



MINUTES of the regular meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Monday, March 17, 2014 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Michael Mason called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M., after which the members pledged allegiance to the flag.

Board members in attendance:

Michael S. Mason, Chairman
Arthur D. Norton, Vice Chairman
William Drake, Clerk
John Blankley
William R. Finger
Sean Goldrick
Randall Huffman
Marc Johnson
Mary Lee Kiernan
Jeffrey S. Ramer
Leslie L. Tarkington
Nancy Weissler

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

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Lauren Elliott, Assessor; Robert Shipman, Assistant Assessor; Amy Seibert, Commissioner of Public Works; Peter Siecienski, Chief, Fire Department; Chief Scott Hawkins, Sound Beach Fire Department; Allen Brown, Nathaniel Witherell Executive Director; Raymond Augustine, Director of Financial Operations

Other: Sandy Kornberg, Volunteer Fire Fighter; Sean Turpin, Glenville Volunteer Fire Fighter

ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

<u>PW-5</u>	<u>DPW</u>	<u>Additional Appropriation</u>
\$215,000	A345 54050	Maintenance of Buildings

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the application.

<u>NW-3</u>	<u>Nathaniel Witherell</u>	<u>Transfer General & Elevator Maintenance</u>
\$100,500	H45020 54010 54060 56100	Allocated Insurance Expense

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the application.

NON ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

<u>PW-4</u>	<u>DPW</u>	<u>Additional Appropriation</u>
\$1,015,000	A312 51100, 51300, 52300, 53750	Snow & Ice Control FY2013-14

Upon a motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the application.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Ms. Elliott presented the Assessor's Report, stating that the Board of Assessment Appeals had completed its hearings resulting in a reduction of \$29,760,450 in the estimated Grand List. Ms. Elliot commented that the reduction was less than forecast. The Senior Tax Credit program applications are being processed.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Assessor's Report.

COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

Mr. Mynarski presented the Comptroller's Report, commenting that the Superstorm Sandy insurance and FEMA reimbursement checks have not yet been received. Mr. Norton noted that Mr. Lally had signed the proof of loss letter within the past week and returned it to the insurance company.

Upon a motion by Mr. Norton, seconded by Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Comptroller's Report.

ACCEPTANCE OF TREASURER'S REPORT SHOWING INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD OF October 1, 2013 – October 31, 2013

Upon a motion by Mr. Norton, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Treasurer's Report.

BET Standing Committee Reports

Mr. Norton reported that the Audit Committee had discussed posting of other meeting information beyond Meeting Minutes on the TOG website; the Committee voted 2-2 on the matter. The Committee is awaiting Mr. Fox's determination on posting policy. Mr. Mason suggested that in the absence of policy, any member could make a motion to request posting of information under the New Business portion of a BET meeting.

BET Liaison Reports

None

BET Special Project Team Reports

Mr. Mason noted that a written report updating the Board on MISA progress had been received today by the members and recommended that time was needed to review it.

Mr. Norton reported that despite delays, the conclusion of work at Nathaniel Witherell was anticipated in August/September.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of McGladrey as TOG Auditor for Fiscal 2014

Mr. Norton commented that the Audit Committee had voted 4-0 to renew McGladrey's contract for the 2014 Audit. Mr. Mynarski reported that the McGladrey contract had been for two years with the addition option of yearly approval of three more years, with a cost escalation during each of the three optional years

Upon a motion by Mr. Mason, seconded unanimously, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the appointment of McGladrey as the TOG auditor for the 2014 Audit.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Weissler, the Board voted 12-0-0 to add a new item to the Agenda under New Business.

Appointment of McGladrey as Auditor for Nathaniel Witherell Cost Certification

Upon a motion by Audit Committee (presented by Mr. Norton), the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the appointment of McGladrey as Auditor for Nathaniel Witherell Cost Certification to obtain the State Historic Tax Credit.

Executive Session – Discussion of Real Estate Acquisition

The Order of Business was changed so that executive session would be the last agenda item.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BET Regular Meeting, February 18, 2014

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of the BET from February 18, 2014.

BET Budget Work Session February 20, 2014

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the BET Budget Work Session Minutes from February 20, 2014.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Mason reminded BET members that a Public Hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at 7:00 P.M.

Mr. Mason thanked the members of the public and the Fire Department for waiting and then invited Chief Siecienski to begin his remarks.

OLD BUSINESS

Fire Department 2014 – 2015 Budget

Chief Siecienski began his remarks by expressing appreciation for the ad hoc meetings and time invested to learn the complex issues driving the Fire Department's Budget request. He presented a model of 3-person staffing at current fire stations and a future Northwest station. Acknowledging that the Board was seeking a comprehensive plan, he reviewed the evolution of Greenwich's Fire Department from an all-volunteer firefighting force in the 1970s to the pressure put on the current department to respond to life safety and property risk with inadequate manpower in 2-person fire response.

He explained the request for 8 new firefighters for FY15 and 4 additional fire fighters in FY16, saying the results would a reduction in injuries, wear and tear on equipment and an increase in life/property safety.

Mr. Ramer asked if volunteer firefighters could fill the staffing gap. Mr. Johnson asked about the costs of promotion of captains and lieutenants, added to the cost of hiring new firefighters over the next five years.

Mr. Kornberg and Mr. Turpin commented on the new dialogue between Greenwich's Volunteer Firefighters Association and the TOG Fire Department on integrating volunteers with career fire –fighters. They felt progress was made that would increase their ability to effectively recruit and support the Department in the future, but could not commit to being the third or fourth firefighter in fire response immediately.

Chief Siecienski noted that national, state and OSHA standards recommended a 4-person firefighting crew (2 inside/2 outside) and his proposal of a 3-man response would make progress toward this goal. He agreed with the Volunteer Association that a Memorandum of Understanding could be developed within 30 days to improve integration of volunteers into firefighting activity.

The Board asked additional questions about the costs of the proposed staffing and Mr. Mason complimented the career and volunteer firefighters on their cooperation and expressed hope for success. He encouraged the firefighters to appear at the upcoming Public Hearing on March 18 and again for the Decision Meeting on March 20, 2014.

Mr. Tesei thanked the Board for its time and concern on the fire safety issue and recognized that this investigative process had been the most time dedicated to the subject in the last 10-15 years. In summation he recommended striking a balance between the town's historic volunteer firefighting tradition and contemporary demands for life/safety.

Executive Session

On a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington and Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to enter Executive Session to discuss a real estate acquisition at 8:28 P.M.

The Board exited Executive Session at 9:03 P.M.

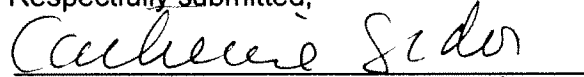
Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to end the Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

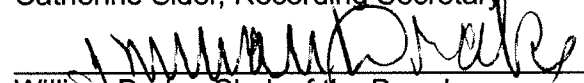
Upon a motion by Mr. Blankley, seconded by Ms. Weissler, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9.:14 P.M.

The next Regular Meeting of the BET is scheduled on Monday, April 21, 2014 in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



William Drake, Clerk of the Board



Michael S. Mason, Chairman