



MINUTES of the regular meeting of the Board of Estimate and Taxation held on Monday, October 20, 2008 in the Town Hall Meeting Room, Greenwich, CT.

Chairman Stephen Walko called the meeting to order at 6:39 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; and Lin Lavery

Staff: Peter Mynarski, Comptroller; Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Joseph Siciliano, Director, Parks and Recreation Department; Alan Monelli, Superintendent, Building Construction and Maintenance; Peter Siecienski, Fire Chief; Ted Gwartney, Tax Assessor

NON-ROUTINE APPLICATIONS – from Budget Committee:

PR-1 Parks & Recreation – Additional Appropriation - \$647,022

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 647,022 to Z834-59710 25080 Grass Island Dredge

\$ 647,022 from Capital Non-Recurring Fund

Mr. Mason stated that planned dredging of Greenwich Harbor has been in the works for almost a decade. This additional appropriation is needed to complete the project. In response to Ms. Barton, Mr. Siciliano explained that this project would maintain the Town's infrastructure for affordable boating. The last dredge in this location was in 1950, although a small portion was dredged in 1975. These projects are designed to last 25 years. In response to Mr. Walko, Mr.

Siciliano stated that the Parks and Recreation Department will return \$250,000 to the Town in funds appropriated for replacement of a ferry boat and for rebuilding of a dock at Grass Island.

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

PW-1 Department of Public Works, BC&M – Release of Conditions - \$225,000

Release of Conditions:

\$ 225,000 to Z345-59560 29042 Glenville Fire Station

Mr. Mason gave an overview of requests PW-1 and PW-2, and stated that this project is part of the ten-year plan. In response to Mr. Kelly, Mr. Monelli explained the reasons for this project and the implications if delayed. In response to Mr. Walko, Chief Siecienski stated the Fire Department will return \$250,000 to the Town in funds appropriated for dry hydrant and cistern installations. A discussion followed regarding use of the Glenville Station to house equipment from the Central Station during its renovation.

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

PW-2 Department of Public Works, BC&M – Additional Appropriation - \$350,000

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 350,000 to Z345-59560 29042 Glenville Fire Station
\$ 350,000 from Capital Non-Recurring Fund

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

ROUTINE APPLICATIONS – from Budget Committee:

HD-3 Health Department – Approval to Use - \$9,567

Approval to Use:

\$ 5,610	to	F406-51490	Professional Services NOC
\$ 950	to	F406-52010	Advertising & Public Notice
\$ 1,050	to	F406-52150	Office Services
\$ 230	to	F406-52920	Work Transfer Other Depts.
\$ 177	to	F406-53010	Office Supplies
\$ 1,550	to	F406-53250	Medical, Dental, Lab Supplies
\$ 9,567	from		HERR Funds - Grant

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

NON-ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

SE-8 First Selectman – Additional Appropriation - \$5,000

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 5,000 to P935-57350 Settlement – Claim of A. Lester

\$ 5,000 from Risk Fund Balance

Ms. Barton explained that this would have been a routine item, but for the abstentions. Mr. Krumeich and Mr. Walko will not take part in the discussion or vote due to conflict of interest.

Upon a motion by Ms. Barton, seconded by Ms. Tarkington, the Board voted 10-0-2 to approve the application. Mr. Walko and Mr. Krumeich abstained.

ROUTINE APPLICATIONS

SE-6 First Selectman – Additional Appropriation - \$65,000

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 65,000 to P935-57350 Settlement – Utility Analysts, LLC v. CCM Services, LLC & TOG

\$ 65,000 from Risk Fund Balance

Ms. Barton gave an explanation for this request.

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

SE-7 First Selectman – Additional Appropriation - \$17,500

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 17,500 to P935-57350 Settlement – Valentine v. BOE

\$ 17,500 from Risk Fund Balance

Ms. Barton gave an explanation for this request.

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

SE-9 First Selectman – Additional Appropriation - \$75,000

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 75,000 to P935-57350 Settlement – M. Santoro vs. TOG

\$ 75,000 from Risk Fund Balance

Ms. Barton gave an explanation for this request.

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

SE-10 First Selectman – Additional Appropriation - \$7,500

Additional Appropriation:

\$ 7,500 to P935-57350 Settlement – Claim of A. Fairclough

\$ 7,500 from Risk Fund

Ms. Barton gave an explanation for this request.

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

ASSESSOR'S REPORT

Mr. Gwartney presented the Assessor's Report and the FY 2009-2010 Operational Plan to the Board. He stated that they are carefully watching the real estate market, due to the changes in the economy. In response to Mr. Walko, Mr. Gwartney stated that the online public information system will be in place on January 8th, so the earliest live demonstration will be at the January 2009 meeting. A discussion followed regarding filling vacant positions and current real estate trends.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Finger, the Board voted 12-0-0 to accept the Assessor's Report including the FY 2009-2010 Operational Plan.

