



**TOWN OF GREENWICH  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION**

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 12, 2021  
Town Hall Meeting Room

**Committee**

**Present:** Leslie L. Tarkington, Chair; Andy Duus, Leslie Moriarty, Jeffrey S. Ramer

**Staff:** Caroline Baisley, Director, Health Department (Dept); Debbie Edwards, Manager Business Office, Health Dept; Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems\Management, Finance Dept; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Patricia Sesto, Director, Conservation and Environmental Affairs

**Board:** Karen Fassuliotis, Chairman; Laura Erickson, Harry Fisher, Elizabeth K. Krumeich, David Weisbrod

**Guest:** Michael Miller, President Pro Tempore, Transportation Association of Greenwich (TAG)

**Other:** Kenneth Borsuk, Reporter, *Greenwich Time*; Horst Tebbe, GCTV

**Request for Budget Adjustments**

**ROUTINE APPLICATIONS**

<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Department</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Purpose</u></b>
<b>CC-1</b>	<b>Conservation</b>	<b>\$25,015</b>	<b>Additional Appropriation</b>
	Z172 59080		Mural

Ms. Sesto explained that she is requesting approval to appropriate the donation approved by the RTM of \$25,015 received from the Greenwich Botanical Center for the completion of the Pollinator Pathway Mural on the wall adjacent to the bus shelter on Route 1 opposite Greenwich High School. Ms. Sesto noted that the Law Department has not completed their review of the contract.

Ms. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to approve the application of \$25,015 to complete the Pollinator Pathway mural, with the expectation that its contract documents and related indemnification and insurance will be approved by the Law Department, and to recommend the application to the full BET as a Routine Application. The Committee voted

4-0-0. Motion carried.

<b>HD-1</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>\$173,396</b>	<b>Approval to Use</b>
	F4011 Various		ELC Covid-19 Grant

Ms. Baisley presented the application for approval to use the second phase of the 3-year federal grant of \$173,396 covering the period of 5/18/2021-11/17/2022 for enhanced detection, response, surveillance and detection of COVID-19. The Health Department will use the funds for vaccination programs, education, testing, tracing, office support and supplies.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Mr. Duus, to approve the use of the \$173,396 ELC COVID-19 grant, and recommend it to the full BET as a Routine Application. The Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

<b>HD-2</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>\$43,311</b>	<b>Approval to Use</b>
	F40382 Various		PHEP Grant

Ms. Baisley requested approval to use a \$43,311 PHEP Grant for emergency preparedness parttime staff, supplies and travel. She described how the grant would be used in response to the need for quarantine or isolation situations and staffing to handle the volume of emergency-related work that occurs. Ms. Baisley noted that although a limited supply of PPE inventory was stored for use by first responders, most items had a shelf-life and therefore she did not recommend acquiring additional PPE inventory.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Mr. Duus, to approve the use of the \$43,311 PHEP grant, and recommend it to the full BET as a Routine Application, the Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

### **NON-ROUTINE APPLICATIONS**

<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Department</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Purpose</u></b>
<b>SE-7</b>	<b>First Selectman</b>	<b>\$942.50</b>	<b>Release of Conditions</b>
	A105 51490		Professional Services - NOC

As BET liaison to The Nathaniel Witherell (TNW) and the First Selectman's RFP Evaluation Committee, Mr. Duus commented that \$25,000 had been set aside for consulting expertise to assist the Committee to understand various aspects of the sale/lease proposals resulting from the RFP. Mr. Duus commented that the \$942.50 fee for consulting by PKF O'Connor Davies afforded the bidders and the RFP Evaluation Committee a clearer analysis of TNW operations for reporting their future findings to the First Selectman, TNW Board, BET and RTM.

Mr. Duus made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, to release the conditions on \$942.50 for professional services, and the Committee voted 2-2-0 (Opposed: Moriarty, Ramer) to forward the application to the full BET. Motion failed.

