



MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Monday, July 19, 2021 in a virtual Zoom webinar, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Karen Fassuliotis called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

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

Staff: Ben Branyan, Town Administrator, Office of the First Selectman (OFS); Daniel Carlsen, Senior Business Analyst, Katie DeLuca, Director, Planning & Zoning Dept; Lauren Elliott, Assessor; Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems Management, Finance Dept; Brian Koczak, Ass't Chief, Fire Dept; Thomas Lenart, Deputy Chief of Training, Fire Dept; Joseph McHugh, Chief, Fire Dept; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller

Guest: Margareta Alban, Chairman, Planning & Zoning Commission; Bob Barolak, Alternate, Planning & Zoning Commission

Public: William Finger; Richard Kaufman, Reporter, *Greenwich Patch*; Horst Tebbe, GCTV

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Request for Budget Adjustment

ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

Number **Department** **Purpose**

FD-1	Fire Department	\$259,000	Transfers
	Various		Year-end Adjustments

FI-1	Finance B Various	\$1,914,189	Transfers Bonding Auth. Reduction
GM-1	GEMS B440 51490	\$1,410,000	Release of Conditions GEMS Station 4
TC-1	Town Clerk F150 51100, 52050 various	\$31,176	Approval to Use COVID Grant

CARRY FORWARD CAPITAL REQUESTS

Number Department Amount Purpose

ED-1 BOE \$156,000 Continue-in-Force B680 21250 Restroom Renovations

ED-2 BOE \$15,000 Continue-in-Force Z680 21258 Fences 12-0-0

ED-3 BOE \$149,000 Continue-in-Force B680 21262 Abatement

ED-4 BOE \$130,000 Continue-in-Force B680 21264 Emergency Lighting

Upon a motion by Mr. Drake, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to approve these four Routine Applications and these four Carry Forward Capital Requests, the Board voted unanimously to approve these eight items.

NON-ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

<u>Number</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
SE-1	First Selectman A105 51490	\$8,000 Release of Conditions Professional Services – NOC

Mr. Duus as co-chair of the Nathaniel Witherell RFP Committee explained the request to release \$8,000 of the \$25,000 Professional Services consulting amount based on the scope of work described in the RFP. Mr. Ramer objected as follows: lack of transparency on the objective of the additional consulting since the BET had not seen the RFP; that restrictive covenants exist on the property and could be violated in error; and, that the rush to sell or lease the property is premature given the receipt of COVID reimbursement funds and the implementation of the new management team’s strategies. In response, Mr. Drake reminded the Board of the requirement for confidentiality to comply with the Town’s Purchasing Policy, and indicated that contrary to a rush, this topic has been under active discussion for years. Mr. Duus indicated that a BET Working Group had spent two BET terms studying strategic issues and voted for recommendations that were being followed. The RFP Committee anticipates sharing the results of their evaluation in September with the First Selectman, BET and RTM.

The Clerk took a roll call vote of the Board to release conditions on \$8,000 for Professional Consulting Services to facilitate formulating recommendation for the First Selectman on the Nathaniel Witherell. The Board voted 11-1-0. (Opposed: Ramer) Motion carried.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

The Town Assessor Ms. Elliott, highlighted the following items from her written monthly report: the personal property tax bills were mailed on June 21, 2021 and the process is going smoothly this year; the ReVal team expects to complete measuring all single-family homes for property card accuracy and possible new values by the end of August or early September; an income/expense model is being developed for Commercial tax valuations and will be in use shortly. Ms. Elliott will follow-up with the Board on the number of commercial building permits issued and the number of non-filing commercial businesses.

