



**TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
LAW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
September 6, 2023**

Law Committee: Karen Fassuliotis, Chair, Stephen Selbst

Town Attorney: Barbara Schellenberg

Law Department: Amina Ahmad, Assistant Town Attorney; Laura McGeachy, Assistant Town Attorney; Lisa Waller, Assistant Town Attorney

BET: Laura Erickson, Harry Fisher, Leslie Moriarty, Leslie Tarkington

RTM: Kip Burgweger

Assessor: Lauren Elliott

Public Works: Jim Michel

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3.00 P.M.

1. Motion to Add to Agenda

Upon motion made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to add: (a) a discussion of the Town Attorney's opinion regarding municipal improvements, and (b) a proposal for the Town to indemnify the Army Corps of Engineers to the agenda.

2. Senior and Disabled Tax Relief

Upon motion made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to take up the Senior and Disabled Tax Relief Ordinance as the next item.

The Town's Commission on Aging requested that the Town amend its existing property tax relief ordinance, which was first enacted in 1985 and which has an expiration date of June 30, 2024, to June 30, 2029.

Mr. Burgweger, a member of the Representative Town Meeting, made a presentation to the Law Committee on the proposal to extend the ordinance. Mr. Burgweger summarized the memorandum presented to the Law Committee prepared by Lori Contadino, the Executive Director of the Commission on Aging. Town Assessor Lauren Elliott provided statistical data on the number of Greenwich residents assisted by the ordinance.

Upon motion made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to recommend to the full Board of Estimate and Taxation that the expiration date of the Ordinance be extended until June 30, 2029.

3. Approval of Minutes

Upon motion made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2023, regular meeting.

4. Old Business

Budget -- Town Attorney Schellenberg reported that the Law Department was running on budget through August 31, 2023.

Personnel -- Town Attorney Schellenberg reported that Lisa Waller had filled the prior attorney vacancy and had begun work. Ms. Schellenberg added that she was seeking to fill a paralegal position.

Investigation -- Town Attorney Schellenberg reported that the Town's investigation of the allegations of improper hiring at the Board of Education and concluded that there was no evidence of systemic hiring discrimination in Greenwich Public Schools. She also reported that the investigations being conducted by the Connecticut Attorney General and Connecticut Commission on Human Rights had not yet ended. Ms. Schellenberg advised the Law Committee that she estimated the cost of the investigation at approximately \$350,000 in fees paid to counsel and consultants.

5. New Business

Army Corps of Engineers – Ms. McGeachy and Mr. Michel advised the Law Committee on the Town's obligation to indemnify the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) in connection with engineering work to be conducted by ACE in preparation for the rebuilding of a bridge on Route 1 near the Greenwich-New

York border. The engineering studies are expected to last approximately two years. Ms. McGeachy reported that ACE is requiring the Town to indemnify it in connection with the engineering work because the Town is the non-federal sponsor of the project. Because Town policy requires that insurance against indemnity be obtained, the Town had obtained such insurance for an annual premium of approximately \$7,600 per year. Mr. Michel advised the Law Committee that the total estimated cost of the project is \$35-40 million.

Bond Resolution – The Law Committee was presented with a proposed bonding resolution for \$2,000,000 for a soil remediation project at Greenwich High School. The Law Committee was advised that the language of the bonding resolution was substantially similar to prior bonding resolutions for the project.

Municipal Improvement Opinion – The members of the Law Committee, Town Attorney Schellenberg and the other members of the Board of Estimate and Taxation discussed a recent opinion by the Town Attorney which states that no action, other than the making of studies or surveys, shall be taken by any Town agency with respect to a project until Municipal Improvement (MI) approval has been obtained. Questions relating to the opinion and prior action by the BET were answered by the Town Attorney. It was reiterated that any additional request for further funding by the Central Middle School Building Committee is premature as no MI has yet been obtained.

6. Executive Session

Upon motion made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to go into executive session at 4.17 P.M.

Upon motion made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to go into executive session at 4.54 P.M.

7. Adjournment

Upon motion made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Selbst, the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to adjourn at 4.54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Selbst, Recording Secretary



Karen Fassuliotis, Chair, Law Committee