<b>TA-2</b>	<b>TAG</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>Release of Conditions</b>
	A440 57221		3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Allocation

Mr. Miller requested the Committee consider the release of conditions on the Town's third-quarter contribution to TAG. He pointed out that TAG continued to operate at a lower level of operations,

its annual fundraising had been rescheduled from Fall to Spring, and the reimbursement from the American Rescue Plan funds had not yet been received --- all of which made its cashflow situation challenging. The Committee acknowledged TAG's extraordinary response to Town emergencies and discussed the possibility of releasing the remaining annual contribution of \$151,000 or only the \$75,000 requested.

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duus, to recommend the release of conditions on \$75,000 and forward the application to the full BET as a Non-Routine Application. The Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Economic Conditions Report**

Mr. Gieger reviewed the Town's financial position to date and reported that the Town had received \$4 million of bridge project revenue from the State. Tax collections were \$50 million ahead of FY21 since last year's receipts were impacted by the 90-day extension on the collection of property taxes. He noted that OPEB and Pension expenditures and BOE salaries were higher. He pointed out the impact of the transfer of some expenses from the capital plan to operating expense. In the discussion that followed, Mr. Duus remarked that employee benefits, pension and OPEB costs primarily increased because of contract settlements. Ms. Tarkington noted that September Conveyance Taxes were less than what was collected in August.

- **Budget Guidelines**

Ms. Tarkington expressed her thanks to Mr. Gieger and Mr. Mynarski for their assistance preparing the FY2023 Budget Guidelines, and to each of the Budget Committee members.

Mr. Gieger reviewed highlights of the estimates used in Exhibit 1, such as salary assumptions that incorporate approved contract terms, inflation in non-salary accounts, an assumed 6% increase in health benefit costs and increases in employee benefit contribution. He commented that Fixed Costs were impacted by contributions to the pension fund, OPEB, but offset by no contribution to the risk fund and lower prior-year loss amounts for separate funds. He pointed out the schedule presenting various amounts of Fund Balance that would be needed to attain various Mill Rate increases.

Ms. Tarkington noted that these were proposed FY23 Guidelines prepared using inputs known at this time. She indicated that the February budget meetings would provide updated and more detailed information, including revenues and grants. She noted that the level of capital spending would be a focus and identified the need for a prioritized capital plan.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Mr. Duus, to approve the Budget Guidelines and recommend them to the full BET.

Each Committee member offered comments ranging from reinforcing that these were guidelines based on the information known at this time, suggesting Budget-to-Budget proposals for comparison, the level of capital projects: developing capital programs after conversations with department heads and appointing authorities; funding capital projects from the Town's Capital Non-Recurring Fund instead of Tax Levy; and use of the \$9 million increase in the \$68.3 million Fund Balance. Mr. Ramer identified that the

guidelines reflected substantial compromises which make them more acceptable; however, there were a few areas which he believed still needed some adjustment: the decision not to add funding to the Risk Fund when the volume of 42 cases might exceed budget; the amount of the subsidy for Nathaniel Witherell; and disruption to the \$3 million annual increase to the capital tax levy.

Upon a motion to Amend by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to raise the appropriation to the Risk Fund by \$1.5 million, the Committee voted 2-2-0. (Opposed: Duus, Tarkington). Motion failed.

Upon a motion to Amend by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to increase The Nathaniel Witherell budget by \$375,000 to \$1,500,000, the Committee voted 2-2-0. (Opposed: Duus, Tarkington) Motion failed.

Upon a motion to Amend by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to increase funding for Capital Projects from \$70 million to \$75 million, the Committee voted 2-2-0. (Opposed: Duus, Tarkington) Motion failed.

The vote on the original motion, that was not amended, to approve the FY23 Budget Guidelines, was 4-0-0. Motion carried.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion by Mr. Duus, seconded by Mr. Ramer, to adjourn the meeting at 3:22 P.M., the Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



---

Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



---

Leslie L. Tarkington, Budget Cmte Chair

The next Regular Meeting of the BET Budget Committee will be held on Thursday, November 18, 2021, at 1:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.