MINUTES of the Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Thursday, March 22, 2012 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Michael Mason called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M., after which the members pledged allegiance to the flag.

Board members in attendance:

Michael S. Mason, Chairman
Arthur D. Norton, Vice Chairman
Mary Lee A. Kiernan, Clerk
Gregory Bedrosian
Robert Brady
William R. Finger
Sean Goldrick
Randall Huffman
Marc V. Johnson
Joseph L. Pellegrino
Jeffrey S. Ramer
Leslie L. Tarkington

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

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Benjamin Branyan, Managing Director of Operations, Board of Education; Joseph Siciliano, Director; Tom Greco, Manager, Business Services Operations, David D'Andrea, Operations Manager, Griffith E. Harris Golf Course, Parks and Recreation Department; James Heavey, Chief, Police Department; Amy Siebert, Commissioner, Public Works Department; Caroline Baisley, Director, Health Department; Carmella Budkins, Town Clerk

Mr. Mason gave an opening statement in which gave an overview of the FY 2012-2013 budget decision process.

PROPOSED FY 2012-2013 BUDGET

101 – Representative Town Meeting $14,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.
102 – Ethics $2,400

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

104 – Emergency Operations - $131,800

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

105 – Office of the Selectman - $986,339

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

106 – Purchasing Department - $1,038,514

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

107 – Administrative Services Center - $659,105

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

109 – Human Resources - $2,025,443

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

111 – Probate Court - $43,485

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

120 – Registrars of Voters - $487,591

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

130 – Finance-Administration - $1,934,929

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

131 – Retirement - $1,518,750

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.
134 – Information Technology - $3,239,999

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

135 – Assessor - $1,011,631

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

136 – Board of Assessment Appeals - $38,400

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

139 – Tax Collector - $555,616

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

140 – Law Department - $2,525,924

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

150 – Town Clerk’s Office - $572,706

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

161 – Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals / Zoning Enforcement - $435,192

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

170 – Condemnation Commission - $2,500

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

171 – Planning and Zoning Commission - $881,511

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

172 – Conservation Commission - $288,725

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.
173 – Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Agency - $494,372

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

174 – Land Use Administration - $339,326

Amendment:

      Document imaging     A174-52190  $27,000

Mr. Pellegrino stated that this is to reinstate funding for digitizing Inland Wetland records that was removed by the Selectmen's Office. These funds would allow the department to complete the digitizing program (records from 1975 through 1999) and allow the public online access.

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

174 – Land Use Administration - $366,326

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

195 – Commission on Aging - $176,213

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

196 – Senior Center - $646,798

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

101 – 196 General Government $20,078,669

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

201-208 – Fire Department - $13,670,895

Amendment:

      Firefighting Force Overtime     205-51100  $700,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation, upon the BET's receipt and acceptance of a plan and schedule to implement the plan to increase the staffing model at the Glenville fire station.

Mr. Pellegrino explained that this condition is in an effort to allow the Fire Chief adequate time to develop and recommend a plan for additional staffing at the Glenville Fire Station in order to address improving fire coverage in Northwest Greenwich.
Upon a motion by Mr. Pellegrino, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the amendment.

201-208 – Fire Department - $13,670,895

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

211-217 – Police Department - $19,098,268

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

301-351 – Public Works - $19,289,142

Amendment:

Byram River Level Gauge A302-52950 $18,000

Mr. Pellegrino proposed an additional appropriation of $18,000 to the $1,055,398 that had been appropriated for the Engineering Division.

Mr. Pellegrino stated that this is the annual cost for the Town’s maintenance of the Byram River level gauge. In the past, grants were available to cover the cost of this service; however, the grants are no longer available to us. This cost must now be absorbed by the Town. DPW will attempt to cover the cost for this fiscal year within their budget, but request that funding be included in the FY 2012-2013 budget.