BET COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS and SPECIAL PROJECT TEAMS' REPORTS

Audit Committee Meeting, October 8, 2008 – Mr. Norton

BET Investment Advisory Committee, October 6, 2008 – Mr. Norton

Human Resources Committee, October 15, 2008 – Ms. Tarkington

Nathaniel Witherell Town Building Committee, October 2008 – Ms. Tarkington

OPEB Trust Board, October 7, 2008 – Mr. Stone

Havemeyer/Old Town Hall Project, October 2008 – Mr. Stone

Mr. Walko requested that the BOE Phase 1, Geddis Report, and the DPW Perkins-Eastman Study be sent to the Board Members.

COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

Mr. Mynarski presented the Comptroller's report to the Board. A discussion followed regarding expected tax revenues. Mr. Norton stated that it is the intention of the Audit Committee to present to the full Board, at the December meeting, the FY2007-2008 Audit for its approval.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Mr. Norton, 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 SEPTEMBER 1, 2008 – SEPTMEMER 30, 2008

Mr. Mynarski presented the Treasurer's report to the Board.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BET Regular Meeting, September 16, 2008

Upon a motion by Mr. Simon, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of the BET from September 16, 2008.

OFFICER'S REPORT

Mr. Walko recognized the Town Manager of the Year, Roland Geiger, Budget Director.

Mr. Walko reported that he and Mr. Finger met with the Assessor and the Comptroller. They spoke to the Comptroller regarding the budgeted funds for an audit of Nathaniel Witherell's operations plan and about creating a revolving fund. Mr. Walko and Mr. Mason attended the RTM BOC meeting in order to increase communication between the BET and BOC. Two issues remaining with the Hamilton Avenue Building are the garage and air circulation balancing.

Ms. Tarkington reported that there has been an amendment to the State's Freedom of Information Act that requires Boards and Committees to post their minutes on the Town website for public inspection within seven days of a meeting and explained the change in the process.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion and Approval of BET Budget Guidelines – FY 2009-2010

Mr. Mason gave an overview of the Budget Guidelines process and timeline. Since drafting the guidelines, there have been big changes in the economic conditions in the United States. The Budget Committee has made some adjustments to reflect reduced revenue, including assumptions on potential building permit revenue reductions, conveyance tax reductions, and changes to the grand list. This resulted in decisions to rearrange and defer capital projects. This was put into the final document, which was considered by the Budget Committee at its October meeting. The discussion at that meeting resulted in two Special Meetings thereafter. The consensus is that there are concerns with revenues and some of the capital plan spending.

Mr. Mason stated that it was suggested that the Guidelines would not be able to address everyone's assumptions on where the BET might find itself in February during the Budget Committee meetings, nor did it seem likely that the BET should make those decisions now. Mr. Mason presented a Preamble, which he explained, was prepared as a result of these discussions. The Budget Committee passed the Guidelines as previously prepared by a vote of 3-1-0. Then separately it voted on the Preamble by a vote of 3-1-0. He stated that the Guidelines should give direction to the Town Departments and the Preamble is the warning that current economic conditions could cause significant changes by the decision time in February.

Ms. Tarkington and Mr. Finger acknowledged the work done by the Budget Committee and supported the addition of the Preamble.

Mr. Stone stated he remains quite concerned about the situation that will be affecting the region. The Guidelines as presented are unfair to the citizenry of Greenwich. Mr. Stone said that the BET knows enough now to make a determination as to where the Budget Committee will be in February and the Guideline's message should be clearer. Some changes were made to the Guidelines, one of which is a reduction of 15 in the Town's table of organization. However, the idea surfaced about developing a Preamble, which has become the subject of a good deal of thoughtful discussion. A fairly good document was arrived at, but it has not come far enough. Mr. Stone presented an adjusted insert to the proposed Preamble, to follow the second paragraph.

Upon a motion by Mr. Stone, seconded by Ms. Tarkington the Board voted 5-7-0 against the amendment to add "To further reduce the amount required from the capital markets and to achieve a goal of containing property tax increases to a targeted 2-4%, capital spending may be limited to projects having a clear bearing on maintenance, health and/or safety" to the Preamble with Mr. Mason, Mr. Simon, Mr. Krumeich, Ms. Barton, Mr. Finger, Mr. Kelly and Mr. Ramer voting against.

Mr. Kelly proposed striking the words "and with enormous losses in the past few weeks and days", from the first sentence of the Preamble stating that the language creates confusion.

Upon a motion by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to delete the clause within the Preamble.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Simon, the Board voted 11-1-0, to accept the FY 2009-2010 Budget Guidelines as amended with Mr. Stone voting against.

The approved Budget Guidelines - FY 2009-2010 can be found at:

http://greenwichct.virtualltownhall.net/Public_Documents/GreenwichCT_Estimate/BudgetGuidelines_2009-2010_Final.pdf

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of 2009 BET Calendar

Upon a motion by Mr. Ramer, seconded by Mr. Simon, the Board voted 12-0-0 to approve the 2009 BET Calendar as amended.

The approved 2009 BET Calendar can be found at:
http://greenwichct.virtualtownhall.net/Public_Documents/GreenwichCT_BETAgendas/betBudget_RTM_Schedule_2009.pdf

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Ramer, the Board voted 12-0-0 to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Bocchino, Recording Secretary

Leslie L. Tarkington, Clerk of the Board

Stephen G. Walko, Chairman

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL