

**WICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION  
BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**CAPITAL BUDGET REVIEW and CONSOLIDATION DAY – FY14 BUDGET  
MINUTES**

**Town Hall Meeting Room, 1st Floor – 9:00 A.M.  
Wednesday, February 25, 2014**

**Present:**

**Committee:** Marc V. Johnson, Mary Lee Kiernan, Jeffrey Ramer, Leslie L. Tarkington

**Staff:** Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Amy Siebert, Commissioner of Public Works; David Thompson, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works; Tom Greco, Manager, Business Services Operations; John Crary, Town Administrator; James Michel, DPW Chief Engineer, Richard Feminella, Waste Water Division Manager; Lauren Elliott, Assessor, Alan Monelli, Superintendent Building Construction & Maintenance; Rod Dioquino, Business Operations Supervisor Parking Services

**First Selectman:** Peter Tesei, First Selectman;

**Board:** Michael Mason, Chairman, John Blankley, William Drake, William Finger, Sean Goldrick, Randall Huffman, Nancy Weissler

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:06 A.M and welcomed everyone to the review of the Capital Budget outstanding items remaining from February 19, 2014 and thereafter a review of the Operating Budget by department. He indicated that Capital Accounts would be reviewed one at a time and invited discussion on any item that the Committee members wished to discuss or propose changes.

**Department Speakers and Topics Covered**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**Stormwater Master Plan Program** - The meeting began with Mr. Johnson asking how much of the \$6.8million not spent from the Department's Capital Appropriations was available to be returned to the General Fund. Acknowledging that \$1.4million had already been returned, he asked for clarification of lead time to begin execution of outstanding funded projects and what could get done during FY2014-2015. He also asked what would be reimbursed by State grants and the percentage of reimbursements that could be anticipated.

Mr. Geiger responded that it was difficult to forecast the State's reimbursement timeline because it was a function of State internal auditing practices. Mr. Mynarski noted that TOG received grants from state as well as local sources and gave the example of State reimbursement for town bridges which to date had reimbursed Greenwich \$972million. Ms. Tarkington asked if there was a predictable percentage based on a project type and Ms. Seibert responded that the percentage of reimbursement is known at the beginning of the grant application phase but that each reimbursement rate is different.

Ms. Kiernan asked for a sense of scale and strategy for DPW's drainage and storm water projects. Ms. Seibert replied: 1) analyzing Greenwich's drainage networks; 2) responding to EPA sampling stormwater quality to established standards; and 3) integrating DEEP's recommendations for controlling and enforcing its bacterial goals. Mr. Michel noted that the project is phased so that multiple contractors could enhance its efficiency of implementation. Ms. Kiernan asked for clarification of how the \$40million Flood Erosion Committee estimate was reflected in DPW's Stormwater Master Plan. Ms. Seibert responded that DPW, Conservation, P&Z and Highway were coordinating allocations in their individual budgets.

**Town Hall Improvements** – Ms. Seibert commented that many of the projects budgeted for \$970K over two years were progressing through the planning and design phases.

**Mianus Park Dam Repair** – although this was originally in the 2008 – 2009 Budget, it is a ready project but has not gone forward due to lack of identification of a reimbursement source.

**Byram River Project** – although \$200K has not yet been spent, DPW estimates that an additional \$450K from the 2014-2015 Budget is needed to begin the next phase.

**Silva Cell Tree Well** – Ms. Tarkington asked why trees had been removed and new paving installed after Superstorm Sandy in the Island Beach parking lot before this new tactic was considered. Mr. Cray responded that the Tree Conservancy was donating \$20K to test the new theory that promises not to compress tree roots and that additional funds, although not earmarked, might be applied for from the insurance reimbursement and FEMA funds.

**Cos Cob Park Development** – Mr. Michel indicated that the \$2.3million in 2013's budget and the additional \$1.7million in 2014 would be dedicated to sidewalk and roadway connections. 20-30% of the project was already completed and the balance would be finished in September/October 2014.

