

TOWN OF GREENWICH
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Cone Room
Wednesday, November 12, 2008

Committee:

Present: Michael S. Mason, Chairman; Laurence B. Simon, Robert S. Stone, Edward T. Krumeich, Jr

Board: Art Norton, Jim Campbell, Steve Walko, Bill Finger, Nancy Barton, Leslie Tarkington

Ex-Officio

Board Member: First Selectman Peter Tesei

Staff:

Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller
Debbie Flynn, Business Office Manager; Caroline Baisley, Director, Health Department
J. Wayne Fox, Town Attorney; Eugene McLaughlin, Assistant Town Attorney
Ted Gwartney, Tax Assessor
John Crary, Town Administrator
Victoria Anyikwa, Commissioner; Nester Nana, Contracts Program Manager, Business Office, Social Services Department

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Requests for Budget Adjustments

LAW-1 Law Department – Release of Condition - \$600,000

Release of Condition:

\$ 600,000 to A140-51400 Prof. & Other Spec. Services Attorneys Fees

Mr. Mason gave an explanation for the condition. Mr. Fox gave an overview of the types of cases that have required the hiring of outside counsel and/or special services.

In response to Mr. Stone, Mr. Fox explained that the Lessons Learned process is now handled by the Law Committee. The Law Department and Law Committee meet in a regular basis to review cases. When the system has not functioned as it should, the problem is identified and addressed, in order to avoid the same problem in the future.

The Committee voted 4-0 to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a non-routine application.

HD-4 Health Department – Approval to Use - \$73,674.88

Approval to Use:

\$ 17,500	to	F403-51490	Prof. Services NOC
\$ 10,000	to	F403-52010	Publicity
\$ 10,000	to	F403-52020	Printing
\$11,361.88	to	F403-52150	Office Services
\$ 17,013	to	F403-53010	Office Supplies
\$ 200	to	F403-53160	Film & Video
\$ 7,600	to	F403-53250	Medical, Surgical, Lab Supplies
\$73,674.88	from		Public Act funds - Grant

Ms. Baisley stated that the funds have been received and gave an overview of the planned use for the funds. This Grant is renewable yearly and is to be used for Public Health only.

The Committee voted 4-0 to approve the request and forward it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation as a routine application.

Discussion of Social Services Benchmark Model EVOLV-CS Software Update and Homemaker Services

Dr. Anyikwa presented a comparison study Social Services and Homemaker Services of ten towns with similar demographics in Connecticut. Of those towns surveyed, Greenwich is above the others in services provided and the number of people served. A discussion followed. Mr. Mason asked Dr. Anyikwa to distribute the presented information to the BET.

Seniors and Citizens with Disabilities Tax Relief Ordinance

Mr. Tesei and Mr. McLaughlin presented an amended senior and disabled tax relief ordinance Sec. 12-6.1. Mr. Tesei gave an overview of the process, the findings and an explanation for the proposed changes. A lengthy discussion followed concerning the language of the ordinance, possible changes made by the RTM, the administrative burden, and total impact of the ordinance. To deal with an issue that received considerable attention, the possibility that the RTM could ignore the \$1,000,000 amount targeted, Mr. Stone suggested that the maximum program cost, proposed to be set at 1% of real property taxes, be reduced to ½%, which would place the ceiling at roughly \$1.3million.

Mr. McLaughlin agreed to work on the language in Section 4. Mr. Mason suggested the Budget Committee meet again, prior to the BET meeting, concerning this Ordinance.

Upon a motion by Mr. Simon, the Committee voted 3-1-0 (Mr. Krumeich against), to approve changing the language in Section 1 to read, **(4) who is under age sixty-five and eligible in accordance with applicable federal regulations to receive permanent total disability benefits under Social Security.**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Simon, the Committee voted 3-1-0 (Mr. Krumeich against), to ask the Town Attorney to draft a new section 4 to incorporate the following changes:

- a. Change the maximum benefit to one-half of one percent of real property taxes (reduced from one percent).
- b. Include a minimum amount of \$570,000 for this benefit (since modified to be the lesser of all approved applications or \$570,000).

- c. Allow the BET at the time it sets the mill rate to establish a lower maximum than included in (a) above.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Simon, the Committee voted 3-1-0 (Mr. Krumeich against), to approve changing the language in Section 11c to read: round **down** all increases to the nearest \$500.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Simon, the Committee voted 4-0-0 to approve changing the language in Section 11c to read **CPI-U** instead of **CPI-W**. (CPI-U measures price inflation as opposed to CPI-W which measures wage inflation).
Section 11c as amended now reads:

(c) For fiscal years commencing July 1, 2010 and following the *Qualifying Total Annual Income* shall be adjusted by the percentage increase in the CPI-U NY-NJ-CT-PA as provided in paragraph 4 above rounded down to the nearest \$500.

BET Budget Calendar of Monthly Topics

A discussion took place regarding the Budget Committee Discussion Topics and meeting dates for 2009. The Budget Committee changed the date of the January 2009 from January 12, 2009 to January 20, 2009 at a time to be determined based upon the agenda. The meeting would start no later than 5:00 P.M. and might start earlier.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Committee voted 4-0 to approve the minutes from the October 14, 2008, Regular Budget Committee Meeting.

The Committee voted 3-0-1 to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2008, Special Budget Committee Meeting.

The Committee voted 4-0 to approve the minutes from the October 20, 2008, Special Budget Committee Meeting.

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Bocchino, Recording Secretary

Michael S. Mason, Chairman