TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION  

REGULAR MEETING  

BUDGET COMMITTEE  

MINUTES – Cone Meeting Room  

May 10, 2005  

Present:  
Committee: Valeria P. Storms, Chairman  
Jara Burnett, Laurence Simon, Stephen Walko  

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Sue Wallerstein, Richard Calcavecchio, Board of Education; Christine Clark, Ray Augustine, The Nathaniel Witherell; Marcos Madrid, Al Monelli, Bob Kalm, Dave Thompson, Department of Public Works; Dan Warzoha, Fire Department; Joe Siciliano, Tom Greco, Parks & Recreation; Mark Kordick, Parking Department; Sam Diebler, Commission on Aging; Ed Gomeau, Town Administrator  

Board: Peter Berg, Michael Mason, Alma Rutgers, Robert Stone, Peter Tesei  

Board Ex Officio: James A. Lash, First Selectman  

Other: Betty Hauptman, Commission on Aging; Neil Ritter, Dean Goss, Condemnation Commission  

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM.  

The chairman asked that the comptroller convey to department heads the Budget Committee’s request that they pay more attention to the blue sheets submitted with applications, both for timeliness and content. There are too many mistakes and too many late submissions.  

SEWER ASSESSMENT DATE – CHARTER CHANGE  

The Condemnation Commission has requested that the date for setting assessments for sewer projects be changed from the fixed date of September 1 to a flexible date. A flexible date is more consistent with what most municipal sewer authorities use, as well as being consistent with Connecticut General Statute Section 7-249.
Mr. Ritter and Mr. Goss said that the Milbrook Sewer Project is finished and the cost certified, but the commission is still waiting for the final sewer map and the necessary public hearing. They are concerned that they will not be able to meet the September 1 deadline, which will delay the assessment until September 2006. Deleting the requirement of a fixed date will allow assessments to be set in a more timely manner and eliminate the restriction of being locked into a once-a-year date.

Mr. Walko was particularly concerned that the BET is being asked to approve a charter change to compensate for a process that is not working as it should. After discussion the committee decided that making the date flexible was probably a good idea, but that a group including representatives from all parties involved in the assessment process should meet to work out whatever problems are delaying their work.

**PR-1 PARKS & RECREATION — Transfer - $20,000**

Request for transfer:
- $20,000 to A812-51300 Temporary Services
- $20,000 from A822-51010 Regular Salaries

This transfer is being requested to provide funds to operate the Skatepark. A proper mechanism has not yet been set up to handle either the revenues or expenses of the Skatepark. As a result of this transfer, $20,000 of Skatepark revenue will go into the Town’s General Fund revenues from the Restricted Receipts Account. The Parks & Recreation Regular Salaries Account has extra money in it, so the $20,000 needed to pay Skatepark expenses will come from there.

Skatepark revenues since its opening in 2003 total $107,000, resulting in a positive cash flow at present. Mr. Gieger said the proper mechanism for dealing with Skatepark finances would be in place by the next budget. This raised the question of restricted receipt accounts, and Mr. Simon requested from Mr. Gieger a list of all of the Town’s restricted receipt accounts.

The committee voted unanimously to approve this transfer and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a routine application.

**NW-1 THE NATHANIEL WITHERELL — Transfer - $96,000**

Request for transfer:
- $96,000 to A45055-54050 Maintenance of Building & Supplies
- $96,000 from A45066-51420 Professional, Medical, Dental

Ms. Clark said that this request is to cover maintenance expenses that have run over budget. Examples are air conditioner repairs, boiler repair, window washing, tree work, and other general repairs.
The committee voted unanimously to approve the transfer and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a routine application.

FD-1  **FIRE DEPARTMENT – Transfer - $175,000**

Request for transfer:

- $175,000 to A205-51100 Overtime Services
- $102,000 from A201-52210 Municipal Water Service
- $23,000 from A201-51010 Regular Salaries
- $15,000 from A202-51450 Prof/other Services
- $10,000 from A202-51490 Prof/Other Services
- $15,000 from A202-52090 Tuition
- $10,000 from A202-52100 Travel

This transfer will provide $175,000 of a total of $250,867 needed to cover overtime expense in the Fire Department. The balance is to be made up by an additional appropriation (FD-2).

Among the reasons for the excess overtime are men on vacation, over 4200 hours of sick time and over 2800 hours of time out for injury as of April 15th, and one fire fighter still out since the Davis Avenue fire.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the transfer and forward this application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a non-routine application.

FD-2  **FIRE DEPARTMENT – Additional Appropriation - $75,867**

Request for new appropriation:

- $75,867 to A205-51100 Overtime
- $75,867 from Contingency

This request is for an additional appropriation needed to cover overtime expense in the Fire Department. The discussion was the same as that for the above transfer.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the additional appropriation and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a non-routine application.

