

BET LAW COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting Held on
March 11, 2010

The meeting began at 1:30 P.M. Attendance:

Committee Members: Nancy Barton, Jim Campbell

BET Members: Leslie Tarkington

Law Department: Wayne Fox

Eugene McLaughlin (part of the meeting)

Aamina Ahmad (part of the meeting)

Fernando de Arango (part of the meeting)

1. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Committee's February 16, 2010 meeting were approved.
2. Revaluation Contract: The Committee discussed the Assessor's request that the Town should accept an assignment of the contract for certain revaluation services from Total Valuation to Municipal Valuation. The preliminary conclusion is that there should be a new contract with Municipal Valuation, which would contain all necessary provisions. The Law Department is pursuing the matter with the Assessor and the contractor, and expects to be in a position to report back in early April, in time for the relevant BET Committee and Liaison meetings, followed by the BET meeting in April 2010.
3. Charter Provisions Relating to Social Services Department: The Law Department has reviewed the relevant Charter provisions concerning the positions of the Commissioner and the Deputy Commission, and has advised that there is no Charter or Connecticut law provision that requires a Deputy Commissioner.
4. Proposed Legislation Concerning Municipal Assessors: The Committee discussed the proposed legislation, CT House Bill #5059, which would make the positions of municipal assessors in Connecticut as apolitical as possible, including a provision that an assessor may not be terminated except upon "good cause." Based upon advice from the Law Department, the Committee determined that the proposed legislation conflicts with and is controlled by Section 293 of the Charter for the Town of Greenwich, and determined to recommend that the Town should not take any action at this time, pending continued analysis of the proposed bill as it works its way through the Connecticut legislature.

5. Review of Revaluation Cases: The Committee voted 2-0 to take up the review of revaluation cases in executive session. Following review, the Committee voted 2-0 to return to regular session. The Committee agreed that its report to the BET should note that most of the outstanding cases were not filed until 2007-2009 (although they are correctly listed as relating to the 2005 revaluation), and they are simply proceeding in the ordinary course. There are two older cases relating to a John Street property, which are still pending due to several changes in the plaintiff's attorney and related delays; another older case relates a property on King Street, which is subject to a bankruptcy stay and is likely to be withdrawn; and a collection of cases involving office equipment are also expected to be withdrawn.

6. The Committee voted 2-0 to take up the review of pending litigation and claims out of order and in executive session. Following review, the Committee voted 2-0 to return to regular session.

7. The Committee voted 2-0 to take up the review of Law Department personnel in executive session. Following review, the Committee voted 2-0 to return to regular session. The Committee requested that the Town Attorney assemble data concerning the Town's expenditures on Board of Education special education cases, both outside counsel expenses and the use of internal resources, to provide a basis for future discussion. In addition, the Committee requested that the Town Attorney provide detailed information concerning the nature of the work performed by the Department's administrative and paralegal staff, to provide a basis for future discussion of the Department's staffing ratio.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M.