



MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) held on Monday, July 18, 2022, in the Town Hall Meeting Room, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Dan Ozizmir called the meeting to order at 6:36 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Dan Ozizmir, Chairman
Nisha Arora, Clerk
William Drake
Laura Erickson
Karen Fassuliotis
Harry Fisher
Miriam Kreuzer (via telephone)
Leslie Moriarty
Jeffrey S. Ramer
Stephen Selbst
Leslie L. Tarkington
David Weisbrod

Staff: Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems Management, Finance Department;
Peter Mynarski, Comptroller, Lauren Elliott, Assessor, Dr. Demetria Nelson,
Commissioner of Human Services

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

2. Election for Vacant Vice Chair Position

Chairman Ozizmir made a motion to nominate Leslie Tarkington to fill the vacant Vice Chair position, seconded by Ms. Moriarty. The Board voted 12-0-0 in favor. Motion carried.

3. Request for Budget Adjustments

ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

<u>Number</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
FD-4	Fire Department	\$186,000	Transfer
	A202, 204, 205 Various		Overtime & Injury Expenses
NW-1	The Nathaniel Witherell	\$30,000	Transfer
	H45001 56280		Medical Liability Costs

TC-1	Town Clerk	\$40,000	Transfer
	A150 51010, A101 Various		Department Expenses

Ms. Arora read the routine budget adjustments for the Board.

Mr. Selbst made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, The items came from a Committee and Chairman Ozizmir called for a unanimous consent vote. The items passed 12-0-0.

4. ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Ms. Elliott told the Board the tax bills went out June 15, 2022, and the Assessor's staff is currently answering any inquiries and adjusting tax bills as requested. Ms. Elliott added that there were an additional five tax appeals added subsequent to previous reporting and the total number of court tax appeal cases for the list of 2021 increased to 87.

Mr. Ramer expressed a concern about the drop in the Fire Fighter Tax relief program applicants from 51 to 38 and requested that the BET Liaisons check with the Fire Department to ensure that we are capturing all potential qualified fire volunteers for this program. Chairman Ozizmir concurred and stated he will take the matter up with the Fire Chief and staff at a meeting scheduled for July 28, 2022.

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

5. COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

Mr. Mynarski presented the Comptroller's report and highlighted the following areas:

- The quarterly American Rescue Plan (ARP) quarterly report will be submitted to the U.S. Treasury by July 31, 2022
- The annual audit has commenced with a goal to complete the process by the December 2022 BET meetings for acceptance
- Final figures were presented for the North Mianus School Water Damage Claim reimbursement with a total received of \$1,192,188.

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

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Mynarski presented the Treasurer's Report and pointed out that the General Fund cash balance contained about \$53 million in prepaid tax payments. He also added that about \$9.6 million in ARP monies were received slightly after the Fourth of July.

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

7. BET Standing Committee Reports - No reports were scheduled for reporting

8. **BET Liaison Reports** - No reports were scheduled for reporting.
9. **BET Special Project Team Reports** - No reports were scheduled for reporting.
10. **Old Business**

BET Professional Fees – FY 22 – Vote to Use Encumbered Funds

- **The Nathaniel Witherell Study**

Chairman Ozizmir gave the Board an update on the Town’s attempt to find a vendor to provide management services for The Nathaniel Witherell Nursing Home. The Board reviewed a document contained within packet, detailing the history of the Nathaniel Witherell Request for Proposal #7568 for Management Services with the reasons to request \$75,000 to encumber prior year funds and provided a number of suggested edits. Mr. Mynarski agreed to work with Ms. Erickson to edit the document for the minutes.

Upon a motion by Ms. Erickson, seconded by Mr. Drake, the Board voted 12-0-0 to the suggested edits to the descriptive document attached to the request to encumber \$75,000 for consultant’s fees for the year ending June 30, 2022 for a Nathaniel Witherell study. Motion carried.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Ozizmir, the Board voted 12-0-0 to encumber \$75,000 for consultant’s fees for the year ending June 30, 2022 for a Nathaniel Witherell study. Motion carried.

- **Funds to Engage a Construction Estimator**

Chairman Ozizmir presented the item by stating that that the Town is looking at a very large and costly capital project for the Central Middle School (CMS). He summarized that the project was being fast tracked and did not have a feasibility study attached to the project and there is a need for an independent review of the potential construction’s costs for the project. As a result, Ms. Tarkington made a motion, seconded by Ms. Arora, to encumber \$15,000 to encumber funds to hire a cost estimator for the CMS project. Chairman Ozizmir called for discussion.

