

**TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW DAY ONE FOR FY14 BUDGET  
MINUTES**

**Police Complex, Training Room A – 9:30 A.M.**

**Tuesday, February 5, 2013**

**Present:**

**Committee:** Joseph L. Pellegrino, Chairman; William Finger, Jeffrey S. Ramer, Leslie L. Tarkington

**Staff:** Peter Mynarski, Comptroller, Roland Gieger, Budget Director, Maureen Tracy, Financial Analyst, Peter Tesei, First Selectman, John Crary, Town Administrator, Dustin Anderson, Special Projects Manager

**Board:** Greg Bedrosian, Robert Brady, Marc Johnson, Mary Lee Kiernan, Sean Goldrick, Randall Huffman, Michael Mason, Art Norton

**Others:** John Chadwick and Laurence Simon, Retirement Board Trustees, Melissa Crowther and Alison Graham, Retirement Administration, Leslie Moriarty, Board of Education, Peter Siecienski, Fire Chief, Robert Kick, Deputy Fire Chief, Amy Siebert, Commissioner of Public Works, David Thompson, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works, Alan Monelli, Superintendent of Public Works Building Construction and Maintenance, William McCormick, Public Works Business Services Manager, Joseph Roberto, DPW Highway Superintendent, James Michel, DPW Chief Engineer, James Heavey, Police Chief, Mark Kordick, Police Captain, Greg Hannigan, Director of Police General Services Division, Joan Sullivan, Director of Purchasing and Administrative Services, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Representatives; James Finley Jr., Executive Director and CEO and Kevin Maloney, Anthony "Tod" Laudonia, Tax Collector, Denise Savagau, Conservation Commission Director

Mr. Pellegrino called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M.

**SPEAKERS**

1. **Retirement Administration** – The Retirement Administration budget was presented by Retirement Plan Trustees Laurence Simon and John Chadwick. Mr. Simon began by introducing Retirement Administration personnel Alison Graham and Melissa Crowther. Mr. Simon gave the Committee a presentation about the contents of the Retirement Administration budget and explained budget variances from year to year. The remainder of the presentation was as follows:

- Mr. Chadwick told the Committee he started on the Retirement Board, as a Trustee, in February 2005. Mr. Chadwick stated that when he arrived the Board was void of investment experience and the Plan money managers were underperforming. Under his leadership, the Board changed from a number of underperforming money managers to investments in index funds with much lower management fees. In

addition, Mr. Chadwick took credit for transitioning from a traditional stock and bond fund to an allocation including; TIPs, Commodities, Real Estate and alternative investments, such as private debt and equity.

- Mr. Pellegrino asked Mr. Chadwick about his thoughts on the assumed rate of return relative to other plans. Mr. Chadwick stated he was in agreement with the objective to move to a 7% assumed rate of return with an associated inflation rate of 3%. Mr. Pellegrino asked about our rate of return benchmarked against other municipal plans. Mr. Simon and Mr. Chadwick collectively cited comments made by the Town's Actuary that the range would be 6% to 8%, on average and we are in line with others.
- Mr. Simon highlighted the operational improvements made to the Retirement Benefits area since the departure of the former Retirement Administration Administrator and the reporting channel move to the Human Resources Department. Mr. Simon also provided the Committee with his recommendations for providing operational improvements in other areas of the Town.

- 2. Fire Department** – The Fire Department budget was presented by Chief Peter Siecienski and Deputy Chief Robert Kick. First Selectman Peter Tesei assisted in the presentation and gave the Committee an update on the search for a Fire Station site in the northwest quadrant of the Town of Greenwich. Mr. Tesei cautioned the Committee and other BET members that obtaining an adequate site for the station is the first step and reminded everyone that staffing the station needs to be taken into account, based on its incremental costs during trying budgetary times.

Chief Siecienski gave the Committee an update on the additional manning at the Glenville Fire Station and stated that, in light of the death of the former Fire Marshal, the Fire Marshal's office has been revamped. Deputy Chief Kick gave a more detailed update on the Glenville Fire Station. He stated that the \$700,000 funding for overtime to add two additional firefighters for deployment is tracking on schedule and there have been no injuries to date, which he attributes to a four person response team as opposed to the previous two person response team. Deputy Chief Kick highlighted some of the working fires that Glenville response teams responded to during this time period.