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

301-351 – Public Works - $19,307,142

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

380 – Vehicle Maintenance - $3,242,966

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

401-425 – Health - $2,211,873

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

440 – External Entities - $4,874,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.
501-509 - Social Services - $3,060,500

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

600-675 - Board of Education - $139,252,220

Amendment:

Administration  A600  $5,112,469

Mr. Pellegrino proposed an additional appropriation of $105,000 to the $5,007,469 that had been appropriated for Administration.

Mr. Pellegrino stated that the Budget Committee voted to reduce the Board of Education's budget by $450,000. In addition to the $450,000 reduction, the Budget Committee also inadvertently reduced the budget by an additional $105,000 for a total reduction of $555,000. This amendment proposes to restore the $105,000 reduction to the Board of Education budget.

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

600-675 - Board of Education - $139,357,220

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

701 - Greenwich Library - $7,615,990

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 11-0-1 (Ms. Kiernan abstained) to approve the item.

702 - Peterson Foundation - $1,083,372

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 11-0-1 (Ms. Kiernan abstained) to approve the item.

710 - Perrot Memorial Library - $1,546,631

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

701-710 - Libraries - $10,245,993

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 11-0-1 (Ms. Kiernan abstained) to approve the item.

801-834 - Parks and Recreation - $9,960,301

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.
901 – Town Contributions for Employee Benefits - $77,441,458

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

902 – Unemployment Compensation & Workers Compensation - $3,358,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

908 – Payments for Insurance Coverage - $3,000,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

911 – Sewer Taxes for Town Owned Properties - $600,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

926 – Non-Public School Bus Transportation - $2,606,029

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

950 – Repayment of Debt, Principal & Interest - $19,837,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

999 – Transfers to Other Funds (Ex Capital Projects) - $6,164,000

Amendment:

Fixed Charges Contribution to Nathaniel Witherell 999-57128 $1,000,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation, upon the BET’s receipt of a report demonstrating a need for this contribution to Nathaniel Witherell.

Mr. Pellegrino explained that this condition will not allow Nathaniel Witherell to draw from the General Fund at will, in order to replenish its Revolving Fund.

Upon a motion by Mr. Norton, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the amendment.

999 – Transfers to Other Funds (Ex Capital Projects) - $6,164,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.
901 – 999 Fixed Charges - $113,006.487

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

General Fund - $358,114,313

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

Capital

General Government - $415,000

Amendment:

Purchasing (Phones) 106-59250 $15,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon the BET’s receipt and acceptance of a report demonstrating the need for phone upgrade.

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

Amendment:

Selectman (800MHz Radio System Study) 105-59560 $155,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon the establishment of a working group headed by the Selectman’s Office to oversee the radio system evaluation study.

Mr. Pellegrino explained that the public safety radio system is many years old, and the provider has indicated that they will no longer support the service going forward, for that reason we need to evaluate and identify a replacement. A working group will be established under the Selectman’s Office, as requested by the First Selectman, to conduct this evaluation. Mr. Mason also shared comments regarding State requirements and potential for grant funding.

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

Amendment:

Mr. Gieger stated that the budget did not reflect the transfer of $155,000 from the Police to the General Government for the radio system upgrade.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the amendment.
General Government - $570,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

Fire - $1,012,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

Police - $625,000

Amendment:

Mr. Gieger stated that the budget did not reflect the transfer of $155,000 from the Police to the General Government for the radio system upgrade.

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

Police - $470,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

Public Works - $18,277,000

Amendment:

Central Fire Station  345-59560  $2,459,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon receipt and acceptance by the BET of plans and cost estimates on the full project, including the proposed replacement fire station to be constructed on the site, and the final approvals from all land use agencies and other regulatory agencies necessary for the construction of the proposed replacement fire station, and receipt and satisfactory review of a Phase I environmental report, a Phase II report (if required), and an invasive asbestos test report.