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 provided an overview of the First Selectman's American Recovery Plan (ARP) Working Group meeting. It was decided that future meetings will be in-person. Mr. Branyan made a presentation on federal guidelines for eligibility and distribution of the funds and is developing a website to answer FAQs. He suggested that the model for the Working Group will resemble a mini-budget process approval. He asked the Working Group to come to the next meeting (September 9, 2021 at 2:00 P.M.) with spending suggestions noting that the \$32 million must be spent or obligated by December 2024 and that unspent money would need to be returned by December 2026. He added that the tentative timetable would be for the BET to review the Working Group's recommendations and the RTM to approve the ARP Working Group plan at its December meeting. Mr. Mynarski indicated that a Federal ARP website currently has interim Guidelines and FAQs posted. The first report of Federal Grants' expenditures through July 31, 2021, is due August 30, 2021 and quarterly thereafter.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

BET Standing Committee Reports

None

BET Liaison Reports

None

BET Special Project Team Reports

Pension Liability Special Project Team – Mr. Drake reported that the Special Project Team would be reviewing its report at its July 21, 2021 meeting. He noted that the time of the meeting would be 2:30 P.M.

Approval of BET Meeting Minutes

Ms. Moriarty proposed changes to the Minutes of the June 14, 2021 meeting.

Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hess, to amend the June 14, 2021 Regular BET Meeting Minutes. The Board voted 10-0-2. (Abstain: Drake, Fisher) Motion carried.

Ms. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to approve the amended June 14, 2021 BET Regular Meeting Minutes. The Board voted 10-0-2. (Abstain: Drake, Fisher) Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Presentation of Greenwich Fire Department Strategic Plan – Greenwich Fire Department**

Chief McHugh introduced the presentation of the Fire Department's Strategic Plan developed from the Matrix Study's 22 recommendations. Assistant Chief Koczak commented that a survey had been circulated to the Fire Department's internal and external stakeholders. A 5-year Plan was delivered to the Board of Selectmen for their acceptance and approval that highlighted Resources, Developing Policy, a Training Program and the intention to evaluate the department's operations and service delivery. Board members expressed their concern about the sequence of priorities and lack of attention to the Matrix Study's big impact recommendations. Mr. Duus, as Public Safety Liaison expressed his disappointment at the lack of measurements of progress. Ms. Fassuliotis requested a follow-up visit with more detail and timelines for the Matrix Study action items.

- **Presentation of Affordable Housing Concepts – Planning & Zoning Department**

Ms. DeLuca asked that the Town of Greenwich provide funds to support an affordable housing development program. She explained how present State regulations promoted affordable housing to reach 10% of housing units. If this level is not reached, it allows developers to override local rules for location, density and size. Mr. Barolak, a recent Alternate appointee to the P&Z Commission, commented on how the addition of Town funding to affordable housing development could be recalibrated on local median income, allowing 45% higher rents and enabling Town employees to qualify under these changes. He listed 5 funding source options and suggested a tax incentive for the developer. The objectives would be to accelerate reaching the 10% goal, mitigating future monetary penalties and controlling the scale and location of housing development. Ms. Alban, Chair of the P&Z Commission, remarked that a Town investment would be a tool to

negotiate with developers and protect Greenwich's character. An "Affordable Housing Taskforce" and the development of an affordable housing plan were proposed for review by the Board of Selectmen and the BET.

Minority Caucus Leader's Report

Ms. Moriarty, as leader of the Minority Caucus, recognized Michael Mason for his 18 years of leadership, hard work as BET Chairman and hours of service to the community. She expressed appreciation for his style of collaborative work. With hard work ahead in the next several months, Ms. Moriarty pledged to work collaboratively with the new BET Chair and Vice Chair and welcomed newly appointed Harry Fisher to the BET.

Chair's Report

Chair Fassuliotis expressed thanks and appreciation for Mr. Mason's leadership as the Town's budget grew from \$22 million in 2003, through the fiscal meltdown of 2007- 2008, the uncertainties of pandemic budgeting and now with a half-a-billion-dollar budget for FY22. Times were challenging during his tenure. Mr. Mason, like every person on the Board, shares a deep love of the Town and has deep roots, and believes firmly that Greenwich is the best place to live or raise a family and retire. Ms. Fassuliotis thanked the Board again, remarked that she looks forward to working together and wished all a great summer.

Adjournment

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 P.M. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



William Drake, Clerk of the Board



Karen Fassuliotis, Chairman

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation is on Monday, September 20, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.