



**TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION**

SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 22, 2022

Town Hall Meeting Room

Committee

Present: Leslie L. Tarkington, Chair; Nisha Arora, Laura Erickson, Leslie Moriarty

Staff:

Benjamin Branyan, Town Administrator; Roland Gieger, Director, Budget and Systems Management, Finance Department; Jenny Larkin, IT Department; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Luigi Romano, Superintendent, Building Construction and Maintenance, Department of Public Works; Joseph Siciliano, Director, Parks and Recreation Department; Amy Siebert, Commissioner, Public Works

Selectmen: Fred Camillo, First Selectman

BET: Dan Ozizmir, Chairman; Michael Basham, Jeffrey S. Ramer, David Weisbrod

Other: Ken Borsuk, *Greenwich Time*; Don Conway, GCTV

Ms. Tarkington called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

The Order of Business was changed to accommodate a speaker's delayed arrival.

NEW BUSINESS

• **Economic Conditions Report**

Mr. Gieger reviewed the Town's financial position to date and reported that revenues from conveyance taxes were 43% higher compared to same month previous year, and ahead of budget for the year; building permits continued to be strong. He highlighted that conveyance, building permit, and interest revenue was \$746,000 ahead of budget. Tax collection was \$32 million ahead of previous year but noted that the Governor's Executive Orders deferred the tax payment deadline until April, 2021. Expenses included \$521,000 increase in IT spending after moving cyber into operating, Fire Department retro pay per contract settlement, debt service payment slightly lower, and \$700,000 increase in insurance premiums.

Request for Budget Adjustments

<u>Number</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
PW-3	Public Works	\$22,717,000	Release of Conditions
	B345 59560 22326		Eastern Greenwich CC

Ms. Tarkington requested that the amount to be released should be \$18,677,000 since the \$4 million increase in construction costs approved the previous month did not have a condition attached. Ms. Siebert agreed and added that the \$4 million construction cost increase appropriation had already been approved by the RTM and explained that the department was looking forward to moving ahead with the contract. The operations plan, public/private partnership plan and recognition of the Cohen contribution of \$5 million per contractual agreement, were attached to the application; however, the long term lease template, rental space projections, and re-opening plan were not yet available. Mr. Siciliano commented that lists of future tenants and program dates were being assembled. A member of the Committee asked to review the market analysis of competitive fees being used to develop EGCC's fee schedule for offsetting operating costs. A suggestion was made to benchmark fees and charges against other communities, the Library, and Bruce Museum.

Upon a motion by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to approve the release of conditions on \$18,677,000 for construction of the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to recommend the application to the full BET for its approval. Motion carried.

SE-9	First Selectman	\$31,399,117	Additional Appropriation
	F-Various		American Rescue Plan Grant

Mr. Branyan provided background information about the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Grant and process to select recipients and distribution of the funds. He expressed appreciation for the advisory working group contribution to prioritizing recipients and projects, and complimented their input for increasing the quality of the results. He repeated the categories of eligibility (Affordable Housing, HVAC, storm-water and sewers, response to negative economic impact, loss of revenue and administrative expenses). He noted that no changes had been made to allocation of the grant funding subsequent to the March 21, 2022 First Selectman's Public Hearing. He commented on important dates to remember as being auditable issues, and that the capital items identified met ARP conditions.

The Committee began a dialogue with the First Selectman Camillo and Town Administrator Branyan on each proposed allocation and its consistency with the grant's intent to address COVID impact and transformational improvement. Specific line items discussed included affordable housing allocation, HVAC for schools, TNW and Library, Department of Human Services allocations, non-profit allocations, public health education specialist allocation, Loss of Revenue allocation, amounts, and administrative expense allocation. Questions concerning future audit trail obligations; the mechanics of giving under the federal reporting requirements; the participation of the BET Law Committee and Town Law Department; and, differentiating between the effectiveness and controls using direct relief and third-party channels, were deliberated.

The Committee proposed the following changes:

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to reduce "Replacing Lost Public Sector Revenue" by \$140,750 and transfer it to the Department of Human Services to bring the total allocated to DHS to \$1 million, the Committee voted 2-2-0. Motion failed.

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to reduce "Replacing Lost Public Sector Revenue" by \$150,000 to restore funding to the YWCA Sexual Assault Services and Prevention Education program in the Non-Profit funding category. The Committee voted 2-2-0. Motion failed.

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to reallocate \$10,000,000 of "Replacing Lost Public Sector Revenue" to fund soil remediation expenditures at Greenwich High School after March 3, 2021. The Committee voted 4-0. Motion carried.

Upon Motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to approve the ARP Budget as amended for the application SE-9 for \$31,399,117, the Committee voted 3-0-1 to recommend the request to the full BET as a Non-Routine Application. Motion carried. (Abstain: Erickson).

BET Chairman Ozizmir thanked the Budget Committee and ARP Working Group for their extraordinary job reviewing and recommending the ARP grant recipients to the BET for its "first read" on Thursday March 24, the BET Public Hearing on March 28 and for its vote on March 29, 2022.

Approval of BET Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Erickson, to approve the Minutes of the Regular BET Budget Committee Meeting held on March 10, 2022 as amended, the Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of March 8, Budget Committee Decision Day 2, March 7 Budget Committee Decision Day 2, and Budget Committee Public Hearing FY2022-2023 held on January 25, 2022 are deferred until the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Discussion of pending litigation for the following matters:

Birdies Restaurant II, LLC v. Town of Greenwich

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Arora, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to enter Executive Session at 3:07 P.M. Motion carried.

Executive Session Closed

Upon a motion by Ms. Moriarty, seconded by Ms. Erickson, the Budget Committee voted 4-0-0 to exit Executive Session at 3:37 P.M. Motion carried.

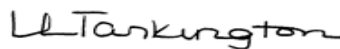
ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Ms. Arora, to adjourn the meeting at 3:37 P.M., the Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



Leslie L. Tarkington, Chair, Budget Committee

The next Regular Meeting of the BET Budget Committee will be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at 1:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.