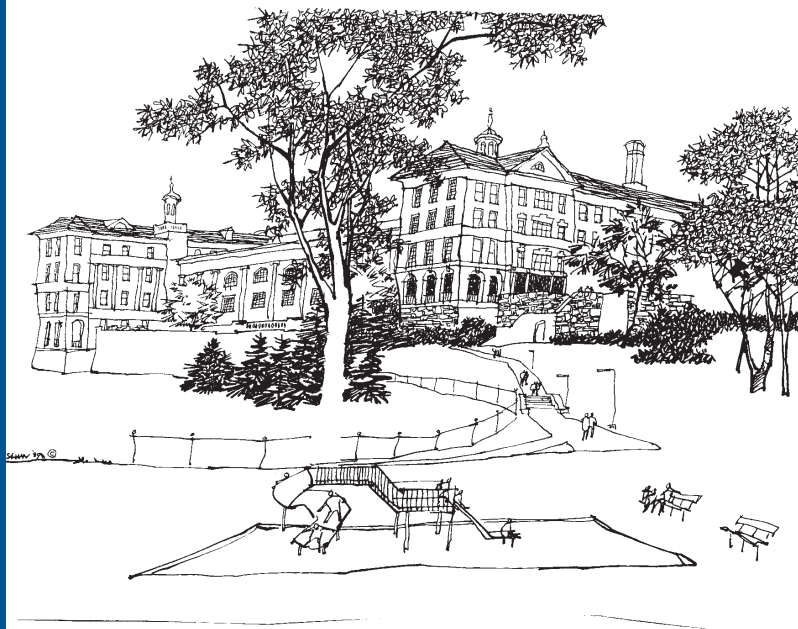


# A Guide to Greenwich Government



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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. It was founded in 1920 as an outgrowth of the 72 year struggle to win voting rights for women.

The League’s purpose, its open membership, its independence from partisan politics and its democratic procedures attract women and men of all ages and backgrounds. It is an excellent training ground for people who wish to “make it happen.”

We hope you will join the League!

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## In Greenwich... *You Make it Happen*

The Town of Greenwich is governed by a Board of Selectmen, a Board of Estimate and Taxation, a Representative Town Meeting, a Board of Education and various other elected or appointed boards and commissions. Except for the Board of Selectmen, Greenwich is led by a “night government”—men and women who volunteer their time and meet primarily in the evenings. But decision-making in Greenwich isn’t only their responsibility—it’s also up to you.

This booklet describes the functions of some of the boards and commissions and how you can play a part. Registering and voting is just a first step you can take in shaping the future of this Town. All board and commission meetings are open to Greenwich residents. Plan to attend some. For your voice to count, the people in Town government have to hear from you.

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF GREENWICH

## Government

In 1640, a boat carrying Robert and Elizabeth Feake, a young couple escaping the Puritan rigors of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, floated in to the beach at Greenwich Point. The Feakes, with Captain Daniel Patrick, bought the adjacent land from the Siwanoy Indians for 25 English coats and the Town of Greenwich was born. The colony grew steadily and in 1665 received a patent from King Charles II to become a township “providing they procure and maintain an orthodox minister” and was accepted into the jurisdiction of Connecticut.

When Greenwich became a separate town in 1665, voters adopted the traditional New England Town Meeting and Selectman system of government. Anxious to protect the moral character of the Town, they decreed that only those who could produce a certificate testifying to an orderly life and who enjoyed the approval of a minister would be admitted as residents. Nevertheless, there were over 300 families by the 1740s and the business of the Town Meeting had become proportionately more complicated. Voters had to elect not only the Selectmen, but a Town Clerk and three Constables. They also had to choose a Tax Collector, Highway Surveyors, Grand Jurymen, a School Committee, a Town Treasurer and other officials.

In 1774, the Town Meeting became involved in historic events, ordering the establishment of a committee to see that the Articles of Association adopted by the Continental Congress were strictly observed in the Town and in 1776 passing a motion, without a single dissenting vote, sustaining the Declaration of Independence. In 1818, it approved the new State Constitution.

At the start of the 19th century, Greenwich was still essentially a farming community, and a special Town Meeting was called to establish “bylaws” for the restraint of horses, cattle, asses, mules, swine, sheep and geese. After the New York-New Haven railroad was built in 1848, many New Yorkers began building summer homes here. By the end of the century, the population had grown to over 12,000. Among the new arrivals was the infamous Boss Tweed, who must have felt right at home since at the time Greenwich was in the clutches of a political machine, the Tax Collector’s accounts had been found wanting and



Bush Wilmot House (1790)

the Selectmen were suspected of graft. Greenwich was declared by muckraking journalist Lincoln Steffens to be “as corrupt as any city in the United States.” The Town’s debt was such that a 50 percent increase in real estate taxes was thought necessary. In 1909, the Greenwich Town Meeting responded to this state of affairs by establishing a Board of Estimate and Taxation to be responsible for the financial affairs of the Town.