Mr. Ramer explained that there should be no demolition of the existing fire station until the regulatory approvals, including the Planning & Zoning Board of Appeals approval, have been obtained. This Board has not yet reviewed schematics or other basic plans of the design and cost estimates of the proposed new station, and until this Board has accepted those plans and cost estimates, the existing building may not be demolished. In addition, the Board must review the Phase I and possibly Phase II environmental reports, before committing to construction, and considering the age of the building, it may have been partially insulated with asbestos fiber materials.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the amendment.
Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

**Fleet - $188,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

**Health - $64,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

**Social Services - $32,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

**Schools - $21,952,000**

Amendment:

MISA 680 59560 $12,215,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon the receipt and acceptance by the BET of a report from the Campaign for MISA, Inc., an organization qualified under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, regarding pledges for the MISA project.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the amendment.

Amendment:

MISA 680 59560 $12,215,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon the receipt and acceptance by the BET from the MISA Building Committee of all bids for the MISA project.

The Board discussed and agreed that the MISA subject to release conditions are not intended to delay the project.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the amendment.

Amendment:

Board of Education (Phones) 680 59060 $126,000
Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon the BET’s receipt and acceptance of a report demonstrating the need for phone upgrade.

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

**Schools - $21,952,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

**Libraries - $273,000**

Amendment:

Library (Phones) 701-59090 $85,000

Subject to release by the Board of Estimate and Taxation upon the BET’s receipt and acceptance of a report demonstrating the need for phone upgrade.

Upon a motion by Mr. Pellegrino, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 11-0-1 (Ms. Kiernan abstained) to approve the amendment.

**Libraries - $273,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 11-0-1 (Ms. Kiernan abstained) to approve the item, as amended.

**Parks and Recreation - $2,846,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

**Bond/BAN Acquisition and Interest - $543,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

**Total Capital Fund - $46,227,000**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

**Total Overall Budget - $404,341,313**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item, as amended.

**361 – Sewer Maintenance Fund - $9,991,847**

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.
361 – Sewer Improvement Fund - $9,175,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

450 – Nathaniel Witherell - $24,108,559

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

132 – Other Post Employment Benefits - $9,575,000

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

219 and 318 – Parking Fund - $4,226,088

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

317 – Parking Fund – State Portion - $204,400

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

670 – School Lunch Fund - $3,860,740

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

824 – Griffith E. Harris Golf Course Revolving Fund - $2,020,459

Upon a motion by Ms. Kiernan, seconded by Mr. Pellegrino, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the item.

RESOLUTIONS of the Board of Estimate and Taxation and Representative Town Meeting on FY 2012-2013 Budget

Mr. Mason shared comments regarding the importance of the resolutions.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Resolutions of the Board of Estimate and Taxation and Representative Town Meeting on the 2012-2013 Budget, Grants and Other Receipts.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Resolutions of the Board of Estimate and Taxation and Representative Town Meeting on the 2012-2013 Budget, Additional Provisions.
Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Resolution Authorizing Borrowings in the Aggregate Amount of $22,044,000 to meet a Portion of the Capital Budget Appropriations in the Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Resolution Authorizing Borrowings in the Amount of $14,585,000 to meet the Appropriation for the Construction of the Greenwich High School Music Instruction Space and Auditorium in the Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Resolution Authorizing Borrowings in the Aggregate Amount of $3,780,000 for Various Sewerage System Appropriations in the Sewer Improvement Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

COMMENTS

Mr. Mason invited each of the members to share their comments.

Mr. Norton
This is the seventh budget that I have voted to recommend as a member of this body, the BET, and it is a milestone, the first to recommend total expenditures greater than $400M. I have followed Greenwich municipal expenditures since I relocated to Greenwich during the Fiscal 1968 term, and the budget recommended tonight is greater than that budget by a multiple of thirteen.

Let me comment briefly on our budget structure, and my observations. Our budget has a trifurcated composition: operating, fixed charges, and capital, and each section functions to provide funding for the business of the Town of Greenwich.

The operating section provides the funding for our town services, public safety, education, recreation, public works, public health, social services, an accredited museum, a five star nursing home; programs and services that our citizens want and expect. Fixed charges include the employee benefits, our insurance program, mandated employee expenses. These two sections do not have much variability; however they have constant cost changes to reflect product delivery. The third area, Capital, is a variable, with two basic components; funding for which we have the financial capacity, and more important, our physical ability to complete the work.