Chief Siecienski and Deputy Chief Kick answered a number of budgetary questions highlighted by Mr. Pellegrino expressing his concerns about bringing overtime costs down. Chief Siecienski explained the variety of reasons for overtime usage and how they are impacted by firefighter contractual constraints. Mr. Tesei emphasized the impact of the Town of Greenwich contracts on the process and overtime costs. He stated that he gets a list of all grievances filed by each union and told the Committee they would be surprised by the number of grievances being filed on a regular basis.

Mr. Finger asked questions about response times in the northwest quadrant. Deputy Chief Kick responded by saying he already tracks such information and that he would supply the Committee and also forward a chart that shows the coverage area by fire station throughout the entire Town of Greenwich.

There were questions about the role of the Volunteer Fire Coordinator and his duties, which were answered by Chief Siecienski. Mr. Pellegrino suggested that due to a number of lingering questions requiring answers it would be necessary to convene another meeting at another time to discuss volunteer firefighter matters.

Mr. Pellegrino thanked Chief Siecienski and Deputy Chief Kick for respecting the BET Guidelines and submitting a budget that came in at a 1.3% increase.

- 3. Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM)** – The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) was represented by Mr. James Finley Jr., CCM Executive Director and CEO, and his associate Mr. Kevin Maloney. First Selectman Peter Tesei decided to invite CCM officials to bolster support and make his case to reinstitute funding of the annual dues for membership, which equates to just under \$40,000 per year.

Mr. Pellegrino noted that the Town of Greenwich had ceased to be a member for the last several years for perceived political reasons and asked CCM officials to offer their reasons to have the Town rejoin the association. Mr. Finley made a case for reinstatement based on the many services CCM provides. Mr. Finley was asked about whom in Town of Greenwich government was eligible to utilize the services of CCM. Mr. Finley responded that every Town employee and every member of a Town Board or Commission was eligible to utilize the services of CCM.

Ms. Tarkington asked if the fee was negotiable. Mr. Finley responded that it wasn't negotiable but offered to offer their services free of charge for the rest of the year.

- 4. Public Works** – The Public Works budget was presented by Ms. Amy Siebert, Commissioner of Public Works, and members of her staff. Mr. Pellegrino noted the budget request was up 2.9% and suggested that the discussions start with two important topics; the leaf collection program and the imposition of tipping fees.

Regarding the leaf collection program, Mr. Finger asked who has the authority to decide whether or not leaves have to be bagged and also, who has the authority to institute a tipping fee program. Ms. Siebert told the Committee that decision would have to come from the Office of the First Selectman. There were a number of questions from Committee members regarding the costs of the program. After a discussion period, there were rough estimates that the leaf collection program costs anywhere between \$550,000 and \$600,000. Mr. Pellegrino decided to firmly quantify the answer and requested that Roland Gieger, Budget Director, put together a leaf program cost analysis. Ms. Siebert offered to have her staff assist Mr. Gieger in the compilation of the costs, since they already compile those costs. Ms. Tarkington asked if the collection zone was pulled back to R12 from R20 if that would reduce costs while retaining service for the most densely zoned areas.

The second major topic for discussion was the implementation of a tipping fees program. Mr. Pellegrino noted that the Town of Greenwich does not charge fees to dispose of certain materials at the Holly Hill Transfer Station, unlike other municipalities. Ms. Siebert told the Committee that the Town of Greenwich is charged \$84.23 per ton to haul away Municipal Solid Waste (MSW). In addition, the Town is charged a monthly management fee of \$38,000. There was a general discussion on the impact of imposing such a fee. Mr. Ramer pointed out that he thought there would be a shift from the more affluent households to less affluent households, if the fee was imposed and that the local waste collectors would pass the cost on to homeowners. Mr. Ramer stated he is not in favor of imposing a tipping fee.

Mr. Pellegrino commended Ms. Siebert for the institution of a single stream waste collection program and further asked her what she would like to change relative to her operations. Ms. Siebert immediately answered that she would like to see the elimination of unnecessary

Town buildings through either a sale or demolition. She pointed out that the large number of Town buildings is costly to maintain and that there are a number of unnecessary buildings that take up a lot of manpower hours to maintain. In addition, Ms. Siebert stated that the Town does not spend enough money on maintaining storm drains. She offered that she would like to spend more funds on maintaining storm drains throughout Town.

Mr. Pellegrino asked Ms. Siebert if there were any potential areas in her operations that could be candidates for privatization. Ms. Siebert answered no. She couldn't think of any part of her operations that are presently candidates for privatization.

Mr. Pellegrino questioned the increase in the budgetary account #52240, Telephone, Telegraph and Radio of 23.7%. Mr. Gieger and Mr. McCormick both answered that across the town there have been cellphone upgrades, more smartphones and iPads, all contributing to cost increases in most Town accounts.