The character of the Town was gradually changing from agricultural to commercial and residential. In 1912, there were over 16,000 residents, of whom about 500 were commuters. The Grand List (the value of all properties in Town) totaled \$35,000,000. The Town budget was \$403,000. By 1928, Greenwich led the nation in per capita wealth, but also had the second-highest per capita debt in the state. In 1932, the Town, prompted by prominent citizens and newspaper editorialists, adopted a Pay-As-You-Go policy.

The population was growing so much that the traditional open Town Meeting was no longer feasible. In addition, special interests began packing the Town Meetings so that they no longer represented the will of the majority. A Representative Town Meeting was first suggested in 1916, but change comes slowly, especially when vested interests are concerned. In 1928, at a particularly acrimonious Town Meeting attended by over 1,000 residents, a motion to reorganize the government, investigate tax matters and make a general survey was defeated by an overwhelming margin. It was not until October 1933 that open Town Meetings, in which all voters (almost 15,000 at the time) were eligible to vote, were replaced by a Representative Town Meeting, with members elected from 11 districts, one member for each 100 voters. Greenwich’s 12th district was added in 1953.

Town government continued to evolve under the impetus of citizens’ reform committees and RTM committees. In 1933, it was decided that the BET and the Board of Education should have equal representation from the two political parties. In 1939, the RTM unanimously adopted a streamlined form of government with citizens participating through membership on different boards. In 1953, RTM membership was limited to 230. In 1978, the First Selectman became a full-time, salaried chief executive officer of the Town.

Greenwich population has remained relatively stable at almost 61,000 residents. The Town has the state’s largest Grand List, exceeding \$43 billion and an annual

budget of over \$380 million in fiscal 2012. For up-to-date information on Town statistics, please visit the Town website at [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

Today, the Town government can be characterized as a decentralized system of overlapping powers and responsibilities. It is also largely volunteer. Except for the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Tax Review, all members of the boards and commissions serve without pay.

What follows are brief descriptions of the Town boards, commissions and departments that are most likely to be of interest to the average citizen. To get involved or push a particular cause, you can start by attending their meetings. According to the Freedom of Information Act, all meetings must be open to the public. For current information on meetings, agendas, minutes and names of elected and appointed officials and departments, visit the Town of Greenwich website at [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).



Benjamin Mead House (1697)



## ELECTED BOARDS & OFFICERS

### The Board of Selectmen: The Focus of Town Government

The Board of Selectmen consists of a full-time, salaried First Selectman, who is the chief executive officer of the Town, and two salaried, part-time Selectmen—all elected for two-year terms. No more than two members may be elected from one party. They take office on December 1 following their election in November.

Despite the name, Selectmen can be women. In 1978, Ruth Sims became the first woman to be elected First Selectman. She was also the first full-time First Selectman; the position was changed from part-time to full-time because of the Town's growth and complexity of administration of its affairs.

Along with nominating and appointing many Town officials and committee members (often subject to RTM approval), the Board of Selectmen may initiate changes in the Town Charter, either by appointing a charter revision commission or under Home Rule action as described in the Town Charter. The Board also acts as the Parking and Traffic Authority for the Town.

The First Selectman supervises a number of Town departments, such as Fire, Police, Public Works, Law, Information Technology and Parks and Recreation and appoints department heads subject to approval of the Board of Selectmen (see the Chart of Greenwich Government, pages 20 and 21). The First Selectman is responsible for labor negotiations for the entire Town (except for teachers' contracts), and is also an ex-officio (nonvoting) member of all Boards and Commissions and a voting member of the Flood and Erosion Control Board and of the Bruce Museum Board. The First Selectman is also responsible for preparing an initial Town-wide budget proposal for submission to the Board of Estimate and Taxation and for approving, revising and monitoring operations plans (except for the operations budget of the Board of Education and of the Finance Department) submitted along with budget requests. See Budget Process on page 10 for details.

The Board of Selectmen holds regular meetings, at least once a month, at Town Hall, with additional meetings held as needed. The Board often forms special committees to explore a wide range of issues affecting Town life, from water

quality and preserving open space to affordable housing. To request that an item be put on the agenda, write or call the First Selectman. A typical request might involve the need for a stop sign, traffic lights or parking control in a certain area.

To find out when the Board of Selectmen is meeting, call 203-622-7710 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

### The Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET): Holding the Purse Strings

The BET consists of twelve members, elected for two-year terms. They must be taxpayers and hold no other elective office. Each party nominates six candidates. Once the party slates are selected, either by endorsement or as a result of a primary challenge, they are elected automatically unless there are independent candidates or write-in votes. BET members begin their terms of office on January 1st following their election in November.

The BET controls Town spending, sets fiscal policy, prepares the annual budget, approves interim appropriations, receives funds for the Town, determines each year's tax rate and oversees the Finance Department, the Assessor and the Tax Collector. By state law, operational expenditures for the Board of Education are appropriated in a lump sum. BET members elect a chairman who must belong to the party receiving the most votes for BET candidates in that election. In the case of a tie vote, the Chairman may cast a second vote to break the tie. He or she appoints bipartisan committees of the Board corresponding to Town departments and programs. These committees review departmental requests (typically for more money or transfers of funds) before each BET meeting. The four-member Budget Committee is responsible for recommending the annual budget and its financing to the entire BET.