The growth and changes in Greenwich during the forty years that I have been a resident have been extensive, and we have today a very ambitious Capital program. I posit that as we plan each project, we determine that it is necessary that there is majority support, and that we have the operational ability to execute and implement.

I am proud of the work of this Board with our financial discipline, our processes, and our procedures, including our fund balance and debt policies, and our Capital plan, and this recommendation tonight indicates further that we work to form consensus to serve our constituents, the taxpayers, and all Greenwich residents. Mr. Chairman, I believe that this is a good budget, and I am proud to serve as your Vice Chair as we recommend this budget for approval.

Mr. Brady
One of the things that I learned in the RTM is that if it has already been said, don’t say it again. So, I will defer the next member.
Mr. Huffman
I think we are pleased with the work that we have done with the budget and we have accomplished a lot. What I remain concerned about is that even with the increases that we have in the budget, our contribution to Capital improvements and in the case of this Town is often, to a great extent, maintaining and improving existing facilities as opposed to creating new and additional facilities. Still, it is in the neighborhood of ten percent of the total budget, and that people who are expert in this field will tell you that this is not adequate to keep your infrastructure at the level that it should be.

So we really have some work still to do to decide how to increase and fund an additional Capital budget if we want the Town to maintain and improve its fiscal structure and its Capital structure. At the same time, I think we’re all concerned that the fixed charges have increased now to a fourth of the full budget, and that is an exceedingly high figure and one that I think we will have to continue to look at carefully in the future.

Ms. Tarkington
This has been a productive and successful budget season. There were numerous challenges. Thanks to Mr. Mason and Mr. Pellegrino in their new roles, as well as my Budget Committee colleagues, Mr. Finger and Mr. Ramer, and all other BET members.

There are several items that I’d like to mention. We met all requests by the MISA Building Committee, and anticipated other potential liabilities. The team on this is multi-experienced and professional. MISA construction and the GHS/Hillside Road soils projects will remain a focus for the remainder of this and the next fiscal year.

The Fire Department staffing is a breakthrough for greatly improved fire coverage for the Town’s northwest quadrant. Also, the enhanced staffing should reinforce central Greenwich firefighting during the period of the temporary central firehouse. By this time next year, the fire department should have factual data to move forward on for this section of Town.

Like each BET member, to come to consensus, there are issues that I have to step back from. On the operating side, there are issues that will need monitoring, including the operating budget of Witherell, which will require a Town subsidy of $1 million and a Friends of Witherell subsidy of $1 million. If private partnership funds are to be counted on for capital projects, they must deliver committed funds in a timely manner and according to agreement, whether Witherell, MISA, or a future project. On the capital side, there are projects that could have been deferred, which would put less pressure on the Town’s debt service from three to eight years from now.

Finally, I would like to thank the Town employees who made this budget and BET Decision Day possible. Mr. Mynarski, Mr. Gieger, and the Finance Department staff are amazing. They work smartly, and hard, especially during the budget cycle. A couple of Town departments were outstanding. The Board of Education was forthright, and provided excellent follow-up and teamwork. Also, when the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief were queried, they brought forth solutions, and we see that included in our budget. Participants in the process include Peter Tesei, John Crary, Amy Siebert, Al Cava, and many others. Thanks to all. I look forward to supporting this budget through the RTM process.

Mr. Goldrick
It’s been a marvelous education on the town government over the last few months. I like to echo Randy Huffman’s remarks in terms of the Capital situation. We have a largely increasing Capital budget and it is very necessary. We have found that maintenance of some of our facilities have not been done in the past, we are now addressing the situation with our schools. I’m heartened to see that we now have financing for Nathaniel Witherell, and now that we have Nathaniel Witherell rated as the best nursing home facility in the State of Connecticut, we’ll hopefully match that with first class structural facilities there as well.