Mr. Ramer responded by citing a number of sections in the Municipal Town Code of the Town of Greenwich, specifically Chapter 2, Article 9, School Building Committee regarding this topic. He felt that the hiring of the cost estimator for the CMS project would be better suited to be under the control of the CMS Building Committee. Ms. Arora commented that an estimator that reported to the BET would help equip the Board with information including evaluating various options that would be presented by the building committee, evaluating costs broadly before details get defined and benchmarking other municipal projects similar in size, scope and geography.

There was an extended discuss with many questioning the timing of hiring a cost estimator without existing educational specifications for the project. The debate continued about who should control the hiring of an estimator; the BET or the CMS Building Committee. Suggestions were made to have the CMS Building Committee

hire the cost estimator and the BET supplement the cost with these funds. To conclude the discussions, Ms. Fassuliotis offered a replacement motion as follows:

Upon a motion by Ms. Fassuliotis, seconded by Mr. Weisbrod, to encumber \$15,000 in prior year funds for a cost estimator with the intention to bring the matter, at a future date, to the BET and not expend any funds until the process for hiring a cost estimator is clearly defined. The Board voted 11-1-0 (Ramer voting no) to encumber \$15,000 for consultant's fees for the year ending June 30, 2022 for a Construction Estimator. Motion carried.

11. New Business

- **Retirement Board – Additional Full-time Employee**

It was reported that the request to convert a part-time position for a Retirement Coordinator to a full-time position had already been approved by both the Human Resources Committee and Budget Committee with one dissenting vote at each meeting. The two members that voted against the change explained increasing headcount was part of their decisions.

Being that the matter for the request came from committees and not requiring a motion, the Board voted 8-4-0 (Fassuliotis, Ozizmir, Tarkington & Fisher voting no) to make the change for the Retirement Coordinator position from part-time to full-time. Motion carried.

- **Vote to Amend OPEB Investment Policy Statement**

It was reported that both the OPEB Board (3-0-0 vote) and the BET Investment Advisory Committee (4-0-0 vote) voted to accept the proposed changes to the OPEB Trust Investment Policy Statement (IPS) from its Outsourced Chief Investment Officer, Vanguard. Chairman Ozizmir made a motion to make the following changes to the IPS:

- a) Change the suggested allocation in Public US Equity from 45.0% to 50.0%
- b) Change the suggested allocation in Non-US Equity from 30.0% to 25%
- c) Change the suggested upper limit in Non-US Equities from 40.0% to 30.0%

Chairman Ozizmir's motion above was seconded by Ms. Tarkington, and the Board voted 5-7-0 (Selbst, Drake, Ramer, Moriarty, Weisbrod, Erickson, Kreuzer voting no). Motion failed.

Ms. Kreuzer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Drake to change the suggested upper limit in Non-US Equities from 40.0% to 35.0% and the Board voted 10-0-2 (Ozizmir, Fassuliotis abstaining) and the amended IPS passed.

- **Acceptance of First Payment for National Opioid Settlement**

Mr. Ramer seconded by Mr. Selbst, made a motion to take this item up hearing that it could have potentially been deferred. The motion carried 12-0-0.

Ms. Fassuliotis presented this item by giving a Law Department report on the matter of the Town of Greenwich voting to accept payments for a National Opioid Settlement case. She concluded by telling the Board that there would be a first payment for \$24,819.34 with a total of 18 payments and that the Law Committee voted 2 to 0 to accept the first payment anticipated to be received on August 2, 2022.

It was reported that the Board of Selectman had previously voted to accept this settlement in December 2021 and the Town had been legally registered to accept the monies.

Dr. Nelson also reported that the Town would register in the national portal to receive the monies and when it was decided where to appropriate the spending of the funds, she would come back to the BET and RTM.

The matter came from the Law Committee and did not require a motion and the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the first payment for the National Opioid Settlement.

12. Chair's Report

Chairman Ozizmir thanked the Finance Department and the BET members for all their hard work this year and wished everyone an enjoyable summer.

13. Approval of BET Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 11-0-1 (Mr. Selbst abstaining) to approve the amended Minutes of the BET Regular Meeting held on June 21, 2022. Motion carried.

14. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. Fisher, seconded by Mr. Selbst, to adjourn the meeting, the Board voted 12-0-0 to adjourn at 8:36 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary



Nisha Arora, Clerk of the Board



Dan Ozizmir, Chairman