Town boards may make requests for interim appropriations when the BET meets. Requests may be for extra money for projects which arise after the budget is set, for repairing heavy storm damage, or to transfer money within a department from one project to another. Any request for additional money over \$5,000 must also be approved by the RTM.

Greenwich has operated on a modified Pay-As-You-Go fiscal policy since 1933. The plan uses a provision of the Connecticut General Statutes which permits a municipality to spread the financing of capital and non-recurring expenditures over a five-year period. The BET approves the full amount but in setting the tax rate, it will include in the expenditure calculation only some portion of the total expenditure approved and postpone the additional portions to each of the following four years. The decision as to the annual amounts to be financed reflects the cash flow of that project as well as the general cash flow of the Town. As a result of this practice the Town had generally refrained from borrowing except for sewer projects. In recent years, in response to the economic situation and due to the extremely low interest rates, the BET decided to suspend the Pay-As-You-Go method of funding and is utilizing the model that allows Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN) for up to two years followed by issuance of five-year bonds that will capitalize the project's cost once it is known.

The BET meets every third Monday of the month, usually at 8 p.m. at Town Hall except for January and September, when it meets on the fourth Monday. For more information, call 203-622-7720 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

## The Budget Process

Departments, divisions and officers submit annually to their supervising authorities a proposed budget report and an operations plan for the ensuing year. This usually happens during the Fall and is based on the Budget Guidelines (targets) approved by the full BET in October. Following review by the supervising authorities, these budgets and operations plans are submitted to the First Selectman for review and revisions. It is the First Selectman's responsibility to review non tax revenue except for revenues considered part of the school's budget. The First Selectman may not make changes in the operations budget of the Board of Education (BOE), in the Fixed Charges budget submitted by the BET, nor in the operations plans submitted by the BOE or the BET. The First Selectman also develops goals and objectives and establishes priorities with respect to the proposed capital spending for all Town agencies. The capital budget is updated each year by the First Selectman's Capital Improvement Projects Committee (CIP) composed of several department heads who recommend which capital projects should be funded. The plan covers the next fiscal year in

detail and as many years in the future as possible but not less than ten years in total. Usually, the First Selectman holds a public hearing before finalizing the budget request.

On or before December 1st, or at such time as the BET prescribes, the First Selectman submits to the BET and the RTM his or her budget request.

The Budget Committee of the BET meets with departments to discuss the proposed spending plans. It may add, increase, decrease or eliminate the appropriations requests submitted by the First Selectman on behalf of the departments. A public hearing is held by the Budget Committee (usually in February) before finalizing the Proposed Budget.

The full BET receives the Proposed Budget from the Budget Committee. The full board may add, increase, decrease or eliminate items in the Proposed Budget. A public hearing is held on the Proposed Budget (usually in March) before the appropriations request is finalized and sent to the RTM as the Recommended Budget. A summary of these appropriations must be published in the newspapers by the BET on or before April 10.

The RTM must act on the Recommended Budget on or before May 15. The RTM may decrease or eliminate items from the Recommended Budget but may not add or increase any appropriation.

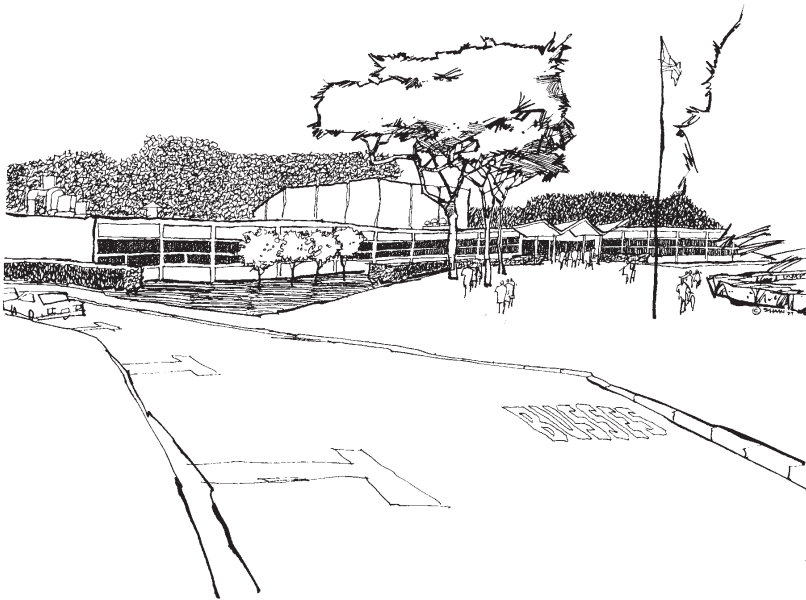
## How to Influence the Budget Process

Taxpayers may influence the budget process during several stages of budget preparation. They may:

- Lobby department heads and the First Selectman from July through September.
- Attend and speak up at the First Selectman's public hearings on the capital and operating budgets.
- Attend BET committee meetings.
- Lobby BET members during budget considerations December through February.

