

BUDGET OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES
September 7, 2018

OFFICERS: Lucia D. Jansen CHAIRMAN District 7
 Dan Ozizmir VICE CHAIR District 5
 Nancy Burke (ACTING) SECRETARY District 2

MEMBERS:

DIST	DELEGATE	P	A	DIST	ALTERNATE	P	A
1	Goss, Dean C.	X		1	Lopez, Anthony		X
2	Burke, Nancy	X		2	O'Hagan, Lorelei		X
3	Nicastro, Roz	X		3	Robert, Allen		X
4	Samaniego, Romulo	X		4	Sanchez, Diego		X
5	Ozizmir, Dan	X		5	Walker, Kathryn L.		X
6	Garthwaite, Candace	X		6	Klintberg, Gunnar	X	
7	Jansen, Lucia D.	X		7	Galvin, III, William V.		X
8	Saleeby, Mary "Molly"	X		8	Kostin, Laura A.	X	
9	Zarrilli, Carol A.		X	9	Malin, Brian	X	
10	Malkin, Lawrence S.	X		10	Hamre, Mareta C.	X	
11	Zorthian, Gregory J.		X	11	Oliver, David	X	
12	Agresta, Thomas	X		12	de Milhau, David		X

Visitors: RTM, District 10 Member - Louisa Stone
 Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) - Leslie Moriarty, Mike Mason, Leslie Tarkington

Lucia Jansen called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm. There were 12 voting members, 10 delegates and 2 alternates.

The BOC Minutes for August 1, 2018 were unanimously approved.

RTM Call Item #5, D10 Sense of the Meeting Resolution (SOMR), Northwest Fire Station

A motion was made and seconded to consider the item on the call. **The motion PASSED by a BOC vote of 12-0-0.**

The Fire Chief, First Selectman, and Town Administrator were invited to attend the BOC's meeting. All declined due to conflicts with their schedule.

Lucia stated the high importance of public safety for all Greenwich residents. D10 RTM members present at the meeting then recapped the reasons for the Sense of the Meeting Resolution (SOMR). As said in the Explanatory Comments, the

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proponents believe there is unequal fire protection for the 3,500 residents in the NW area with response times from 8 to 15 minutes far worse than other parts of town. They cited that other parts of town receive 4 minutes and up to 8 minutes of response time. They referenced the “deficient” Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating Greenwich is classified. They also feel the two previous RTM votes rejecting the NW fire station, in 2016, and again in 2017, were conducted in a cursory, superficial manner and lacked a deep, understanding of the facts by the RTM at the time.

Scope of the Fire Incident and Response Time Issues

BOC members had questions and comments to the various assertions by D10 proponents. BOC members were frustrated with the lack of important information disclosed in the Explanatory Comments. They began by noting there was a lack of current, town-wide structural fire incident data. Also, no updated data by fire station on the response time to structural fire incidences, particularly for NW area. For example, several BOC members noted according to the D10’s maps they too were, in fact, in 8-minute or greater fire response time zones. It was noted that Greenwich has an ISO rating of 3/3y which is a superior, elite rating and only 3% of stations out of 48,000 have such a high rating. Members also questioned the far Northwest Fairview Country Club property as a proposed location. It was also unclear what it meant for Fairview to be “fully vetted” as D10 members stated. Most, importantly, there was no mention what the new response time improvement would be with a new NW fire station. BOC members questioned why D10 maps do not show the Banksville fire department. Also, Armonk had no mention at all.

BOC members were given the Finance Committee white paper written by the Mike Basham, the Vice Chair, as well as a white paper written by a former RTM Public Works member [attached]. The so-called 4 minute response time standard for structural fire incidences was commented in both papers. The NFPA 1710 standard cited for a 4 minute response is not law or a government regulatory standard. The National Fire Protection Association, (NFPA), is a non government organization. In fact, the data provided by the Fire Chief shows that no fire station in Greenwich is making a 4 minute or less average response time to structure fires from 1/1/2009 through 4/19/2016.