I would also like to note the challenges going forward with our sewer system and water treatment. I think we’ve got close to $100M in planned expenditures for that system over the next six years, and in the water treatment facility, the real workings of that is in the process of being changed over. That’s going to be a huge challenge engineering wise and that has to be done.
And I’d also like to note that we’ve got a lot of supporters for the Byram Pool and for making that a first rate facility in that part of town. I know that we are going to revisit that going forward and I would certainly like to see that taken up with due speed. I appreciate the all of the efforts of my new colleagues.

Mr. Johnson
As another new member of the BET, I found it kind of interesting that we started a few months ago right at the beginning of this whole budgeting process, so perhaps I felt like the guy handed a small snow shovel just as the snow blizzard was hitting the town with over two feet of snow. I was a little overwhelmed and am still overwhelmed with the process.

I do have a few observations; again this is over the course of the last two months. I’m incredibly impressed with the professionalism and dedication of the department heads from both of the Town of Greenwich and the Board of Education. I have really learned a lot through this whole budget process from them. They are very professional and know everything about their different departments, so I was impressed that they are such a valuable part of this whole process of budgeting.

Second observation is the Budget Committee: Ms. Tarkington, Mr. Pellegrino, Mr. Finger, and Mr. Ramer, as well as Peter Mynarski, Roland Gieger and the Finance Department staff--- just an incredible job. And to negotiate through this whole process, it’s amazing how well that goes, so hats off to them.

And a final comment on the Capital budget, I was interested to see that by my numbers $46M of the general fund was dedicated to Capital projects and I think the total was about $57M. What’s a little scary to me is that next year that will be almost doubled given some of the construction projects that will be starting. Really what that means, especially this year, are a lot of painful decisions going through to select what to fund and what not to fund, and it’s only going to get tougher.

I was fortunate to attend one of the middle schools here in town, some forty years ago. And over the course of the last twenty years as a parent, attending some meetings, and being a GBA basketball coach, I was happy to see some improvements. But it still pains me to see what still needs to be done. Certainly no criticism to the Board of Education, but maybe as an example of our town facilities, there is a lot to do and a lot of future projects as we’ve all seen.

So, am I worried? Yes, a little bit. But after sitting through this process, I have a lot of confidence that the Budget Committee itself, as well as hopefully the rest of us on the BET, will show to the Town of Greenwich residents that this process works and a sound budget can be put together. So I am very appreciative of this whole process and am proud to be part of this group.

Mr. Bedrosian
As another rookie on the BET, I must say during my career I have had the chance and the opportunity to serve on numerous corporate and non-profit boards, and the BET has been a real honor. Being part of the budget process here in the Town of Greenwich, the rigor, the discipline, the interaction that we’ve all had with the various constituencies and ourselves, the twelve of us, has been a real privilege. I mentioned in the midst of the process, to our Budget Chair, Mr. Pellegrino, I analogize the creating the budget to that of a symphony. Each of the different, distinct pieces on their own is relevant, but having each fit and work and sound well all together is really the art of what I think all of us here try to do and I am privileged and honored to be helping to create this budget.

Mr. Ramer
As has been said before, this is a community that has taxes that are the envy of all of our surrounding neighbors, and we have services second to none. For fifteen years, we have said to you that we will keep our mill rate increases between two and four percent, and for fifteen years we have kept that promise. For fifteen years, our increases, in fact, have been below three and one half percent.

This is a finance operation that works well. I’m a member of a minority party and I’m deeply appreciative of the fact that my colleagues on both parties listen to what has to be said, they accommodate, not
everything that I ask for, but we reach sensible middle grounds. This is a coherent board, without any of
the interpersonal difficulties that the media like to talk about with other boards. This is a board of people
that work well with each other, work well with the Board of Selectmen. We like each other. This is called
good government.

The only parts of this that I worry about is when the public comes in and sits at the farthest seats away
because they don’t want to sit in our proximity. Other than that, I think you are seeing government being
handled well, and I think they share my appreciation, my pride in the job well done.

