

TOWN OF GREENWICH
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION
BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Hayton Meeting Room, 3rd Floor
Thursday, October 8, 2009
10:30 A.M.

Committee:

Present: Michael S. Mason, Chairman; Laurence B. Simon, Robert S. Stone
William Finger

Board: Art Norton, Leslie Tarkington, Jim Campbell, Art Norton

Staff: Roland Gieger, Budget Director; Peter Mynarski, Comptroller
Anthony Giovannone, Finance Department Analyst

Others: Leslie Moriarty and Nancy Weissler, Board of Education,
Peter Tesei, First Selectman

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 A.M.

To discuss and vote on the Budget Guidelines for the 2010-2011 Budget

The BET Budget Committee met to consider additional draft materials submitted as amendments to the FY 10-11 budgetary guideline document amended at a work session of the BET Budget Committee meeting held on September 29, 2009.

Mr. Mason proceeded to guide those in attendance through the redrafted materials which included the FY 2010-2011 Budget Guidelines Draft #6, the FY 2010-2024 Capital Budget Financing model and the preliminary FY 2010-2011 mill rate projection in its current status.

Mr. Stone made the original motion to modify the budgetary guidelines by eliminating references to a 2% - 4% range for a mill rate increase and substitute wording calling for a 2% mill rate increase only. Mr. Mason seconded the motion and a lengthy discussion ensued and the motion failed on a vote of 1 to 3 (Mr. Stone voting for the motion and Mssrs. Mason, Simon and Finger voting against the motion).

Mr. Finger made a motion to include new language on page #1, paragraph 2 to include a reference to the projected budget gap at this time of \$4.6 million being tied to a 3.5% mill rate

increase. Mr. Mason seconded and the voted carried 3 to 1 for with Mr. Stone voting against the motion.

Mr. Simon made a motion and Mr. Mason seconded to make language changes to wording in paragraph 1 on page #2 (Guidelines and Guidance from BET). The changes were to take out “Health Savings Accounts” and insert “High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)” and to add the word “historical” further down in the paragraph. The Committee voted 3 to 1 to accept the word changes with Mr. Stone voting against.

Mr. Simon made a motion to make several changes to parts of the “Mill Rate Guidelines” sections on page #2 and 3. Mr. Mason seconded the motion. The changes noted in bold were as follows and will be properly reflected in Draft #7:

- Add - “**an historical**” 3.50% mill, etc.
- Add - the following “**assumptions have been made or**” actions, etc.
- Add - 47 people “**participated in a**” retirement incentive plan.
- Add - removing “**positions**” from the Table of Organization, etc.
- Add - The Senior Tax Relief is currently in the FY11 budget “**projection**” for \$735,000.
- Add - the Town to achieve “**an historical**” 3.5% mill rate increase in FY11.

The Committee voted 4 to 0 to accept the above noted changes to the Mill Rate Guidelines section.

Mr. Stone made a motion to introduce language into the budgetary guidelines to eliminate a number of positions numbering anywhere from 20 to 30. Mr. Mason seconded the motion.

Mr. Finger expressed concern about putting any reference to a specific number of positions to be eliminated without clearly stating where the cuts would be made. Mr. Stone responded by saying a previous administration failed to cooperate with this initiative from a prior BET Human Resources Committee detailing areas identified as being overstaffed. Mr. Stone continued by saying that a report prepared by the Comptroller, commissioned by the BET HR Committee, clearly pointed out redundancies or where these cuts could be made.

Mr. Mason added that putting in language to cut positions in the budget guidelines would present a problem to appointing authorities and department heads when crafting their budgets with an objective of cutting positions without stating where the cuts should occur.

The Committee voted 1 to 3 (Mr. Stone for and Mssrs. Mason, Simon and Finger against) against the motion made by Mr. Stone to include language to remove a number of positions from the Table of Organization.

Mr. Tesei stated that he felt the first bullet under “Mill Rate Guidelines” was misleading, implying that 47 positions have gone away and that was not the case. The Committee agreed and amended the passage as noted above.

Mrs. Tarkington offered new language under “Mill Rate Guidelines” as a compromise to Mr. Stone’s attempted and failed motion to add references to a number or range of positions to be eliminated and included in the budgetary guidelines. The Committee agreed and made the changes reflected above.

Mrs. Tarkington also offered new language in the bullet under “Mill Rate Guidelines” referencing non-salary account increases by no more than 3.0%. She offered language using the CPI-W index, effective September 30. A discussion ensued and the Committee decided not to make any of Mrs. Tarkington’s suggested changes.

Under the “All Town Departments” section, the Committee agreed to make the following changes noted in bold to the shared services section:

- Add - to have a “**highly**” skilled staff, etc.
- Add – The “**combined**” staff should provide, etc.
- Add – The BET is aware there “**may be**” organizational, etc.
- Add – It is the BET’s goal that the initial implementation begins in “**FY10**”.

Under the “Revenues” section, Mr. Stone offered the following changes:

- Add - “and regional market conditions”.

The Committee agreed and the change was added. There were a number of additional changes offered by BET members and the audience that constituted grammatical changes and will be reflected in Draft #7.

APPROVAL OF GUIDELINES

On a motion by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Simon, the BET Budget Committee voted 3 to 1 (Mr. Stone voted no) to approve the FY 2010-11 Budget Guidelines (FY11). Mr. Mason requested that the changes be incorporated into a new and final draft and it be distributed for discussion at the October 13, 2009 BET Budget Committee meeting.

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Mynarski, Recording Secretary

Michael S. Mason, Chairman