



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

BUDGET COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 27, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Committee

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

Staff: Kimberly Ambrosecchia, Business Operations Supervisor, Parks and Recreation Department (P&R); LuAnn Bellantoni, Business Manager, Parking Services; Lori Contadino, Director, Senior Center; Roland Gieger, Director, Budget & Systems Management; Finance Department; Laurette Helmrich, Administrator, Senior Center; Jenny Larkin, Information Technology Department; Blaize Levitan, Assistant Director, P&R; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Finance Department; Barbara Ormerod-Glynn, Director, Greenwich Public Library

Board: Michael Mason, Chairman; William Drake, Laura Erickson, Karen Fassuliotis, Miriam Kreuzer, Elizabeth K. Krumeich

RTM: Mareta Hamre, (D-10), Education Committee; Lucia Jansen, (D-7), Chair, Budget Overview Committee (BOC), Labor Contracts Committee (LCC); Janet Stone McGuigan, (D-6) Education Committee; Janet McMahon, (D-8), Education Committee; Danyal Ozizmir, (D-5) Vice Chair, BOC, Chair, LCC; Lucy Von Brachel, (D-4), BOC

BOE/GPS: Peter Bernstein, Chair, Board of Education (BOE); Karen Hirsch, Secretary, BOE; Dr. Toni Jones, Superintendent Greenwich Public Schools, (GPS); Sean O'Keefe, Chief Operating Officer, GPS

Public: Ken Borsuk, Reporter, *Greenwich Time*; Patricia Burns, Chair, Commission on Aging Board of Directors; GCTV; Claire Kilgallen, New Lebanon School PTA; Caroline Lerum, Support Greenwich Schools

The meeting was called to order at 9:09 A.M.

Continued Discussion and Approval of the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget Guidelines

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duus, to continue discussion of the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget Guidelines. The Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Mr. Gieger, Director of Budget & Systems Management, was asked to present the posted October 23rd draft Estimate Budget reflecting the revisions of the Budget Committee members since the October 13th Budget Committee meeting. Mr. Gieger, in addition to highlighting the revisions and their impact, pointed out a change in the Town's required contribution to the Retirement System lowered fixed charges and total operating cost. Other revisions included changes to the amount for capital projects, the capital tax levy, and State revenue. He reviewed the draft of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Estimate Budget and compared it to FY 2021. He commented that the total department operating costs increased by 2.48%; fixed charges healthcare costs increased by 10%; proposed capital projects increased from \$39 million to \$55 million; and Capital Tax Levy was flat at \$51 million. In conclusion he commented that the mill rate is projected to increase by 1.67% to 11.783.

Committee Chair Tarkington noted the format of the Budget Guidelines text follows that of the Budget Estimate. There are two new financial exhibits related to benefit cost allocations between the Town and BOE/Schools and the benefits summary by bargaining unit, which demonstrate that benefit costs are increasing more rapidly than salaries. The amount to be financed for the General Fund is \$460.2 million, an increase of 2.6%, double the inflation rate. Ms. Tarkington added that resulting property tax increases have a meaningful impact on homeowners and those who rent.

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to adopt the revised Guidelines including the exhibits I – V dated October 27 date and remove one footnote. The Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

In further discussion of the Guidelines, a member of the Committee suggested additional text needed revisions to accurately reflect the Pension calculation by re-labeling actual and estimated costs.

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to amend the Guidelines with text revising Pension description. The Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to accept the Guidelines as amended.

Mr. Ramer offered observations on the quality of discussions to reach common ground in several areas and looked forward to additional discussion during the February Budget Department meetings. He indicated he continues to have a concern in the following areas: the capital budget and the capital tax levy; School Lunch Fund subsidy; Nathaniel Witherell subsidy of \$1.5 million; Special Education out-of-district tuition; School operating expenses; and questioned legal restrictions on the use of the Capital Non-Recurring Fund.

Ms. Moriarty indicated that in addition to the areas identified by Mr. Ramer, she supported funding the identification of actual or pending labor settlements in the FY2022 Budget Guidelines, examining the needs of the Department of Human Services more thoroughly, and adjusting the capital model to reflect community priorities.

Mr. Duus commented that he was impressed with the good work of his colleagues.

Ms. Tarkington called for a vote on Mr. Ramer's motion, seconded by Ms. Moriarty, to approve the amended Budget Committee's Budget Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and to recommend the Budget Guidelines to the

full BET for their approval. The Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Ms. Tarkington thanked all Committee members for their constructive input and work.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ramer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duus, to adjourn the Meeting at 10:15 A.M. The Committee voted 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Next Regular Meeting of the BET Budget Committee is scheduled for November 9, 2020 at 10:30 A.M. The Meeting is scheduled a virtual webinar meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Sidor, Recording Secretary



Leslie L Tarkington, Budget Committee Chair