continuum of services, and alternative programming; the launch of a reading training initiative; the introduction of new math text books; and, how challenges for managing faculty retirements and incentivizing substitutes were being met. Chairman Tarkington asked for more detailed plans for students' growth and achievement; she commented that parents asked for quality education, happy students engaged in their studies and motivated teachers. The Committee requested a chart of student math and reading achievement and the summer school program and its anticipated costs.

Mr. O'Keefe described typical expenses eligible for reimbursement through federal ESSER 2 and ESSER 3 grants. The Committee asked if cost efficiencies had been identified for consolidation of services with Town Departments; and potential savings from declining student enrollment. A member of the Committee offered a chart comparing how cost-per-student differed among Greenwich's elementary schools, and Dr. Jones reviewed characteristics that needed to be factored into the comparison: salary level of teachers, spreading costs over a larger student body reducing cost-per-student; on-site special education classroom and teacher costs; and, demographics of student population at individual schools. Mr. O'Keefe commented that the school lunch program was expected to breakeven in the next fiscal year with earned revenue and State reimbursements.

BOE Capital Plan FY2021-2022

Mr. O'Keefe reported the completion of closing out of open capital projects through 2018; open capital and encumbered funds for 2019 projects at Old Greenwich, CMS and GHS are in the process of being closed out; release of escrowed funds and reimbursements upon the conclusion of State audits of final expense reports from projects such as MISA, New Lebanon and Glenville. The impact of COVID supply chain delays is responsible for \$350,000 of encumbrances of FY2021 incomplete contracts including annual abatement projects. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the closeout of open capital and encumbrances dating from 2005.

Major Capital Projects – The FY2022-2023 Capital Budget of \$30,265,621 is requested for \$3,250,000 of major projects; \$24,896,621 for annual infrastructure/improvements; \$1,728,000 for technology and \$51,000 for food service; and, \$340,000 for security. Major projects proposed for FY2022-2023 include: cellular service improvement and installation of an antenna for system emergencies at GHS; improvement of network infrastructure; upgrade of the alerts system; relocation and upgrading emergency generators to protect from flood water damage; ADA compliance and elevator installations; ADA accessible walkway installation to school playgrounds; CMS structural study, and WMS soil remediation. The Committee sought a

prioritized list of projects including identifying those for reimbursement through ARP ESSER 3 funds.

Ms Erickson moved and Ms. Moriarty seconded the motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss out district special education settlement updates at 3:06 P.M.


Ms. Moriarty moved and Ms. Erickson seconded to exit Executive Session at 4:00.

The Committee concluded its session at 4:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



Leslie L. Tarkington, Committee Chair