



MINUTES of the regular meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Monday, July 20, 2009 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Stephen Walko called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., after which the members pledged allegiance to the flag.

Board members in attendance:

Stephen G. Walko, Chairman
Robert S. Stone, Vice Chairman
Leslie L. Tarkington, Clerk
Nancy E. Barton
James S. Campbell
William R. Finger
William G. Kelly
Edward T. Krumeich, Jr.
Michael S. Mason
Arthur D. Norton
Jeffrey S. Ramer
Laurence B. Simon

Selectmen: Peter Tesei, First Selectman; Peter Crumbine; Lin Lavery

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Ted Gwartney, Assessor; John Crary, Town Administrator; Elizabeth Linck, Director, Fleet Department; Amy Siebert, Commissioner, Department of Public Works

Other: Tony MacLeod, Chairman, Flood & Erosion Control Board

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Walko stated that this date marks the 100-year anniversary of the Board of Estimate and Taxation. At a morning celebration of this historic event, it was noted that the list of BET members is continually being worked on to ensure its accuracy. The BET biannual dinner is planned for December and all former and current BET members will be invited back to help celebrate the 100-years of the BET. Mr. Walko recognized and thanked former BET Chairman Sam Stowell for his attendance at the meeting.

Ms. Linck, who will retire September 20, 2009, expressed her gratitude to BET members past and present for their support including the new fleet maintenance program, automated fueling system, outsourcing the parts room, tire replacement program, stipend for the ASE certification program, and the soon to open, car washing facility.

ROUTINE APPLICATIONS – from Budget Committee:

PR-1 Parks & Recreation – Additional Appropriation - \$24,692

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 24,692	to	Z834-59700-20961	Marine Sewage Disposal Facility (MSDF)
\$ 24,692	from		Capital Non Recurring

HD-1 Health – Approval to Use - \$61,030

Approval to Use:

\$ 56,693	to	F4034-51300	Temporary Salaries
\$ 4,337	to	F4034-57050	Social Security
\$ 61,030	from		Emergency Prep Grant

PW-1 DPW – Interim Appropriation - \$40,000

Interim Appropriation:

\$ 40,000	to	Z312-59620-28007	Round Hill Road Bridge Repair
\$ 40,000	from		Capital Non Recurring

NW-4 Nathaniel Witherell – Transfer - \$120,000

Transfer:

\$ 120,000	to	A450-51420	Prof Medical Dental
\$ 100,000	from	A450-53250	Medical Surgical Lab
\$ 10,000	from	A450-52220	Electric Service
\$ 10,000	from	A450-54050	Maint Building Supplies

FI-2 Finance – Administration – Transfer - \$25,000

Transfer:

\$ 25,000	to	A130-52030	Bank Fees
\$ 25,000	from	A130-51010	Regular Salaries

SE-3 First Selectman – Approval to Use - \$20,370

Approval to Use:

\$ 1,500	to	F834-51300	Temp Salaries
\$ 250	to	F834-52110	Mileage
\$ 3,500	to	F834-52360	Software Maintenance/Rental
\$ 1,000	to	F834-53010	Office Supplies
\$ 3,000	to	F834-53500	Fuel
\$ 3,000	to	F834-53520	Boat Parts
\$ 8,000	to	F834-54300	Maint of Boats & Marinas
\$ 120	to	F834-57050	FICA
\$ 20,370	from	F834-35005	RRR Coastal Resources

Ms. Tarkington noted that NW-4 and FI-2 address FY2008-2009 line item adjustments.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Mason, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the routine applications from the Budget Committee.

NON-ROUTINE APPLICATIONS – from Budget Committee:

PW-2 DPW – Release of Conditions - \$250,000

Release of Conditions:

\$ 250,000

Z312-59660-29032 Drainage

Mr. Mason explained that the request is the first step towards a comprehensive town wide plan for some of the drainage issues.

Mr. Tesei stated that this request is to permit the DPW to continue the progress made on storm water control. The mitigation of the problems that storm water creates in many neighborhoods of the town is one of the administration's highest priorities. Among the many challenging issues are, what work needs to be done, what should be done first, who should pay, and how to put together a plan that is fair and will survive the test of time.

The Flood and Erosion Control Board (FECB) has discussed and considered these and many other questions. The Board has been assisted by staff of the DPW and outside consultants.

The town has been assessing the hydraulics of its major river systems and their ability to handle storm flows. Study areas, to date, include Byram, Strickland, Brothers Brook, and Cider Mill and Binney Brook. The coastal areas, south of the town's riverine watershed, are also being studied, focusing on the drainage network and its ability to convey flows to the Sound. The capacity of smaller drainage networks are also being evaluated, where known problems exist. Old Greenwich and the Church Street/Sherwood Place areas have already been studied. Some smaller drainage evaluations, such as Pemberwick Park, Pemberwick Road, Riversville Road near Mayfair, and Cos Cob Avenue have also been reviewed.

