MINUTES
Board of Health Meeting
November 20, 2017

Present: Robert Carangelo, Esq.; Dr. Marilyn Ross Cahn; Dr. Andrew Bronin; Vick Sandhu, Esq.; Kurt Schaffir; Julia Chiappetta; Dr. Mark Armstrong;

Guests: Tracy Schietinger, GEMS Executive Director; John Strong, GEMS Financial Officer; Jennifer A. Baldock, GEMS Board of Directors Chairman

Staff: Deborah Travers; Joanna Lipson, Michael Long, Debora Edwards

Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Minutes

The minutes of the October 30, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously.
(Motion: Bronin / Second: Chiappetta / Vote: 7 in favor - 0 opposed)

GEMS Proposed 2018-2019 Budget

Chairman invited John Strong to present the GEMS 2018-2019 proposed budget.

Mr. Strong offered the following:
- Income changes to budget request show increase of $21, 600.
- Total net increase is calculated at $72,850, which is 1.6% increase over the FY 2017-2018 budget and is mostly salary driven.
- The current year FY2018 capital budget is $463,800 funded completely without Town dollars; however, medical equipment costs are increasing faster that GEMS donation levels.
- GEMS has a very active fundraising committee, which is a part of the Board of Directors.
- The call volume is estimated to be unchanged from the previous fiscal year and the reimbursement rates are government capped and outside of GEMS' control. Mr. Strong also added that an increase in Medicare call volume decreases revenue due to lower reimbursement rates.
- Calls where the patient declines to be transported to the hospital are not billable per State Law.
- Greenwich Hospital contributions remain at $91,000 and in-kind contributions of Station I and medical supplies will continue.
- Training and Corporate Response revenues are projected at $80,000 and forecasted revenues are forecast at $70,000, consistent with last year.
- Before FY2016-2017 salaries for full-time paramedics and EMT’s and hourly rates for per diem had not increased since 2007.
• The paramedic and EMT ceiling salary rates had been capped at the same level for eleven years except for one increase of less than 1% and were last increased by 3% in FY2015-2016.

• Part-time (per diem) paramedics and EMTs are critical staffing component in reducing overtime and reducing costs.

The GEMS Proposed 2018-2019 Budget was endorsed by the Board of Health unanimously.
(Motion: Bronin / Second: Cahn / Vote: 7 in favor – 0 opposed)

Department of Health 2018-2019 Proposed Fee Schedule

Chairman reported that the 2018-2019 proposed fee schedule shows general increase between 3% and 5%. He also noted that the private well testing fees have remained flat for several years and should be increased, as it is a luxury service since it requires environmental hygienists to pick up the samples. He also noted that the budget to purchase vaccines is increased slightly, which is due to increase in vaccine prices.

The Department’s 2018-2019 proposed fee schedule was approved unanimously.
(Motion: Bronin / Second: Ross Cahn / Vote: 7 in favor - 0 opposed)

Department of Health 2018-2019 Proposed Budget

Chairman reported that the BOH budget subcommittee worked closely with the Director and Business Office Manager and they met three times to discuss the proposed budget. During the third meeting the subcommittee included liaisons from the RTM’s Health and Human Services subcommittee who were very supportive of the budget.

Chairman offered the following highlights of the proposed budget:

• The BET’s budget guidelines state that the budget increase for departments not exceed 2.4%.

• The Department’s proposed budget shows $52,790 (2.19%) increase over prior year, with the main driver being contractual salary increase.

• The second biggest increase is cost of additional vaccines.

• Other small increases include duplicating and office, lab and cleaning supplies.

• The Department’s full-time employee head count remains at 22.

• The Department’s employees are represented by three unions (GMEA, LIUNA and UPSEU), of which only one has a settled contract (GMEA) and for the other two contracts have expired.

• All salary and wages in GMEA increased by 2.25% with added steps as required and the two unions with expired contracts estimate salary and wage increases for the 2018-2019 budget at 2.5%.

• The Department gave up two Town vehicles which should result in savings for the Town.

The Chairman stressed that there is nothing in the budget for the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator due to continually decreasing grant funds, which do not allow to maintain a preparedness position within the Department. In addition, a letter is being drafted by the Chairman to
inform the BET and RTM committees as well as the First Selectman and the public of the public health emergency preparedness services being no longer available to the Town and should a large public health emergency event occurred in Greenwich, the response by the Department may not be as effective without the prior planning.

Discussion ensued about the importance of the public health emergency preparedness planning for the protection of health and safety of Greenwich residents in an event of a potential large scale emergency or disaster.

Dr. Cahn commended the Director and her staff for their efforts in preparing the proposed budget.

The Department’s 2018-2019 proposed budget was approved unanimously.

(Motion: Bronin / Second: Chiappetta / Vote: 7 in favor - 0 opposed)

**Update on Environmental Issues**

Mr. Long Offered the following updates:

- The Greenwich High School is entering a voluntary remediation program under the supervision of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and for the next year to year and a half they will be undertaking a groundwater sampling followed by the final remediation based on the sampling results.
- The Williams Street ballfield has been remediated and will be used as a staging area for the New Lebanon project.
- Half of the field at the Western Middle School has been reopened and testing of remaining areas continues by the contractor.
- The Binney Park pond dredging was completed and testing for heavy metal materials showed levels typical of road wash.

Discussion ensued about previous soil remediation projects and other topics related to environmental soil contamination.

**2018 Proposed Board of Health Schedule**

The 2018 proposed Board of Health schedule was approved unanimously.

(Motion: Bronin / Second: Amstrong / Vote: 7 in favor - 0 opposed)

**Other Business**

Chairman noted that the Department’s flu vaccine statistics for this year requested by Dr. Cahn at the previous meeting are included in the Division of Family Health’s November monthly report. The Chairman congratulated the Division of Family Health on the large number of vaccines administered this season (approximately 1400).
Ms. Chiappetta stated that she is working on a letter to the Town's State Representatives regarding vehicle idling and diesel fumes and their potential effects on health. She plans to send the draft letter to the Board members for comments prior to the January meeting.

There being no further business, Dr. Bronin moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM.  
(Motion: Bronin/ Second: Amstrong /Vote: Unanimous - 7 in favor - 0 opposed)

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Bronin, M.D.

Secretary