- Attend and speak up at the Budget Committee public hearings in February.
- Attend and speak up at the public hearings held by the BET in March.
- Lobby RTM members regarding items in the Proposed Budget during April and early May.
- Attend and speak at the RTM budget meeting in May.

Even after RTM approval, the public has the ultimate say in the budget. It can eliminate, reduce or increase spending approved by the RTM, though it cannot increase spending above what has been approved by the BET. See the section on the RTM, below.



Central Middle School, RTM meeting location

## The Representative Town Meeting (RTM): Representing the People

The RTM consists of 230 members who are elected by the 12 local districts during the regular biennial election of Town officers in odd-numbered years. The number of RTM members per district is based on the number of registered voters who live there. The members serve for two-year terms which begin on January 1st following their election. Candidates for the RTM run without party identification. The members may not hold another elective office in Town government. The RTM is presided over by a Moderator who is chosen by the members from among their number at the first meeting of each two-year term. The Moderator calls meetings, reviews requests for RTM action, decides the order of the agenda at the meetings, refers items to RTM committees and presides at the RTM meetings.

Ex-officio members of the RTM include the Selectmen, the Town Clerk, the Town Attorney, the Chairman of the Board of Education and the BET members. The Town Clerk, who serves as clerk of the RTM, prints the Call (agenda) for the meetings, mails it to RTM members, prepares the minutes and maintains the records of the RTM.

## Organization and Meetings

Before each meeting of the entire RTM, every member receives a copy of the Call which includes explanatory documents. Members become acquainted with items on the agenda through District meetings and meetings of the Standing Committees. Each District chooses a delegate and an alternate to each of the Standing Committees, which hold meetings at which delegates hear from proponents and opponents of each issue. These committees deal with all the major continuing activities of Town government. The Standing Committees are: Appointments, Education, Finance, Health and Human Services, Land Use, Legislative and Rules, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Town Services and Transportation.

Committee members report to their fellow representatives at District meetings. Thus, through the committee and district meetings, the representatives are prepared for the full RTM session.



There are also three special RTM Committees: Labor Contracts, Claims and Budget Overview.

To obtain an RTM Directory, call the League of Women Voters at 203-352-4700.

## Powers

The RTM is empowered to:

- Approve or reject or reduce the budget.
- Approve or reject or reduce all interim expenditures over \$5,000.
- Accept or reject gifts to the Town.
- Adopt, initiate or amend ordinances (except those relating to parking and traffic).
- Approve or reject nominations to Town bodies made by the Selectmen or the Appointments Committee.
- Approve or reject applications for State and Federal funds.
- Create special committees to study particular subjects.
- Act on municipal labor contracts in accordance with state law.
- Approve the Town Plan of Conservation and Development (a planning and zoning document for Town development), the Open Space Plan and the Sewer Map.
- Act as the final authority on municipal improvements.
- Pass Sense of the Meeting resolutions stating the position of the RTM on issues of local, state and national importance, often urging other branches of government to initiate desired legislation, or expressing disapproval of actions already taken.
- Adopt or reject proposals for Home Rule action (changes, amendments or deletions to the Town Charter) brought by the Board of Selectmen or the BET.
- Act on petitions brought to RTM by twenty registered voters (see below).

The RTM has no power to:

- Increase appropriations. Thus, while the RTM can reject or reduce a budget submitted by the BET, it cannot restore or increase appropriations or add new ones.

The RTM generally meets on Mondays at 8 p.m. eight times a year at Central Middle School. Visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org) for additional information.

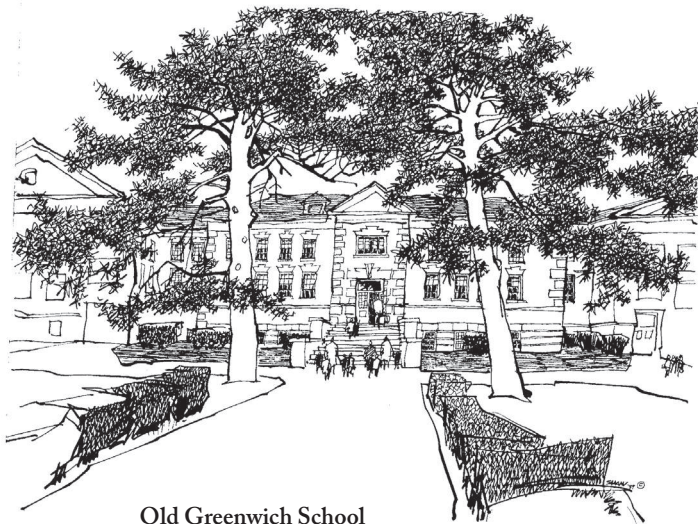
## Referenda on RTM Decisions

The public can review and possibly reverse RTM affirmative votes on major financial or civil matters—such as appropriations over \$20,000, bond issues and changes in ordinances—by a referendum. Three percent of the Town's electors may petition to have a Town-wide vote on such matters, as specified in the Town Charter. The petition must be filed within five business days of the RTM vote. A majority vote of those voting determines the result, except that an RTM decision may not be reversed unless 25% of all registered voters in the Town vote to reverse the RTM decision. This public vote supersedes the RTM action. This charter provision is designed to keep the RTM responsive to the will of the majority.