ED-1  **BOARD OF EDUCATION – Amendment to Budget Resolutions**

This resolution establishes a Reserve for Restricted Receipt Fund to receive gifts and appropriate funds to pay certain employees who provide extra-curricular services to students.
The BET approved this resolution in October 2004. The only amendment is the addition of the word “solely” at the suggestion of RTM members.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the amendment and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a routine application.

ED-2 BOARD OF EDUCATION – Additional Appropriation - $115,000

Request for new appropriation:
$ 95,224 to Z6800292-59560-25109 Ham. Ave. Modulars Hookup
$ 19,776 to Z6800292-59560-24106 School Bldg. Const. Manager
$ 115,000 from Capital & Non-Recurring Fd.

The most recent cost overrun for the Hamilton Avenue modular project was $390,000. The BET and RTM authorized $190,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund, leaving an estimated shortfall of $200,000, pending final negotiations with the construction manager, URS.

The method for recouping the value of the negotiated settlement was described as involving URS coverage of certain expenses charged to the original $550,000 URS appropriation and URS coverage of certain change orders relating to work on the modulars amounting in total to $142,000.

As a matter of information, Dr. Wallerstein said that two capital appropriations are being returned to the Capital and Non-Recurring Fund: $14,180 for Hamilton Avenue interior painting and $110,382 for Hamilton Avenue masonry repair, for a total of $124,562.

The members of the committee had difficulty reconciling the numbers relating to the modulars project and will be looking for clarification. They requested:
1) An explanation of how the $500,000 has been spent to date.
2) How much the modulars cost.

The committee voted unanimously to forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a non-routine application.

PW-1 PUBLIC WORKS – Release of Conditions - $ 900,000

Request to release:
$ 900,000 to Z34559560-25048 Police/Fire/GEMS Facility Design

In the '05 budget the $900,000 of design money for the Fire Department Central Station Rehabilitation was made subject to release upon “verification that the contract engaging the project manager allows the BET to have direct and, at its discretion, independent contact with such consultant.”
Of the $900,000, $700,000 is to be used to execute the architectural contract with Jeter Cook & Jepson, and $200,000 is to be paid to URS, the project manager, for their services.

The Budget Committee was assured that a Memorandum of Understanding between URS Corporation and the Public Works Department that satisfies the budget condition would be drawn up immediately and furnished to the BET before its May 16th meeting.

The committee voted unanimously to forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a non-routine application.

**PW-2 PUBLIC WORKS – Additional Appropriation - $202,000**

Request for new appropriation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$202,000</th>
<th>to A321-52510</th>
<th>Waste Removal Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$202,000</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>Contingency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shortfall was predicted in DPW’s semi-annual report in January ’05. Higher than anticipated municipal solid waste tonnage is the main reason for it.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the additional appropriation and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a routine application.

**PW-3 PUBLIC WORKS – Additional Appropriation - $200,000**

Request for new appropriation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$200,000</th>
<th>to Z345-59560</th>
<th>Indian Field Road Facility– Interior Upgrade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>Capital and Non-Recurring Fund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This facility is used as a “24-hour snow emergency central command post” by work crews during winter storms. The conditions there now were reported as terrible – in particular, heating and ventilation systems, restroom facilities, furniture, lockers, and space in general.

The Budget Committee was very concerned that this application is coming forward at this time without having gone through any part of the CIP process. However, the First Selectman and Town Administrator are similarly concerned about the conditions Town employees have to work under when they must use this facility. After discussion, Mr. Gomeau proposed that the CIP Committee meet before the May 16th BET meeting, rate this project in the usual manner, and discuss whether it should be given a higher priority that some other project costing approximately $200,000.
The committee agreed unanimously to forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a non-routine application without taking a vote on this matter.

PW-4 PUBLIC WORKS – Additional Appropriation - $35,000

Request for new appropriation:
$35,000 to Z301-59800-25106 1327 King St. Land Acquisition
$35,000 from Capital and Non-Recurring Fund

At the recently acquired King Street property, over the winter it has become apparent that there is a water problem that is impacting the septic system and several neighboring properties. The $50,000 of the original appropriation meant for closing costs and other expenses will not cover the cost of fixing the water problem. Therefore $35,000 is being requested to install a drainage system that can carry surface water to existing drains in King Street.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the additional appropriation and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a routine application.

PW-5 PUBLIC WORKS – Additional Appropriation - $32,500

Request for new appropriation:
$32,500 to A345-52260 Heating
$32,500 from Contingency

Unusually cold weather this past winter and a spike in heating oil and natural gas prices have made necessary this additional appropriation for higher than anticipated utility costs for Town buildings.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the additional appropriation and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a routine application.