**Purchase of Town Street Lights** – Mr. Cray described the process of purchasing all CL&P street lights for which \$295K was unspent in the 2013 Budget and \$585K was requested as a supplement in the 2014 Budget. He indicated that the town's ROI would come from not paying rent for the equipment and the savings anticipated from changing to LED lights. He explained that current lease costs were \$479K annually whereas in the future the operating cost would be approximately \$300K.

**Frontage Road Improvements** – Mr. Michel explained that grant funding from SWERPA and DOT's LOTCIP was available for this as a "self-ready" project so that the changes planned to Exit 2's I-95 ramp would be approved before breaking ground.

Mr. Ramer asked if CT's local Road Accident Reduction Program would reimburse TOG for remediation of other intersections and Ms. Seibert said that 100% of the design phase and 90% of construction could be refunded with approval of this type of grant.

**Highway Maintenance** – Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Seibert if the estimate of \$1.87million was necessary for sidewalk and guard rail issues and Ms. Seibert responded that \$1.5 was needed however the difference would allow for repair of additional similar items.

**Paving** – Mr. Ramer asked if \$2.75million could be spent on paving projects or would \$3million be more appropriate given this season's weather damage. Ms. Seibert said her department could execute on as much as \$4-\$5million of paving in this budget year.

**Park Sidewalks & Road Maintenance** – Ms. Seibert noted that the Highway Department was working with Parks & Recreation to estimate costs that could be integrated into the Parks Master Plan.

Mr. Ramer suggested that Capital Appropriations scheduled for specific parks should be amended to a three phase program to give the Commissioner the flexibility to respond to needs of particular parks.

**Round Hill Bridge Replacement** – Ms. Seibert indicated that this project would start in the spring and that an 80% reimbursement from the State would be simultaneous with submission of billing. When asked about other town bridges that are not scheduled for major upgrades, Ms. Seibert offered that 65 of the town's 75 bridges were low maintenance and that \$144K of the \$150K allocation had been spent to date.

**Church Street Storm Drain** – Mr. Blankley asked about the circumference of piping to be installed and the length of time anticipated for completion of the project. Ms. Seibert replied that the project was designed and ready to be implemented over a 12-month period which could mean the work would be done in two less trafficked work-seasons.

**DPW Vehicles** – Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Seibert about \$566K allocated in 2013, \$975K in 2014 and \$1million in 2015 for vehicles. Ms. Seibert indicated that 44 vehicles were being replaced because the average useful life was 15 years.

**GHS Soil Remediation** – Ms. Seibert indicated that following a meeting with regulators in March, the project was ready to go to Bid by pre-qualified contractors who had the capacity and "air rights" to remove the soil from GHS. Ms. Tarkington expressed concern that any delay in approving the project by the regulators could force delays in the MISA project as soil excavated from MISA is being stockpiled for use on the fields. Mr. Ramer expressed a favorable opinion about \$9million requested for the remediation.

**Highway Traffic & Operations** – Mr. Johnson asked about the \$300K allocated but not yet spent on the Arch Street installation of adaptive lighting. Ms. Seibert indicated that the project was underway but that the resolution of the overcapacity of traffic in the shortened corridor was challenging.

**Holly Hill Master Plan** – Mr. Johnson asked for a breakdown of the \$11.2million estimate and Mr. Ramer asked if \$300K of the project could be temporarily postponed. Ms. Seibert indicated that P&Z had approved the project and that the sewer, driveway changes and fueling station were integrated components to upgrade but the appropriation requested for FY2015 would fund items that are independent of later phases of the Holly Hill master plan and did not obligate funding projected for later years.

**Building Construction & Maintenance** – Mr. Monelli was asked by Mr. Johnson if contingency money from the demotion of the old fire house might be used to offset the amounts requested for construction in the 2014 and 2015 budgets. Mr. Monelli expressed his preference for returning the balance of the unspent contingency at the end of the Central Fire House project.