The result of all these studies has been the creation of a plan, and a list of potential capital improvements has been prepared. These potential projects can be evaluated to determine their priority and a cost benefit assessment completed to permit a ranking with respect to other needs across the town. The DPW, in conjunction with the FECB, internal agencies, town administration, and public input, has developed a storm water project prioritization process. DPW has also worked GEMS, Fire, and Police to evaluate potential projects. This has resulted in a process where projects which represent a significant public safety improvement or critical infrastructure are given the highest priority. The culmination of this lengthy process has been that the Church Street/Sherwood Place and Brothers Brook at Hillside Road projects have been identified as two critical elements in the storm water plan and are the subject of this request.

The DPW has been updating the town's drainage manual, requiring a cooperative effort with the various land use agencies and others. Many of the drainage issues may be addressed through an update to the drainage manual and possible changes to other town regulations. DPW, Inland Wetlands Watercourses Agency, Conservation Commission, Planning and Zoning, and Health Departments have been working together to determine the direction the drainage manual will take, including concepts such as low impact design, and permit approaches to reduce the likelihood of off-site surface drainage projects.

A discussion followed regarding future projects going through the CIP process, the level of public input, costs, addressing the causes of some the issues, the drainage manual information,

sequencing the studies and not having to re-do projects, and the Army Corps of Engineers Byram River project.

Mr. MacLeod stated that the FECB meets approximately quarterly generally on a third Thursday at 3:00 p.m., and has a public comment session at every meeting. The FECB and Mr. Kelly recommended that the FECB schedule some of their meetings in the evening in the future.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Simon, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the application.

SE-1 First Selectman – Additional Appropriation - \$5,000

Ms. Barton gave an explanation for this application, stating that the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to approve.

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 5,000	to	P935-57350	Settlement – Interstate Flagging, Inc. v. James Walters, et al.
\$ 5,000	from		Risk Fund Balance

Upon a motion by Ms. Barton, seconded by Mr. Campbell, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the application.

SE-2 First Selectman – Additional Appropriation - \$5,000

Ms. Barton gave an explanation for this application, stating that the Law Committee voted 2-0-0 to approve.

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 5,000	to	P935-57350	Settlement – Otto Lauersdorf v. TOG
\$ 5,000	from		Risk Fund Balance

Upon a motion by Ms. Barton, seconded by Mr. Campbell, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the application.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Mr. Gwartney presented the Assessor's Report to the Board. A discussion followed regarding motor vehicle tax bill address errors, staff education "webinar" regarding foreclosures, and assistance for applicants for Senior Tax Credits.

In response to Mr. Krumeich regarding the 297 applicants not approved for a senior tax credit, Mr. Gwartney stated if they were included the total cost of the program would have been approximately \$1,000,000.

In response to Mr. Walko, Mr. Gwartney stated that legislation has been passed that will allow Greenwich the option to postpone its revaluation until 2011. Greenwich will have to decide by November 2009 whether to do a revaluation as of October 1, 2010. Mr. Gwartney also stated that home sales in May and June are more similar to those in prior years. If the pattern continues he would recommend going ahead with the revaluation.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Assessor's Report.

BET COMMITTEES' and SPECIAL PROJECT TEAMS' REPORTS

Audit Committee, July 9, 2009 – Mr. Norton

Glenville School Building Committee, June 16, 2009 – Mr. Norton

Human Resources Committee, July 2009 – Ms. Tarkington

Nathaniel Witherell Town Building Committee, July 2009 – Ms. Tarkington

OPEB Trust Board and Ad-Hoc OPEB Committee, July 2009 – Mr. Stone

Mr. Norton stated that the school building is approximately 72% complete and possible move in dates will be discussed at the Glenville School Building Committee meeting on July 21, 2009.

COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

Mr. Mynarski presented the Comptroller's report to the Board. Health Dimensions Group (HDG) will be interviewing officials at Nathaniel Witherell on August 4, and at 4:00 p.m. will be interviewing Mr. Mynarski and a few BET members. In response to Mr. Simon, Mr. Mynarski explained that a new bank account was set up for Nathaniel Witherell to receive Medicaid, Medicare, and Connecticut Department of Social Services payments, and that Witherell will reimburse the Town once monthly for its expenses paid by the Town. EFI Actuaries, Vice President, Gregory Stump, will make a presentation regarding the annual required contribution at the Retirement Board meeting on July 23, 2009. All the insurance policies have been renewed collectively receiving approximately \$75,000 in savings. A brief discussion followed.