PW-6 PUBLIC WORKS – Additional Appropriation - $280,000

Request for new appropriation:
$280,000 to Z312-59620 Palmer Hill Rd. Pedestrian Bridge
$280,000 from Capital and Non-Recurring Fund

The Connecticut Department of Transportation informed the Town on April 15, 2005 that the existing pedestrian walkway on the north side of the Palmer Hill Road bridge should be closed to pedestrian traffic because of the condition of the structural supports of the walkway. DPW subsequently asked its consultant, WMC Engineers, Inc., to fast track the design of the walkway, concurrent with its investigation and preliminary design of the main bridge structure. The consultant
has recommended that a new, structurally independent pedestrian bridge be built north of the existing stone masonry arch bridge.

DPW staff will be working to obtain the necessary permits and easements at the same time the design work is being done, and they plan to complete the project by October 15, 2005. There will eventually be some DOT funding, but the amount is unknown at this time.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the additional appropriation and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a non-routine application.

PW-7 PUBLIC WORKS – Additional Appropriation - $55,000

Request for new appropriation:
$55,000 to J361-52530 Cleaning Services (Sludge Removal)
$55,000 from Sewer Maintenance Fund Balance

The Grass Island Waste Water Treatment Plant produces sludge and grit that must be hauled offsite and disposed of in accordance with regulatory requirements. When the sludge removal contract was rebid the price increased. While the '04-'05 budget had been increased in an attempt to forecast this change, the actual prices, when they became available, made a larger amount necessary. That fact, plus a slight increase in solids production during this fiscal year, has caused the need for the extra appropriation.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the additional appropriation and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a routine application.

TAX RELIEF FOR THE ELDERLY ORDINANCE

Mr. Simon reviewed the last changes made to the ordinance that have been approved by the Law Department and the Board of Selectmen. The Budget Committee had no further changes, so the ordinance will go to the BET's May 16th meeting for approval and then to the RTM in June.

COLLECTION OF OVERDUE PARKING FINES

There was considerable discussion, with assistance from Ed Gomeau and Lt. Mark Kordick, about present collection rates (94-95%) and amounts ($1 million), the total amount of receivables ($1.1 million with late fees), the difficulties of collecting fines going back very far, the extra work for Town staff inherent in the administration of an all-out collection program, and finally, whether there is a state statute of limitations that would govern the collection of fines over a year old.
The Budget Committee decided that if by law there is a one-year statute of limitations that would change the discussion considerably. Accordingly, the committee unanimously agreed to ask the Town Attorney to furnish the answer to that question to the BET before its discussion at the May 16th meeting.

**2005-2006 CONTINGENCY AND MILL RATES FOR THE GENERAL, SEWER MAINTENANCE, AND SEWER IMPROVEMENT FUNDS**

The amount for Contingency was set at $7,800,000.
The mill rate for the General Fund was set at 11.510, an increase of 3.50%.
The mill rate for the Sewer Maintenance Fund was set at 0.462, an increase of 8.96%.
The mill rate for the Sewer Improvement Fund was set at 0.122, a decrease of 3.17%.

**FI-1 FIXED CHARGES (FINANCE) – Additional Appropriation - $250,000**

Request for new appropriation:
$250,000 to A902-57300 Workers Compensation
$250,000 from Contingency

This request is for higher than budgeted workers compensation claims. Much of the '04-'05 expense has resulted from several catastrophic claims that have proved to be very expensive for the Town. Transfers are being used to pay for some of the shortfall, but the additional appropriation may be needed to cover the rest.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the additional appropriation and forward the application to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for consideration as a non-routine application.

**WORKERS COMPENSATION PRESENTATION**

Peter Mynarski had prepared his own thorough response to the ARM Tech Risk Study Report, which he distributed prior to the Budget Committee meeting.

He then led a discussion on the Budget Committee’s questions, which included:
1) The overall plan to reduce the Town’s risk costs.
2) The responsibilities of the various parties involved in the management of workers compensation claims.
3) An update on the implementation of a Preferred Provider Network for workers compensation claims.
4) Plans for safety training, before and after CIRMA finishes its work.
5) Risk Study recommendations that are likely to be implemented.
6) The potential impact of the Health Fairs organized by the Health Department.
7) How the physical risk matrices in the Risk Study will be used.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon a motion by Mr. Simon, seconded by Mr. Walko, the committee voted unanimously to approve, as submitted, the minutes for the:

February 16, 2005 Fixed Charges & Capital Budget Meeting
February 17, 2005 Consolidation Day
April 12, 2005 Regular Meeting

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Valeria P. Storms, Chairman