**Asbestos Abatement** – Mr. Johnson asked about \$400K unspent and was advised that this was an ongoing project.

**Greenwich Point Restrooms** – Mr. Johnson asked if the design of the new building to be presented to ARC was to be similar to the Chimes Building or could be more in keeping with original rustic park buildings. Ms. Kiernan asked how the elevation of the building would affect its accessibility. Mr. Monelli responded he would propose the design suggestion.

**Old Greenwich Civic Center** – Mr. Monelli was asked about the \$200K (2015) and \$500K (2016) requested for replacement and renovation of the building. He responded that the building routine maintenance costs would only escalate because new issues were constantly occurring. Mr. Mason suggested that neighborhood and Friends groups needed to be more involved; Ms. Tarkington asked if DPW would investigate if the building was in the FEMA/Superstorm Sandy zone. Mr. Ramer proposed that Mr. Monelli encourage a public/private partnership to decide the future of the building.

**Byram Pool** – Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Monelli to clarify what remained of the current design allocation and whether the contribution from the Junior League was represented in the remaining amount. Mr. Monelli indicated that the expense of the project's professional rendering expected on March 6 included the Junior League's contribution. This rendering would be used to present the project to Land Use and ARC.

**New Building Department Software** – Ms. Seibert was asked about the urgency of replacing the current software. She responded that the current software was no longer supported due to the manufacturer's closure and that loss of records and plans could result if new software was not purchased immediately.

**Sewer Maintenance** – Mr. Feminella was asked about the status of the 3 pumping stations to which he responded that there had been a delay due to PCBs in waste disposal pipes. Mr. Ramer inquired if any equipment had been lost during Superstorm Sandy and Ms. Tarkington asked if these sewer improvements should continue to be financed with pay-as-you-go financing.

Mr. Ramer asked what was generating overtime and Temp Services in the Division's budget request and Mr. Feminella explained that the 365 day/15 hour per day operation created the need for overtime as well as the assignment of Police on roadside projects for public safety.

Mr. Ramer asked how DPW met the challenge of illegal inflow into the sewer system. Ms. Seibert responded that 14,000 instances had been identified and 8,100 had been remediated.

**Grass Island Settling Tank** – Ms. Kiernan was asked why DPW's capital request had been reduced and was informed that the improvement was moved to the asset management plan.

**Other projects** reviewed included an Old Greenwich piping system adjacent to MetroNorth tracks along I-95 land; the rehabilitation of a Pumping Station and sewer maintenance that was previously in the Operating Budget but moved to the Capital Budget because of the size of the expense.

## **PARKING SERVICES**

Mr. Crary and Mr. Geiger replied to questions about the increase in salaries and departmental overtime indicating that two positions had been upgraded and that the number of projects would increase by 20% in the coming year.

Mr. Dioquino indicated that the investment in additional pay stations, electronic meters and charging stations would result in increasing electrical service costs however \$3.9million additional revenue was anticipated based on sales of smart cards and increased downtown parking fine enforcement. The Parking Fund budget projection of a 10% increase in Parking Permit sales was questioned by Mr. Ramer and Ms. Tarkington who were concerned that private commercial companies were renting space in public lots rather than building sufficient parking to accommodate customers and employees and the additional financial burden above the inflation rate on commuting residents for their cost of parking.

Mr. Johnson asked why the program of electronic charging stations wasn't being privatized. Mr. Cray responded that part of the costs could be offset by a state grant.

Mr. Dioquino was asked about the expense for extensive maintenance on Town Hall's garage to which he responded that the water proofing membrane needed to be replaced because its deficiencies were responsible for creating potholes.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that \$75K had not been spent of the \$674K that had been allocated in Capital Appropriations as well as \$175K for paving but Mr. Dioquino said that some money would be taken forward and the majority of paving money would be spent before the end of June 2014.