Mr. Pellegrino
In terms of revenues, we are very sensitive to our permits, our conveyance tax, and our interest income,
and even this year, even though it is at a low point in terms of being budgeted, we are still about $1.6M
below where we budgeted. So those, as well as the fact that when we look at our real estate, and our
Grand List, you can’t help but say that we’re still in a very tough economic environment. Sometimes, we
lose sight of that and that’s still the context within which we developed and worked on this budget.

I had the opportunity to draft the transmittal letter on behalf of the Budget Committee and so many of my
observations and my comments are contained therein. And I really do encourage you and every member
of our community to just take a moment and look at it. I will also say that if you have any difficulty in
sleeping, it’s a great read.

If I’m going to say one statement, it’s that I view the budget this year as victory for the taxpayers of the
Town of Greenwich. We struck the right balance, between meeting the needs of our citizens and their
willingness to pay for their services. We were proactive in addressing the funding needs of remediating
the Hillside Road property, in addressing the need for better fire coverage in the northwest corridor, and
maintaining the viability of our pension plan. We were comprehensive in our approach and have
encouraged all proponents of projects and operating budgets to share with us the bigger picture in their
vision of how mission and needs are to be addressed in the near and the longer term.

As a member of the Board for the past two years, I have to say that Mr. Mason made it look easy to Chair
the Budget Committee. But having now stepped in this seat, I can say there are any number of adjectives
that would describe this responsibility, but easy isn’t one of them. In this budget cycle, if it could be
described as having gone smoothly, or was effective and efficient in creating solutions that worked well in
the overall context of the town’s budget, the credit should go to the department and appointing authority
heads, our staff, the comptroller and budget director, the First Selectman and Town Administrator, and
the other three members of the Budget Committee: Mr. Finger, Ms. Tarkington, Mr. Ramer.

On a personal note, I take particular pride in being one of four members who transmitted to the full Board
the lowest increase in the mill rate in twelve years. And in seeing a Committee come together and work
exceedingly well with each other for the good of the community.

Mr. Finger
One of the advantages of going toward the end is that you had the benefit of listening to what your
colleagues have said. One of the disadvantages is that they’ve said most of everything you planned on
saying.

We as a Board should be proud, and hopefully the town will be proud in the fact that, as Mr. Pellegrino
pointed out, we tackled proactively a number of issues that had not previously been dealt with in this
town. Obviously, the remediation at Greenwich High School that was unforeseen, comp time issues in the
Police Department, along with the Fire Department staffing, approving and agreeing with the Retirement
Board’s suggestions on changing the rate of return assumptions on the pension fund. All things that we
should be proud of.

One of the things that weighed on my mind a little when we started our new BET in January was the fact
that on this Board of twelve members, we had five new members, essentially. Ms. Kiernan had been with
us for a few months before, and there’s a learning curve. One of the things that I was very impressed with
was how all of our new members really stepped up to the plate and I think did a really, really, yeoman’s job in learning quickly the issues that affect the town.

I’d like to speak more specifically about the members of the democratic caucus. I dealt with them and I worked with them more closely than Mr. Johnson and Mr. Bedrosian, so excuse me I don’t want to leave you out. Ms. Kiernan, Mr. Goldnick, and Mr. Brady were enormously helpful and were very good contributors to our caucus, and Mr. Huffman, Mr. Ramer, and I benefited by their work and their points of view. We had our differences at times, but I think it was all welcomed and I’m proud collectively of the work that our caucus did and of the entire BET.

And I’d like to thank Mr. Mynarski, Mr. Geiger, Ms. Bocchino, the Finance Department staff, and also thanks to Mr. Mason and Mr. Pellegrino for leading this Board this year.