Records of all RTM votes are on file at the Town Clerk's office and are available to the public during office hours. This information is also available on the Town website at [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

## How to Bring Matters to the RTM

The First Selectman, the Chairman of the BET, and independent Boards and Commissions can all bring matters before the RTM. So can you. To get an item on the next Call, you must submit a petition signed by twenty registered voters to the Town Clerk. Call the Town Clerk for information on the deadlines and procedures.



Old Greenwich School

## The Board of Education (BOE)

The Board of Education consists of eight members elected for four-year staggered terms. They may not be employees of the Greenwich school system. Each political party may nominate as many persons as there are vacancies on the Board. Independent candidates may also be on the ballot. The four candidates receiving the highest number of votes are elected but no more than two from each party.

The Board of Education is responsible for the Town's public schools. It:

- Sets policy.
- Approves annual budgets subject to BET and RTM approval.
- Sets standards for hiring teachers.
- Negotiates teachers' contracts.
- Hires the Superintendent of Schools
- Decides grade organization of schools.
- Approves curricula.
- Manages school property.

- Handles school redistricting.
- Provides for continuing education.

Administration of the schools is delegated to the Superintendent, who is responsible to the Board. The Board elects a chairman after each election and establishes committees to study and make recommendations on specific policy matters.

The Board of Education meets every fourth Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at different schools. For information, call the Board of Education at 203-625-7400 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

## Town Clerk

The Town Clerk is salaried and elected for a two-year term. His or her primary responsibility is to keep records of the Town, but he or she may also swear in voters and is responsible for the preparing and printing of regular and absentee ballots. The Town Clerk also serves as the clerk of the RTM and prepares marriage, birth and death certificates, keeps property records and sells licenses (dog, fishing or hunting).

The Town Clerk can be reached at 203-622-7897 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

## Probate Court

The Probate Court is presided over by the Probate Judge, who must be a Greenwich resident, who is elected for a two-year term. The Court deals mainly with family matters—administration of decedents' estates, trust accounts, conservators and guardians, parental custody, paternity, tax proceedings, change of name and marriage waivers. The Probate Judge is paid from fees.

## Constables

There are seven Constables, four from the majority party, three from the minority party. Duties consist mainly of serving legal papers, for which the Constables are paid a fee.

## Tax Collector

The Tax Collector is salaried and elected for a two-year term. His or her responsibility is to collect real and personal property taxes levied in the Town. Real estate taxes are payable in two annual installments, July and January. Personal property taxes are payable when billed in July or the following January for personal property acquired mid-year.

The Tax Collector can be reached at 203-622-7891 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

## Board of Assessment Appeals

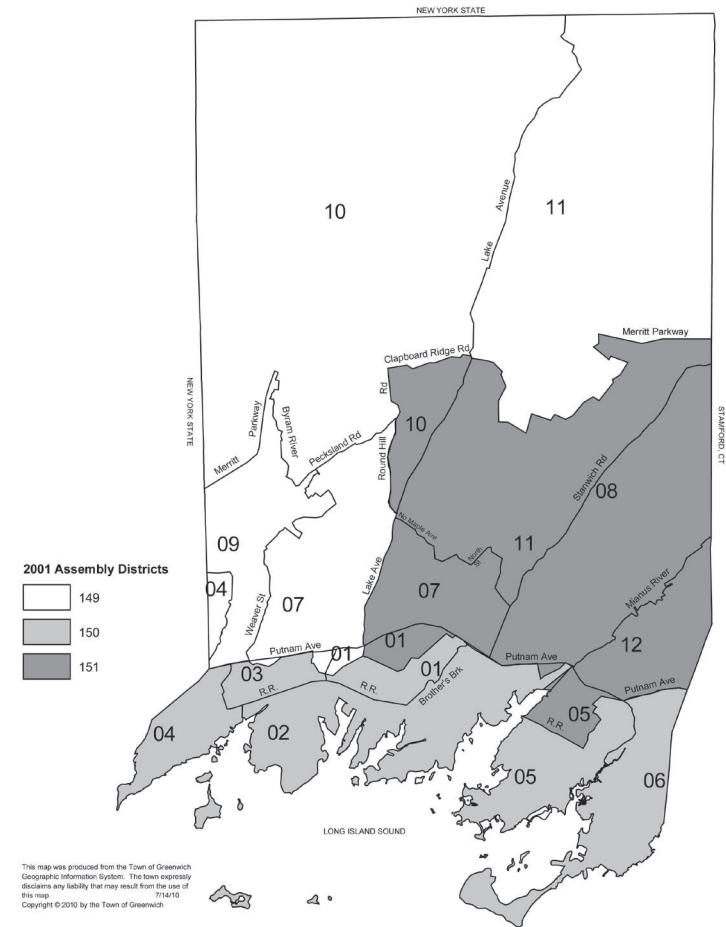
The five members of the Board of Assessment Appeals hear and decide appeals by residents of the assessments of real property and personal property (cars, etc.). The Board may revise assessment upwards or downwards, and may also add items of taxable property to the list of any person or add to the assessment list the name of any person omitted by the Assessor and owning property in the Town. Board members are elected for a two-year term and are paid a small stipend.