**Lunch Break began at 1:05 P.M. and concluded at 1:35 P.M.**

**Operating Revenue Presentation** - The Operating Revenue review was presented by Mr. Mynarski. He itemized the sources and amounts of the \$397million of revenue that was anticipated to support the 2014-2015 Budget. He noted that the primary revenue source was property tax but that grants and LOCIP reimbursements were major contributors. He noted that the Mill Rate would be calculated after reductions for tax settlements, senior tax relief and losses from uncollected taxes were subtracted from anticipated revenue. He also noted that savings from employee migration to HSA health benefits and fiscal year end release of encumbrances would contribute significantly to revenue.

Ms. Elliot commented on Grand List adjustments comparing 230 appeals in 2013 to 176 made for 2014 adjustments. Her Capital Budget request for \$110K would implement the Assessor Department's Reevaluation Project to inspect residential properties.

**Capital Budget Review concluded and Consolidation discussions began at 3:25 P.M.**

### **Consolidation Process**

Mr. Johnson informed the Committee that the process would begin with a review of the Operating Budget by department. He commented to the Committee that projects such as MISA, Central Fire House and Soil Remediation might require additional funds in the future. Given the scope of these projects, the uncertain economy, and the ability of our senior citizens and unemployed to pay increases in taxes, he questioned the timing of introducing new initiatives and adding new positions to the 2014-2015 Budget.

Ms. Tarkington questioned the Operating Budget Revenue assumption of \$321million and suggested reductions in the estimated Grand List and proposed income from Parking Services should be considered.

## TOPICS

### OPERATING FUND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### General Government

- **Registrar of Voters –(\$14,000)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the request be reduced by \$14K and that TOG's 2.5% salary increase guideline be applied to this request; he recommend that this change should be implemented before Fall elections.
- **Law Department – (\$13,437)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the request for a FT Paralegal be reduced to adding a Part Time employee. Mr. Ramer indicated that he disagreed and noted that he would be voting against this suggestion.
- **Planning & Zoning Department** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for increasing a Part Time position to Full Time.
- **Conservation Department** – Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for increasing a Part Time position to Full Time. Ms. Kiernan summarized her support for the increase proposed in the First Selectman's budget changing the part time position to full time given the increasing demands on this department and the increasing applications in all land use departments, which is consistent with added staff in these other departments.
- **Inland Wetlands & Water Courses Agency - \$3,000** The Finance Department recommended that \$3,000 for consulting services that was originally reduced from this department by the First Selectman's Office be reinstated.

#### Fire Department

- **Fire Department – (\$425,076)** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for adding 9 career fire fighters and would also oppose the elevation of 4 current Lieutenants to the rank of Captain and elevating 4 firefighters to the rank of Lieutenant. Mr. Ramer suggested he would vote for hiring 9 new firefighters but opposed elevating the Lieutenants to Captains or promoting 4 firefighters to Lieutenants. He proposed a condition of releasing funds quarterly based on volunteer firefighters being integrated into training with career firefighters.
- Mr. Johnson indicated he approved of the \$60K allocation for the Round Hill Fire House and \$140K for the Banksville Fire House.

#### Public Works Department

- **Public Works** – Mr. Johnson recommended approving the request for adding a Full Time permit coordinator.

#### External Entities (\$77,500)

- **TAG** – Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the request for a \$91K increase and recommended that the Committee consider a budget increase of 2.5% plus \$10,000.
- **GEMS** – Mr. Ramer suggested reducing this budget by \$125,000 – equal to a supervisor level position. Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed this request. Mr. Ramer suggested conditioning the release of funds. Ms. Kiernan suggested conditioning the release of funds on delivery by GEMS of financial and staffing information according to major object codes and Finance Department guidance.