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

ACCEPTANCE OF TREASURER'S REPORT SHOWING INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIODS OF June 1, 2009 – June 30, 2009

Upon a motion by Mr. Simon, seconded by Mr. Stone, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Treasurer's Report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BET Regular Meeting, May 18, 2009

Upon a motion by Mr. Krumeich, seconded by Mr. Simon, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of the BET from May 18, 2009.

BET Regular Meeting, June 15, 2009

Upon a motion by Mr. Norton, seconded by Mr. Simon, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of the BET from June 15, 2009.

OFFICER'S REPORT

Mr. Walko congratulated Mr. Mynarski and the Finance Department on being awarded the "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada, for the Town's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008.

Mr. Walko announced new committee assignments, effective immediately, and recognized Mr. Krumeich, who is going off the Budget Committee, for his work serving on the Committee:

Affirmative Action Advisory – Mr. Krumeich

Storm Water Management – Ms. Barton and Mr. Campbell

Senior Tax Relief – Ms. Barton and Mr. Campbell

Nathaniel Witherell Review – Mr. Ramer, Mr. Simon, Ms. Tarkington, and Mr. Walko

Budget Committee – Mr. Finger

Mr. Walko stated that the August BET meeting is cancelled. Also, he will be meeting with the First Selectman and RTM Moderator to select a candidate for the Retirement Board vacancy.

Regarding the BET's 100-year celebration, Mr. Walko expressed appreciation to the League of Women's Voters for presenting and giving the history of the BET, Elaine Brown for organizing the event, Despina Fassuliotis, and Larry Simon.

Chairman Letter to Appointing Authorities

Mr. Tesei expressed his gratitude for the Board's support in moving through the FY2009-2010 budget process. He recognized that planning for FY2010-2011, has led the Board to put forward a communication that discusses specifically filling vacancies as a result of the early retirement incentive program.

Mr. Tesei stated that the requirement that town departments, including appointing authorities that don't report to the First Selectman, should come to the BET Human Resources Committee to present what they're presenting to the First Selectman's office, as was articulated through the BET budget message, is an additional step that adds burden, at a time when they are challenged in terms of fulfilling their mission. He asked that the HR Committee be sensitive in terms of scheduling due to their time limitations recognizing that those departments have volunteer and independent chairs, who are working with the professional staff. The positions impacted may not be many and therefore the impact on the individuals will not be great. He said that the charter is clear in terms of once money is appropriated through the BET and RTM process, that the departments have discretion. Also, he said that the departments and appointing authorities have shown that they will be responsible.

Ms. Barton stated that after having several discussions with various members of the Board, including the Chairman, and while she strongly agrees that the BET should exercise its authority over the town's financial affairs by reviewing proposed replacements for the vacated positions, and she agrees the letter should be sent to the appointing authorities advising them of that, she disagrees with several aspects of the letter stating aspects of the budget process just concluded and references to what may be the budget guideline process for the upcoming year. She also

stated that the analysis of the costs and benefits of the early retirement incentive program that is addressed in the letter has not been presented to the BET.

A brief discussion followed concerning the HR Committee being made available to the appointing authorities, and the importance of the early retirement incentive program.

Upon a motion by Ms. Tarkington, seconded by Mr. Simon, the Board voted 11-1-0 (Ms. Barton opposed) to adopt the letter and authorize the Chairman to sign and distribute the letter.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

BET 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mr. Walko stated that the BET is much more than dollars and cents. It is about people, including the residents who are passionate about schools, fire stations, sidewalks, beaches, parks, parking garages or preventing them, open space, neighborhood character, and quality of life. Town residents want it all. They want to grow up in town, raise their children in town, retire in town, and continue to pay as little in taxes as possible. And that is the job of the BET.

Mr. Walko continued that the current economic climate has not diminished the resolve of many to ensure that the quality of life that residents have come to expect remains intact. The town authorities must decide the fate of several large scale projects, such as the back country fire station, utilization of the Havemeyer building and old Town Hall, renovation of the central fire station, the eastern Greenwich civic center, and most notably, Nathaniel Witherell's project renew, and storm water management. While it seems as though the capital list is never ending and the resources are dwindling, the BET will now, and for the next one hundred years, serve the town well to ensure the financial stability of Greenwich. Mr. Walko concluded "To all of this I say cheers, job well done, happy one-hundred years. To the BET."

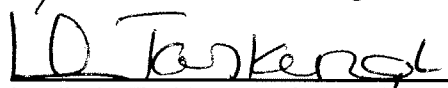
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maria Bocchino, Recording Secretary



Leslie L. Tarkington, Clerk of the Board



Stephen G. Walko, Chairman