NW Fire Station Capital and Operating Costs

BOC members had serious concerns that there was little to no information on the proposed capital or operating cost with the new NW station. The capital cost was 2 years old and broadly stated at \$8 million. More concerning, there was no mention or disclosure on the operating costs, which is a lifetime cost given firefighter defined benefit pension plans and retiree healthcare. Lucia highlighted the discrepancy with D10 verbally stating the NW fire staffing would consist of existing firefighters working overtime versus the Fire Chief’s written confirmation that the NW fire station staffing would be newly hired career firefighters.

NW Fire Station Short and Long-Term Operating Costs

D10 did not outline either overtime costs (with existing personnel) or new career firefighter personnel costs. Also, BET members present at the BOC noted the staffing number of firefighters would not be 12 firefighters as asserted by a D10 member, but rather 16 or 18 given the new 3-man mandated staffing required by labor contract at all career stations. Dan Ozizmir also noted that benchmark research data shows Greenwich at the highest cost in the size of the fire budget; number of existing fire stations; size of the fire suppression personnel for population and square miles; high amount of equipment apparatus; and dry hydrant and cisterns installed by Town; as compared to peer groups. Also noted were public comments by the Fire Chief and others that stated the issue is not lack of personnel but rather the misplacement of the existing stations.

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BOC Item #5 Vote – Due to the lack of critical key information, the BOC considered a new amended SOMR. A **motion was made and seconded to amend D10 SOMR with the replacement described below. Motion PASSED with a BOC vote of 11-1-0.** *District 10 voted no because the original SOMR better reflected their desired outcome.*

**BUDGET OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
AMENDMENTS TO ITEM #5 SENSE OF THE MEETING RESOLUTION
OF THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2018 CALL**

WHEREAS, the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) recognizes that town government plays an important role in the protection of human life and property; and

WHEREAS, District 10 of the RTM has expressed concern as to the adequacy of the fire protection and emergency response times in northwest Greenwich; and

WHEREAS, the RTM has been asked by District 10 to pass a sense of the meeting requesting the development of a budget to design and construct a new fire Station in northwest Greenwich.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of District 10's concerns, it is the Sense of the Meeting that the First Selectman's Office and the Fire Department prepare a report to the RTM Finance, Town Services, and Budget Overview Committees in up to 120 days that:

1. Updates the information provided to the RTM in 2016 regarding fire protection town wide, with particular emphasis on structural fire incidences, response times and volunteer and mutual aid by each town fire station;
2. Provides, in addition to the construction of a new fire station, any potential alternative delivery methods for fire protection town-wide; and
3. Provides a cost estimate, both operating and capital, including a staffing model, land costs, design costs, construction costs, and evaluation of septic and water sources and costs to upgrade, if necessary, and cost of additional fire apparatus for the construction of a northwest fire station or any potential alternative delivery methods for fire protection town-wide.

BOC Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget Goals

Since it was late in the evening, Lucia offered the idea if the BOC would be interested to have another BOC meeting in the next couple of weeks to discuss the FY20 budget goals. The committee responded favorably to the idea and suggested dates would be sent by Lucia shortly. In the meantime, with the BET Budget Committee Chair, Leslie Moriarty, present she shared to the BOC highlights with the FY20 BET Budget assumptions. She indicated that without the State health care plans savings of the past two years it will be a more difficult budget year. She also mentioned the Retirement Board may

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require \$1.79 million higher in Town contribution. Health care and retirement looks to be 16% of the total operating (fixed costs) budget. Labor also is higher than years past namely with teachers who have a 3.6% wage/step increase. The BET will be meeting in the next week to discuss the first round of the BET FY20 Guidelines.

Greenwich Organization School Administrators (GOSA) Labor Contract

[55 employees: Principals, Assistant Principals, Headmasters, and more]

As part of the FY20 BET Guideline discussion, it was mentioned that the Administrator contract will be heading to the RTM for approval in the October call. This was a bit of a surprise since it looked like formal arbitration hearings was going to be necessary. Mike Mason, BET member and part of the negotiation team for the healthcare portion, mentioned GOSA General Wage Increase (GWI) for the next 3 years will be 1.9%, 2.0% and 2.05%. He indicated the portion of the employee premium cost sharing increase 1.5% each year. [The BOC had shown in research that all Greenwich employees pay one of the lowest health care co-share premium rates.]

Adjourn at 9:25 pm

DRAFT