## Registrars of Voters

The Registrars' office is an agency of the State of Connecticut. The two elected registrars, one from each party, are responsible for registering and enrolling voters, maintaining the computerized voter lists and updating the lists by an annual canvass. They also conduct primaries, elections and referenda for the Town—setting up polling places, hiring and training all election workers and tabulating voting results. In addition to regular office hours, the Registrars reach out to the community by offering registration sessions at schools, community events and nursing homes. Registrars are elected to a two-year term and are salaried.

For information on how to vote, polling places, election procedures and voting deadlines, call the Registrars at 203-622-7889 or 203-622-7890 or visit the League of Women Voters website at [www.lwvg.org](http://www.lwvg.org).

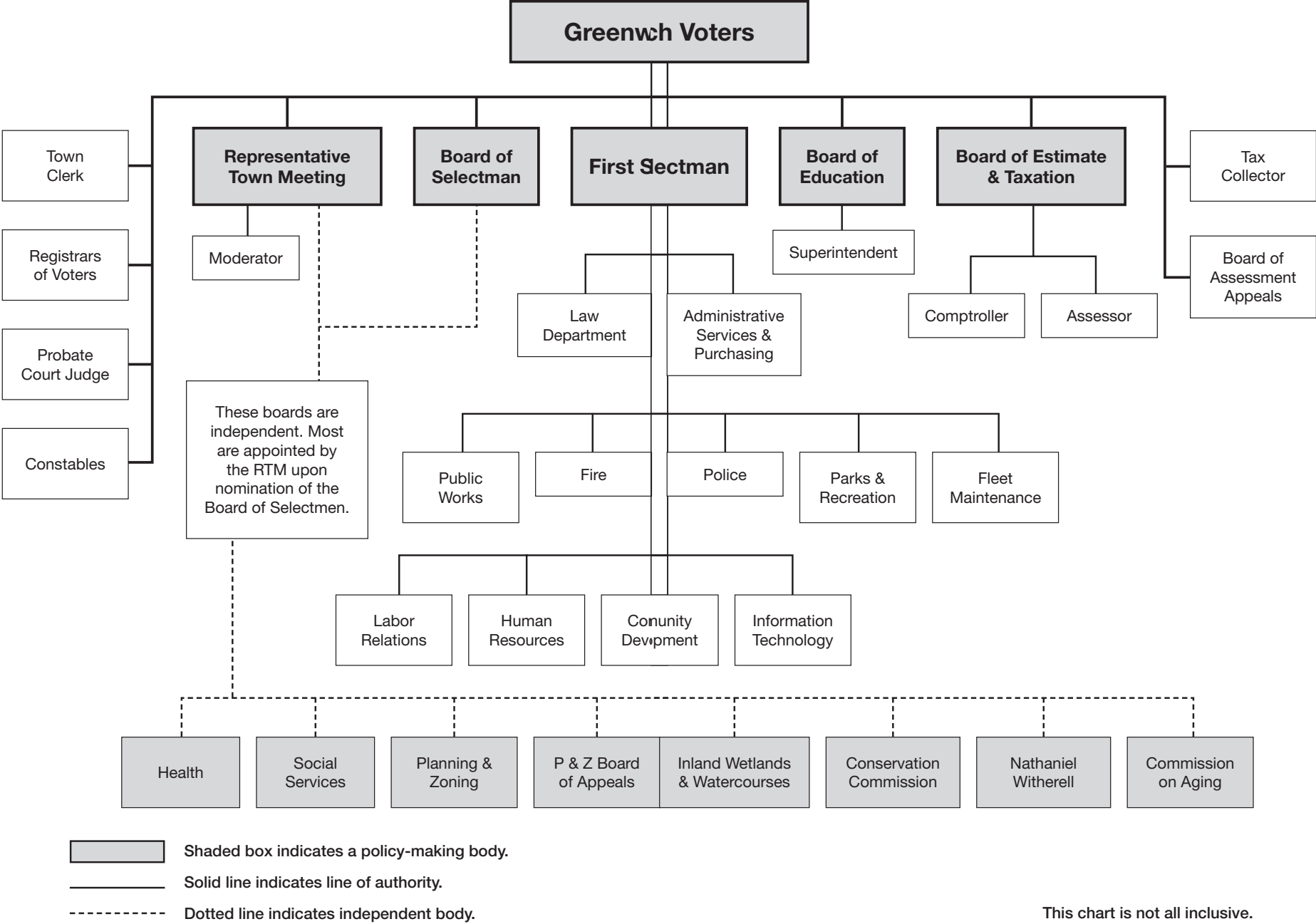
## GREENWICH VOTING DISTRICTS



## POLLING PLACES BY DISTRICT

DISTRICT 1 Julian Curtiss School Gymnasium 180 East Elm Street Greenwich	DISTRICT 5 Riverside School Gymnasium 90 Hendrie Avenue Riverside	DISTRICT 9 Bendheim Western Greenwich Civic Center 449 Pemberwick Road Greenwich
DISTRICT 2 Town Hall, first-floor Meeting Room 101 Field Point Road Greenwich	DISTRICT 6 Old Greenwich School Gymnasium 285 Sound Beach Avenue Old Greenwich	DISTRICT 10 Glenville School 33 Riversville Road Greenwich
DISTRICT 3 Western Middle School 1 Western Junior Highway Greenwich	DISTRICT 7 Greenwich High School 10 Hillside Road Greenwich	DISTRICT 11 North Street School Gymnasium 381 North Street Greenwich
DISTRICT 4 New Lebanon School Gymnasium 25 Mead Avenue Byram	DISTRICT 8 Central Middle School Gymnasium Stanwich Road Greenwich	DISTRICT 12 North Mianus School Gymnasium 309 Palmer Hill Road Riverside

# GREENWICH GOVERNMENT



## DEPARTMENTS & OFFICIALS

### REPORTING TO THE FIRST SELECTMAN

#### Community Development Office

With funds from federally-funded Community Development Block Grants, this Office administers grants that improve quality of life, housing, neighborhoods and economic opportunities in Greenwich, with a special emphasis on the needs of low- and moderate-income residents. Recipients have included the Shelter for the Homeless, the Greenwich Housing Authority, the Greenwich YWCA Domestic Abuse Services and others. Applications for grant monies are screened and prioritized by a committee representative of the community. After public hearings, grants are then approved or modified by the Board of Selectmen, the BET and the RTM.

