



MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Monday, May 17, 2021 in a virtual Zoom webinar, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Michael S. Mason called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Michael S. Mason, Chairman
Karen Fassuliotis, Vice Chairman
William Drake, Clerk
Andreas Duus III
Laura Erickson
Debra Hess
Miriam Kreuzer
Elizabeth K. Krumeich
Leslie Moriarty
Jeffrey S. Ramer
Leslie L. Tarkington
David Weisbrod

Staff: Lauren Elliott, Assessor; Department; Tyler Fairbairn, Administrator, Community Development Office; Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems Management, Finance Department; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller

BOE/GPS: Peter Bernstein, Chair, BOE; Dr. Toni Jones, Superintendent, GPS; Sean O'Keefe, Director of Operations, GPS

RTM: Michael Basham, (D-2), Chair, Finance; Irene Dietrich, (D-8) Health & Human Services; Arline Lomazzo, (D-6) Public Works; Lucia Jansen, (D-7), Chair, BOC; Danyal Ozizmir, (D-5), Vice Chair, BOC, Chair, LCC

Public: Ken Borsuk, Reporter, *Greenwich Time*; Michael Miller, Treasurer, TAG; Lawrence Simon, Chairman, Nathaniel Witherell Board of Directors; Horst Tebbe, GCTV

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Before beginning the business of the meeting, Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake to request a moment of silence to honor the passing of Joan Tibbets Sullivan, a 27-year employee of the Town of Greenwich and Director of Purchasing before retiring in 2017.

Upon a motion by Ms. Hess, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to open a Public Hearing on the CDBG PY2021, the Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Request for Budget Adjustment

NON-ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

<u>Number</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
CD-1	CDBG	Approval to Use
\$823,126.86	Q197	CDBG PY2021 Budget

Mr. Drake and Mr. Weisbrod, BET Liaisons to the 2021 Community Development Block Grant Advisory Committee noted that it was a well-established process, having participated in the Committee deliberations. Mr. Fairbairn thanked BET liaisons for their interest and participation. Mr. Fairbairn noted the Federal grant of \$808,557.00 plus \$14,569.86 of re-programmed funds from previous year for a total of \$823,126.86 for Grant distribution. He commented that 36 applications were received totaling more than \$1 million. Thirty applicants (19 for active service grants and 11 of 12 Capital grants) were awarded grants. Because some organization applied for more than one grant, the CDAC selected the application that would have the most impact. This year’s applicants included four new organizations: Coffee for Good, Wheel it Forward; TOG Human Services Banc After School Program and Liberation Programs. Ms. Tarkington reported the Budget Committee reviewed the PY2021 budget and the list of nonprofit organizations receiving the awards and voted 4-0-0 to approve the request and recommend the application to the full BET as a Non-Routine Application.

Mr. Fairbairn commented that the grant included an additional 1.5% or \$11,742 from HUD to award to active service applicants. Each applicant received a revised Resolution indicating the addition of \$652 to the amount already awarded.

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hess, to suspend the rules to vote on the amended motion under Agenda Item 7. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

ED-12	BOE	Additional Appropriation
\$4,760,086		Transfer of COVID Expenses

Ms. Tarkington reported that the BOE request for an additional appropriation of \$4,760,086 for expenses incurred under the Federal ESSER Fund #1, attributing each expense to a BOE object code. ESSER Fund #2 expenses of \$1,566,172 were being requested because they would be paid in FY2022 when each expense is matched against BOE object codes to determine eligibility. The Budget Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the ESSER Fund #1 appropriation and recommend it to the full BET as a Non-Routine application.

A member of the BET requested that the object code documentation be attached to the Minutes of the meeting.

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake for a rollcall vote to transfer \$4,760,086 to the "E" Educational Grant Fund, with additional documentation to be attached. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

TA-2	TAG	Additional Appropriation
\$116,000		Contribution to TAG

Ms. Tarkington reported that TAG's request for an additional appropriation was as a result of TAG updating its yearend needs. A shortfall of \$300,000 of programming revenue was due to traditional clients remaining closed in response to COVID. The timing of receipt of CDBG 2020 award of \$96,000 and CDBG 2021 award of \$75,000 has caused a cashflow problem. Town Administrator Branyan advised by email that TAG would be eligible for the American Recovery Plan funds. Mr. Miller projected the TAG would be in full service by January 2022 providing between 8,000 to 12,000 community service hours. The Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the application and recommend it to the full BET as a Non-Routine Application.

