

TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
Monday, February 7, 2010

Committee:

Present: Michael S. Mason, Chairman; William R. Finger, Laurence B. Simon, Leslie L. Tarkington

Board: Nancy Barton, Jim Campbell, Randall Huffman, Arthur Norton, Joseph Pellegrino, Jeffrey Ramer, Stephen Walko

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

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller

John Crary, Town Administrator; Dustin Anderson, Executive Assistant, Selectmen's Office; Maureen Kast, Director, Human Resources; Sidney Freund, Superintendent; Stacey Gross, Assistant Superintendent; Robert Lichtenfeld, Managing Director of Operations; Benjamin Branyan, School Business Administrator; Kim Eves, Director of Communications; Mary Forde, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Board of Education; Chief David Ridberg, Police Department; Chief Peter Siecienski; Assistant Chief Robert Kick, Fire Department; Joseph Siciliano, Director; Tom Greco, Manager, Parks and Recreation; Amy Siebert, Commissioner; David Thompson, Deputy Commissioner, Public Works; Carmella Budkins, Town Clerk; Sharon Vecchiolla, Registrar of Voters; Tod Laudonia, Tax Collector; Caroline Baisley, Director, Health Department; Boris Huriton, Director of Information Technology; Denise Savageau, Director, Conservation; Michael Chambers, Director, Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency; Eugene McLaughlin, Assistant Town Attorney; Allen Brown, Executive Director, Nathaniel Witherell; Allen Corry, Director, Parking Services

Other: Steven Anderson, Chairman; Leslie Moriarty, Vice-Chairman, Board of Education; Daniel Warzoha, Emergency Management Director

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M.

**PROPOSED BUDGET FY2011-2012**

Mr. Tesei presented the Town's proposed FY 2011-2012 Budget to the Committee.

Mr. Anderson and Dr. Freund presented the Board of Education's proposed FY2011-2012 budget to the Committee.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

The public hearing session was called to order at 7:10 P.M.

Mr. Mason gave brief instructions regarding the Public Hearing session and shared comments regarding the communications shared with the BET members regarding budget process.

1. **Gordon Ennis, RTM District 8** – Shared concerns regarding the building for GEMS, the Retirement Plan’s growing actuarial deficit, his support for MISA and would like to see the total cost of providing services including benefits.
2. **Valerie Stauffer, Chairman, RTM District 7** – Shared comments regarding the RTM October, 2010 Sense of the Meeting Resolution (SOMR) urging spending restraints, and shared concerns regarding the capital and operating budgets. In support of continued reductions in headcount, especially administration, defined contributions plans for new hires, the Central Fire Station, and opposed to MISA.
3. **Erfe Porter, RTM District 6, Finance Committee** – Shared comments regarding the overall budget; in support of the BOE budget regarding the IB program and MISA; strongly supports health, safety and the environment; most importantly water quality and storm drainage.
4. **Drew Marzullo, Selectman** – Opposed to blind cuts, and supports funding safety, MISA and Central Fire Station.
5. **Julie Pisani, RTM District 6** – Shared a petition with 2,300+ signatures to keep EGCC open, by replacing the roof and maintaining it as a Town owned facility.
6. **Bill Drake, RTM District 5** – Shared concerns regarding the Capital budget, deficit spending, and called for a reduction in spending and is in support of low taxes and low debt.
7. **Chris Von Keyserling, RTM District 8** – In support of a 3.5% mill rate increase, MISA, Central Fire Station, Nathaniel Witherell, and reductions in operations.
8. **Roger Lourie, RTM District 7** – In support of budget decreases, infrastructure projects and the Central Fire Station project, and is opposed to nice to have projects like MISA.
9. **John Blankley, RTM District 10, Finance and Claims Committees** – Author of The Rejoinder to rebut the RTM SOMR; Education is the core of our values in Greenwich and supports MISA, Central Fire Station and Nathaniel Witherell.
10. **Linda Bruno, RTM District 7** – Supports consolidation of Town Departments; the Tax Assessor and Tax Collector; the Town, Schools and Libraries IT; and the Town and BOE Human Resources.