#### Fire Department

Fire prevention, fire fighting, fire protection and rescue, investigation and containment of spills of hazardous materials are provided by a combination of career personnel and affiliated volunteer companies. The primary mission of the Department is to protect the lives and property of those who live and work in Greenwich. There are currently eight fire stations manned by a combination of professional and volunteer firemen and strategically located throughout the Town. The Department is run by the Fire Chief.

#### Fleet Department

The Fleet Department operates the Vehicle Maintenance Center and is charged with the purchase, maintenance and repair of all Town-owned vehicles and seasonal equipment. The vehicles are assigned to the various Town departments.

#### Human Resources

The Department is responsible for all personnel issues, job placement, administration of employee benefits including retirement benefits, insurance, ethics, payroll and training. The Affirmative Action officer is also part of this Department. It is overseen by the Director of Human Resources.

#### Labor Relations

The Director of Labor Relations negotiates contracts for the six unions covering Town employees, such as Public Health Nurses, Firefighters, Police, GMEA (General Municipal Employees' Association, covering clerical workers), Teamsters (for blue-collar workers) and LIUNA (Laborers' International Union of North America, covering managers). The Director is also responsible for resolving grievances and enforcing contract provisions.

#### Law Department

A part-time Town Attorney heads the Law Department, which includes full-time Assistant Town Attorneys and support staff. The Department represents the Town and its boards, commissions and agencies when they are prosecuting or defending their respective legal rights. It also drafts ordinances, reviews and approves contracts, attends meetings to advise various Town departments, boards, commissions and agencies, and renders legal opinions.

#### Office of Emergency Management-Homeland Security

The Emergency Management Director coordinates and directs emergency response operations with local, state and federal agencies. He or she reviews and develops emergency operation plans with community agencies and partners as well as applying for Homeland Security grants.

During an actual emergency, the First Selectman is in charge of the unified command for all types of response.

The Emergency Operations Center is in the new Public Safety complex.