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake for a rollcall vote to provide an additional appropriation of \$116,000 to TAG. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

The Town Assessor, Ms. Elliott highlighted the following items from her written monthly report: the Senior and Disabled Property Tax Relief Program filing deadline ends today. Once the BET established the Mill Rate the amount of the benefits for qualified applicants will be applied for their July 2021 tax bills. The 2021 ReVal is underway with 346 inspections left to complete of the 1,200 outstanding residential and commercial properties by early June. The revaluation company will be in the field between June and August. The vendor is meeting bi-weekly to update the Assessor's Office on its progress.

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

COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

Comptroller Mynarski asked if there were any questions about his monthly written Report. He directed the Board's attention to his comments about Risk Management and complimented Ms. Zanesky on how she had enhanced the program and her success in obtaining reimbursements, especially the FEMA \$1.5 million for Island Beach. He congratulated her on her Presidency of the State's Risk Management chapter, the opening of a New England chapter and award from the National Public Risk Management association. Mr. Mason noted that Ms. Zanesky credited Mr. Mynarski with allowing her to take initiatives including finally getting Chubb Insurance's Safety engineer to inspect the North Mianus School damage.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Mynarski drew the Board's attention to monthly interest earnings and commented that it is still feasible that fiscal year interest will reach the budgeted \$500,000 of income. The previously productive Treasury bill program has matured and in order not to allow it to lapse, \$500,000 will remain in this investment. Mr. Duus pointed out that the Other Post-Employment Benefits Trust (OPEB) had reached \$42 million in assets despite closing the previous year at \$29 million and the COVID-19 economic environment..

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 11-0-1 to accept the Treasurer's Report. (Abstain: Krumeich). Motion carried.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Upon a motion by Mr. Weisbrod seconded by Mr. Ramer, to close the Public Hearing and vote to approve the use of the amended amount of \$823,126.86. The List of recipients with the individual grant allocation and the revised Resolution, are to be attached to the meeting Minutes. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Mr. Mason expressed his thanks to Mr. Fairbairn and Ms. Voulgaris for their assistance with the distribution of the federal HUD grant, and to the BET Liaisons (Mr. Drake and Mr. Weisbrod) for their participation in the program.

BET Standing Committee Reports

No Report submitted.

BET Liaison Reports

No Report submitted.

BET Special Project Team Reports

Labor Contracts – Mr. Mason reported that the negotiations of the GOSA contract for school administrators is about to begin. The process includes a briefing on the contract and its discussion points, agreement on the calendar of negotiation meetings and a preliminary deadline date. BET Liaisons and the RTM Labor Contracts Committee will be attending.

GHS Building Committee – Mr. Mason reported that the first RFP attracted only one architect, so a second RFP was published which drew 4 qualified architects' responses. The Building Committee will be interviewing the respondents and make a selection at its next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- **To increase the Management and Confidential (M&C) salaries in FY2022 by 2%**

Ms. Fassuliotis reported that the Human Resources (HR) Committee had reviewed salary benchmark information provided by the Human Resource Department and asked for a clarification of the First Selectman's decision to not disburse a 2% salary increase

appropriation in FY2021. The HR Committee voted 2-1-1 to increase the M&C salaries for FY2022 by 2%.

Ms. Kreuzer made a motion to amend, seconded by Mr. Mason, to increase M&C salaries by 2% over FY 2020 budgeted salaries. The Board voted 12-0-0 to amend the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake for a rollcall vote on the motion as amended to increase M&C salaries by 2% over FY2020. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- **To increase the healthcare contribution of Management and Confidential (M&C) employees from a budgeted 10% to 12% for FY2021-2022**

Ms. Fassuliotis remarked that the HR Committee and BET had voted for an increase of 1%, or an 11% M&C contribution, to healthcare benefits in FY2021. The First Selectman did not apply the increase in FY2021.