Mr. Pellegrino invited Mr. Monelli to talk about capital projects and give the Committee an update. Mr. Monelli started by saying that the contract for the demolition of the Central Firehouse came in under budget at \$1.173 million. Mr. Monelli told the Committee that they need to abate the interior walls of the old Central Fire Station in mid-February and the demolition project should be completed by July 1, 2013. In addition, Mr. Monelli told the Committee that they had not gone out to bid for the General Contractor for the new Central Fire Station yet.

Mr. Monelli gave the Committee an update on the King Street site that formerly housed a GEMS unit. He stated the GEMS unit previously stationed at the King Street site was currently dispatched to the Boy Scout Reservation site until April 2013. Mr. Monelli said that GEMS will be coming to the BET Budget Committee in February for an additional appropriation of \$47,111 to purchase a trailer to house the GEMS unit and return the unit back to the King Street site.

Ms. Tarkington asked Mr. Monelli about the heating at the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center. Mr. Monelli answered the roof project is completed and they were working on replacing the boiler, radiant floor heat, and convector heat systems.

Mr. Monelli then gave the Committee an update on the Byram Park Renovation and Pool Project. He stated they hired Weston and Sampson to help with the design of the pool and surrounding facilities. Mr. Monelli said that the estimate cost would be about \$7.5 million and the square footage on the pool would be 6,878 feet. Mr. Monelli stressed that this project would result in one building consolidating a number of smaller buildings. Ms. Siebert offered that the newer FEMA maps have been distributed as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Ms. Siebert stated that due to the storm FEMA was altering the maps and that could have a substantial impact on the project due to the requirements of higher flood heights. Mr. Goldrick asked about having diving boards attached to the pool. Ms. Siebert answered that they have already decided the project will be designed without diving boards.

The next topic for discussion involved the capital project funding for generators at the Sound Beach Fire Station and the North Street Maintenance Shed. Mr. Monelli informed the Committee that both generators came in with a cost of \$104,900, well below the \$350,000 budget figure. There was an extended discussion, led by Ms. Siebert, to repurpose the funds to be applied against another generator purchase. Mr. Mason stated that the funds

would have to lapse and the Public Works Department would have to come in for an additional appropriation and could not use the surplus funds.

**5. Police Department** – The presentation was led by Police Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick. The presentation was a basic walkthrough of the Police Department budget pages with Captain Kordick explaining all material budget variances. The presentation was highlighted by discussions covering the following topics:

- The deployment of Police Officers on Greenwich Avenue. Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick explained it takes at least five officers to properly man the Greenwich Avenue posts. If the long standing policy was abandoned, there would still need to be a police presence and it would probably result in a net reduction of two less police officers with their removal from Greenwich Avenue. Ms. Tarkington asked about addressing work rules to reduce costs by changing duty hours to adapt to later store opening and closing hours, weekend shoppers, and stores being closed Mondays.
- Training. There was an extended discussion about the process of hiring a police officer. Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick explained all of the steps necessary to the hiring of a police officer to include, but not limited to; applying for the job, background checks, psychological testing, polygraphing individual applicants, physical durability testing and interviews. The successful candidates that are hired then must proceed through a training period at a police academy for nine months. Subsequent to passing the police academy, new recruits must be shadowed by season veterans for a period of time. Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick explained that one of the biggest obstacles during the training process was finding available space at one of the police academies within the State of Connecticut. The lack of space availability is prompting the Greenwich Police Department to create their own Police Academy which is in the planning stages.
- Vacancies. Captain Kordick explained during the power point presentation that there are currently 10 vacancies in the Police Department for reasons such as, sick time leave, maternity leave, military deployment and personal reasons. He stated that the Police Department has about 10 vacancies, on average, against a full deployment staff of 154 police personnel.
- Security in Schools. Chief Heavey highlighted the fact that they have a School Resources Officer (SRO) in the schools for security and counseling reasons and that this individual officer had been assigned for six years to Greenwich High School. He added that this is considered two years past the normal desire assignment allotment time of four years.

Mr. Pellegrino concluded the presentation by requested that Chief Heavey and Captain Kordick come back to the BET Budget Committee with a Police Department working model with 5% reduction in force and one with 10% reductions in staff and explain what services would be impacted under each scenario.

**6. Purchasing/Administration Services** – Due to time constraints the Purchasing Department budgetary review was deferred.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary



Joseph L. Pellegrino, Chairman