Ms. Kiernan  
Thank you, Mr. Mason and the four members of the Budget Committee. But especially, thanks to Mr. Mynarski and Mr. Gieger. We can’t say this enough—we need to thank you for your hard work, your attention to detail, your responsiveness (there were a lot of emails flying today and they were all responded to very quickly), and your professionalism, and that goes for everybody who came before the Budget Committee. We also owe big thanks to Elaine Brown and Maria Bocchino for keeping us all organized through the whole budget process.

I also would like to comment on a lot of budget themes and budget items, but I’m going to comment on just one item and then I’d like to make one rookie suggestion about our process.

The MISA project: I applaud the entire BET for supporting this appropriation after the project has become far more complicated than anyone reasonably expected. As this project unfolds, I do hope we remember what we heard one year ago at the BET public hearing about the challenging and longstanding space constraints both in music instruction rooms and in the auditorium at Greenwich High School. These constraints have material impacts on music instruction and large scale programming, diminishing the quality of education at our only public high school. I support the rigorous oversight that our BET has given to this project and our keen sense of responsibility to spend tax dollars wisely, which we do with everything. So as we move forward we must continue to gather the best information possible and enable a full understanding and differentiation of the costs that we face.

My one rookie suggestion for our budget process relates to what I view as the most important sentence in the budget guidelines that we passed last Fall. There is a sentence on page 3 in bold that reads “Departments should budget using actual spending in FY 2011 and projected spending in FY 2012 to develop their FY 2013 budgets, and not use FY 2012 budgets as their starting point.” And as I attended all the budget deliberations and heard all the excellent presentations and questions, my sense was that perhaps we as a town could follow this sentence a little more closely. In the end, if we can budget to actuals and not budget to prior budgets, I think we’ll continue to drive the savings that will help us grow our fund balance, and that will ultimately help us address the critical infrastructure needs that we have now and we will certainly have in the future.

Mr. Mason  
As karma has it, one person helped me through the budget. Referring to Mr. Tesei, Mr. Mason stated, he’s sitting right over there, he’s got a pen and he’s doodling, and right now, he’s thinking about going home and seeing the kids, but he helped me more than any of you will know. With nothing to say, he thought I needed to increase my reading, so he gave me a book about Hamlet. But, what it really is, is a summary of the annual report for 1959 for Greenwich, CT. So, I’m standing in his office and I said, “Can I borrow this?” and he says, “Yeah, take it.” And I looked through this book, and I said to myself, there have been seventeen BET Chairmen before me. Peter calls me number eighteen and I call him number sixteen, and then we have Mr. Walko, who’s the odd number in the middle.

And I want to read something, because what we are doing today is what they did in 1959. “The Board of Estimate and Taxation,” a balanced budget provides both services and taxes. This is the most important
task of this Board. Every year, the approved outlays for both ordinary expenses and Capital facilities, must represent the reasonable needs and the desires of the citizens of town. If needed services or improvements are omitted, the budget is not truly balanced, neither is it balanced if we were to waste or extravagance ourselves on hidden items. The factual data submitted by the department heads and presented in the sections which follow will help each reader to judge."

It's the truth; there are things we are deferring, there are things that people want, there is a balance between taxing, there is between revenues, and everything we do. So back in 1959, budgets had increased as a result of growth in inflation, they had an increasing Grand List resulting from a revaluation, the Town faced the need for further Capital improvements, which should be approached with reasonable speed, but the cost of which should be spread over a period of years. How such a procedure can be accommodated to go within our pay as you go policy is described inside the back cover. I didn't get to the back cover yet. And it just goes on and on, and it's exactly on point. I look at our department heads in Town and really understand now how well we are doing.

One thing we should all make note of: this is the first budget to top 400 million dollars.

So Peter Tesei, I'm not done with this book, but I will tell you that what they did in 1959, we do it in bigger numbers, different constituents, a few more people involved. It's a pleasure.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion by Mr. Goldrick, seconded by Mr. Brady, the Board voted 12-0-0 to adjourn at 8:24 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Maria Bocchino, Recording Secretary

[Signature]

Mary Lee A. Kiernan, Clerk of the Board

[Signature]

Michael S. Mason, Chairman