Ms. Krumeich made a motion to amend, seconded by Mr. Mason, to increase the M&C healthcare contribution to 11%, or 1% above the current contribution of 10% since the 11% voted for the FY2021 Budget had not been implemented. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- **To increase Elected Officials' salaries by 0% for the first year of the two-year term of such Officials pursuant to the FY21-22 Operating Budget and increase the Elected Officials' salaries by 2% for the second year of their two-year term.**

Ms. Fassuliotis explained that the HR Committee had reviewed the FY2019 and FY2020 salary increases of 2% and 1.5% respectively for the First Selectman, Selectmen, Tax Collector and Town Clerk. Because they are voted into office in November and the Board of Selectmen take office in December and other elected officials assumed responsibilities in January of 2020 and January of 2021, the salaries are voted corresponding with their two-year terms. The HR Committee voted 2-1-1 for a 0% increase for the first year of the elected officials' term, and 2% for their term's second year.

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake for a roll-call vote on a zero% salary increase for the first year of the Town's Elected Officials (First Selectman, Selectmen, Tax Collector and Town Clerk), and a 2% salary increase for their term's second year. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- **Setting Mill Rates**

- Sewer Improvement Fund

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake to read the Resolution to set the Mill Rate at 0.52 mills on the dollar for the Sewer Improvement Fund attached October 1, 2020 assessment list for FY2021 – 2022.

Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to approve the Sewer Improvement Fund Mill Rate of 0.52 mills on the dollar beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- Sewer Maintenance Fund

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake to read the Resolution to set the Mill Rate at 0.398 mills on the dollar for the Sewer Maintenance Fund attached October 1, 2020 assessment list for FY2021 – 2022.

Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to approve the Sewer Maintenance Fund Mill Rate of 0.398 mills on the dollar beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- General Fund

Mr. Mason asked Mr. Drake to read the Resolution to set the Mill Rate at 11.624 mills on the dollar upon the assessment list of the Town Grand List last completed as the Tax for the Town's General Fund for the succeeding Fiscal Year, FY2022. Mr. Mason clarified that the 11.624 mills was the rate on the budget sent to the RTM for their approval.

Ms. Erickson proposed a motion to amend, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to set the Mill Rate at 11.590 mills. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Ms. Erickson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Weisbrod, to approve the motion as amended. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

- **Bonding Resolution revisit**

Mr. Mynarski explained that it was Robinson Cole's legal opinion that no new Bond Resolution was necessary, only a change in the dollar amount to reflect the RTM's budget reductions. The RTM will vote on the dollar-amount change in the Bonding Resolution in June, or if sufficient members are not present, in September. Mr. Mynarski indicated that the bonds and notes would not be issued until January, and as an interim measure should a cashflow issue occur, money could be borrowed from the Capital non-recurring fund temporarily.

- **ARP Committee Assignment**

The First Selectman has formulated an initiative to set up a process for the allocation of federal American Rescue Plan money for Greenwich. (\$32 million to the Town and \$9.585 million to the BOE). He proposes that upon receipt of more federal guidance on spending categories, a Committee consisting of the First Selectman, Town Administrator, four BET members, the Community Development Administrator and the Comptroller will discuss strategies, objectives and timeline; a Public discussion will follow; proposal applications will be submitted for evaluation (similar to the CDBG process), then similar to the budget process, appropriations will be prepared and submitted to the RTM. The initiative anticipates a new process for each tranche of money received. It was recognized that the BOE projects will reflect State guidance. It

was recommended that the Law Committee and Department provide assistance. Mr. Mason volunteered the Budget Committee to be the BET appointees to the ARP Initiative Committee.

Chair' s Report

Chairman Mason updated the BET on the following topics:

- Ms. Fassuliotis received an award for providing the most pro bono legal services of any attorney in Town.
- The BET was thanked for the many hours invested in meetings with RTM Districts, Committees and individuals to prepare the FY2022 Budget.
- The matter of continuing Zoom meetings, hybrid meetings or in-person meetings will be resolved shortly and reported to the BET.

Approval of BET Meeting Minutes

Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Ms. Kreuzer, to postpone voting on the BET Regular Meeting Minutes held on April 19, 2021 until the next meeting. The Board voted 12-0-0. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. Weisbrod, seconded by Ms. Kreuzer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



William Drake, Clerk of the Board



Michael Mason, Chairman

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation is on Monday, June 14, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.