11. **Vince DiMarco, Vice-Chairman, RTM District 9;** Chairman, Pemberwick/Glenville Association; Co-chairman, Greenwich Safe Cycling – Supports Byram River Flood Mitigation Plan and the Byram Pool feasibility study. Asked for careful scrutiny of operations plans and shared comments regarding the budget guidelines schedule and inconsistencies with the RTM calendar and the need for public input earlier in the budget process. Supports maintaining the infrastructure.
12. **Pam Speer and Collette Rogers,** Friends of the High School Performing Arts – In support of MISA. Shared comments regarding the importance of Music and Arts education and its’ instructional needs. 900 students involved in music.
13. **Dan Silkman and Corey Bloes,** GHS Student Government – In support of MISA. Shared comments regarding the lack of instructional space and need for improvements.
14. **Patrick Taylor, GHS Choral Director** – In support of MISA. Shared comments regarding the lack of instructional space and need for improvements, as compared to other schools.
15. **Karen Fassuliotis, RTM District 7** – Opposed to MISA as currently budgeted. Shared comments regarding the State of CT seating guidelines and possible Grant funding; growing class sizes and instructional space; staff increases, specialized training, and insurance increases. Is not opposed to renovation, but is opposed to new construction. Also, shared comments from Mary Ballard opposing the MISA project.
16. **Gerald Pollack** – In support of MISA. Shared comments regarding recent economic growth and recovery.
17. **Camille Broderick, Co-President, GHS PTA**– In support of MISA. Shared comments regarding the building approval commitment and the need for additional instructional space.
18. **Jesse Kroon and Adrienne Pluta,** GHS Theatre Students – In support of MISA. Shared comments regarding the deficiencies of the current facility and the need for improvements.
19. **Robert Maddux, RTM District 11,** Finance Committee – In Support of the Central Fire Station. Shared concerns regarding capital spending and the debt level of the Town. Would support MISA, if the cost was reduced to the original request of \$14 million.
20. **Mary Jacobson, RTM District 7** – Opposed to MISA. Shared concerns regarding cost increases to the MISA project, and the need for an alternative plan.
21. **Alex Capozza** – Parent of a Hamilton Avenue Student. In support of the BOE Budget, MISA, and the Byram Pool project but concerned about its cost.

22. **Peter Quigley, RTM District 7** – In support of the RTM SOMR for fiscal restraint. Shared comments regarding changing priorities; is opposed to the BOE operating budget, asking for a 3% cut; choose AP or IB, streamline curriculum, reduce GOSA Administration, mandates, and snow days.
23. **Marianna Ponns Cohen**, Board of Education – Shared comments regarding the BET Budget Guidelines, budget analysis, continuing BOE costs, and the IB program expenses.
24. **Sue Rogers, President, PTAC** – In support of the BOE Budget and MISA. Shared comments regarding the BOE budget deliberations, the importance of education, and the quality of the schools.
25. **Paul Pugliese, Chairman**, Architecture Review Committee, Greenwich Preservation Trust – In support of preservation of the Central Fire Station building. Shared comments regarding the Municipal Historic District; the building project improvement process; opposition to demolition of the building; the proposed cost, and preservation incentives. Would like the Town to find a new location for the Central Fire Station.
26. **Sue Baker** – In support of Byram Pool and Park. Shared concerns regarding the condition of the current facility and its' causing ecological disruption, and the need for replacement.
27. **Joe Kantorski**, Byram Neighborhood Association – Shared a letter, written by Mike Bocchino, Chairman, Byram Neighborhood Association, in support of the Byram Pool project.
28. **Dana Whamond** – In support of Byram Pool. Gave an overview of the conditions at the current Byram Pool facility.
29. **Adrienne Singer, President & CEO, YWCA Greenwich** – In support of reallocation to the external entities line in the Social Services budget of \$24,000 to YWCA for Domestic Abuse Services and gave an overview of the program. 6,500 people are treated at a cost of \$1.7 million. 100% of people treated have a Greenwich connection.
30. **Nick Edwards, RTM District 8** – In support of MISA and demolition and relocation of the Central Fire Station. Shared comments regarding the M/C employees salary increase, Town employee healthcare costs and the value of the Heath Savings Accounts (HSA).
31. **Tony Macleod, Flood & Erosion Control Board** – In support of storm water drainage projects. Shared comments regarding upcoming flood control projects and costs.
32. **Candace Garthwaite** – In support of storm drain infrastructure projects. Shared comments regarding communication with the public and education regarding flood control projects and strategic plans.

33. **Donald Hamilton, RTM District 7**, Legislative and Rules Committee – In support of waste and recycling improvements. Shared comments supporting single stream recycling which would generate cost savings, and reduce trash.
34. **Lucia Jansen, RTM District 7** – Shared comments regarding the tax increase, economy, reductions in spending, supports reduction in BOE headcount, departmental review, and restraints.
35. **Marianna Ponns Cohen, Board of Education** – Continued shared comments regarding the BOE budget, including professional training of teaching staff, administrative headcount reductions, and merging the Town and BOE IT Departments.
36. **Paul Pugliese** – In support of Byram Pool
37. **Laura Erickson, RTM District 5**, GHS PTA – In support of MISA and reductions to the operating budget. Shared comments regarding the MISA approval and construction processes.
38. **Gordon Ennis, RTM District 8** – Continued shared concerns regarding pension funding contributions and assumptions, flood control project costs; supports MISA and postponing the Central Fire Station project; supports the need for a defined contribution benefit plan for Police and Fire; and save costs by eliminating leaf collection and ferry service.

Mr. Mason gave an overview of the upcoming budget process.

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:31 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Maria Bocchino, Recording Secretary

  
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Michael S. Mason, Chairman