## **Board of Education**

- **Schools** – Ms. Tarkington recommended that because enrollment was down and staffing had increased that the Committee consider reducing salaries by \$300,000. Mr. Mason commented that the ratio of 10 students to 1 certified staff person was not viable due to attendance dropping and he questioned why the BOE staffing model did not match what was approved. Mr. Finger pointed out that school budgeting took place in November but school enrollment in September could differ from November's basis.
- **Lunch Fund** – Mr. Mynarski noted that the \$300K fund was established as a revolving fund and that the budget's contribution was meant to bring the fund back to its intended level. He opposed capitalizing the fund beyond this level.

## **Parks & Recreation**

- **Parks & Recreation Community First** – Mr. Johnson recognized the proposal's creativity and initiative but opposed the cost because outsourcing the project may not have been explored. Mr. Ramer commented that if union contracts were involved, outsourcing might not be an option. Ms. Kiernan noted that her interpretation of Community First was that projects should be developed to increase productivity.

## **SAVINGS FROM FIXED CHARGES (\$650,000)**

Mr. Geiger and the Committee reviewed estimated savings that would result from the Operating Budget review as well as reductions from FIXED CHARGES for Unemployment Insurance (\$50K), Workers Compensation (\$100K) and healthcare benefit costs due to migration (\$500K) were calculated.

## **INCREMENTAL REVENUE FROM PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES \$2,500,000**

Additional revenue from payments in lieu of taxes was estimated. Nathaniel Witherell tax credits could be applied to reduce their debt service and reduce the amount funded by the General Fund.

## **CAPITAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Trunked Radio System Replacement – \$5,400,000** - Mr. Ramer suggested that capital set aside for FY2016 be added to FY2015 in order to allow the Police Department to sign long-term supplier contracts that might be more advantageous. It would not be expected that the full amount would be spent in FY2015.
- **Document Imaging – (\$150,000)** - Mr. Johnson suggested that the requested \$150K could be covered by the \$186K request in the 2014-2015 budget.
- **IT Disaster Recovery – (\$100,000)** - Ms. Tarkington questioned if this item was a realistic expectation of a newly hired IT Director.
- **Fire Department** – Give backs of \$91K for dry hydrants and \$150K for radios are expected.
- **Fire Department** – Mr. Ramer asked if public safety would be compromised if the purchase of apparatus was deferred. Chief Siencienski replied that it would be possible to defer one \$650K pumper. Mr. Mason noted that the delay on delivery meant that the

money could not be spent until the end of FY 2015. Mr. Johnson questioned authorizing the request in the 2014-2015 Budget and suggested moving the request forward.

- **Police Department** – the return of 2012’s \$51K allocation for Crown Victoria cars and \$44K for radios could be anticipated.
- **Police Department** – Mr. Ramer suggested that in the 2016 Budget he would recommend reducing the number of divers from 9 to 6.
- **DPW – Engineering Division** – Mr. Johnson suggested that the request for \$500K in 2014 and \$400K in 2015 for Town Hall projects might be delayed. Ms. Tarkington was in favor except for the \$117K for the front of the building.
- **DPW Sewer Division** – Mr. Geiger pointed out that the Division’s Capital Improvement Budget had \$17million of unspent funds available. Ms. Tarkington pointed out that construction under the Federal consent decree should have begun so that \$2.5million on hand could lapse from the Old Greenwich project.
- **Parking Services – (\$16,000)** - Mr. Johnson indicated that he opposed the Electronic Vehicle Charging Station expenditure because he believed it should be outsourced. Ms. Tarkington suggested that the Paving expenditure would not be spent because the work would be done by DPW.

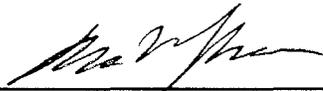
Mr. Johnson suggested the Committee break for the day. More Consolidation Day discussions would take place at the beginning of Decision Day.

The meeting adjourned at 5:21 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



Marc V. Johnson, Chairman