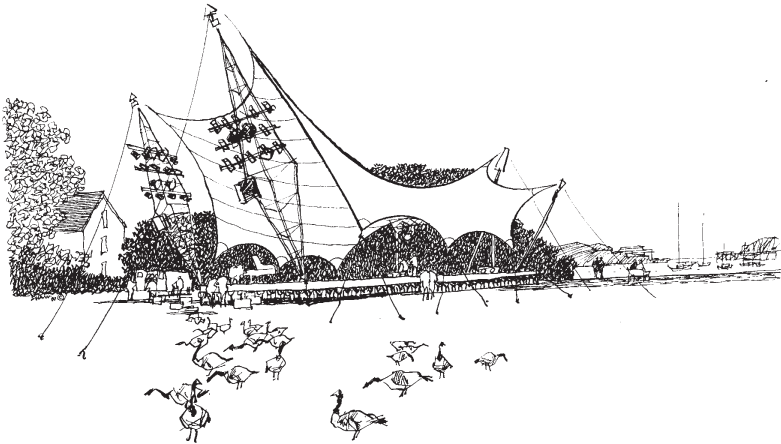


## Parking Services

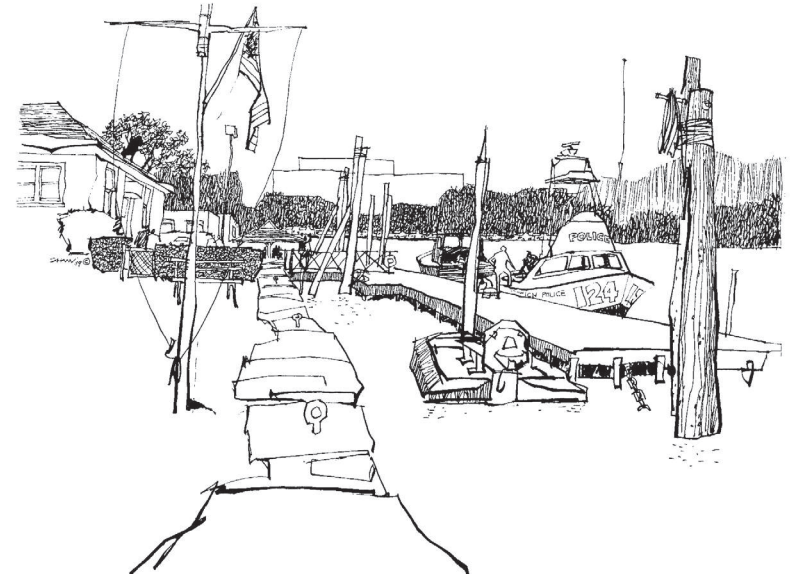
Under the supervision of the Parking Services Director, this Department enforces parking regulations, assesses requests for parking control, collects meter revenue, issues parking permits, and is responsible for the maintenance of Town-owned parking lots. Parking Enforcement Officers patrol the Town during the daytime and issue parking tickets. A volunteer board hears appeals of parking tickets.

## Parks and Recreation Department

The Director supervises three divisions: Recreation, Parks and Trees, and Marine and Facility Operations. The Department is responsible for the supervision and control of the Town's recreational facilities and activities plus the maintenance of school playgrounds, athletic fields and outdoor property. This responsibility includes the development, regulation, maintenance and use of public parks, playgrounds, trees, community centers, the Griffith E. Harris Golf Course, the Dorothy Hamill Skating Rink, beaches, boat harbors and boating facilities. Beach cards and other recreational permits and golf tee times are also handled by the Department.



Rogers Sherman Baldwin Park in summer



Police Dock

## Police Department

The Police Chief supervises the Greenwich Police Department which includes sworn police officers, and civilian support staff. The Department protects life and property and preserves the peace, directs traffic, enforces state and local laws and works with other police departments and agencies to solve crimes.

The Animal Control Officer responds to calls about strays, rabid animals and nuisance wild life and manages the animal control facility.

The Marine Division patrols the Long Island Sound from Stamford, CT to the New York State border and half-way across the water towards Long Island. It provides law enforcement, emergency medical services and general assistance to boaters in Town waters on a seasonal basis.

## Public Works Department

Led by the Commissioner of Public Works, this Department maintains and builds roads, bridges, sewers, Town-owned properties; installs street lights, traffic signals and signs; and handles waste disposal, recycling and snow and ice removal for the Town. The Department issues building permits and inspects construction activities to ensure that safety codes are met. The Department also provides some maintenance for schools.

## Town Administrator

Under the direction of the First Selectman, the full-time Town Administrator helps oversee departments reporting to the First Selectman and represents the First Selectman in the daily operation and administration of all Town departments and offices. The Town Administrator assists with the development of budgets, supports the First Selectman in overseeing labor negotiations and generally provides support on various projects as requested.

Byram scene



## LAND USE AGENCIES

### Building Code Board of Standards and Appeals

The five-member Board hears appeals from those who do not agree with interpretations of the building code or are requesting a variance of this code. The professionals on this Board are nominated by the Appointments Committee of the RTM and appointed by the RTM for five-year staggered terms.

### Condemnation Commission

Consisting of five members, the Commission is authorized to take land by condemnation proceedings, when necessary, for the construction of highways, drains, public parking areas and sewers. It determines the assessment of benefits and/or damages caused by such taking, as well as the assessments of parties benefiting from new sewers. The Appointments Committee of the RTM nominates candidates for a two-year term for appointment by the RTM.

### Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission sets policy, supervises the Director, conducts environmental reviews for the Planning and Zoning Commission and advises that agency as well as individuals about conserving natural resources and preserving endangered species and their habitat. It also monitors natural resources, both public and private (especially drinking water) to insure their proper use. With the approval of the appropriate agencies, the Commission may acquire land in the name of the Town.

The Conservation Commission consists of seven members and three alternates appointed by the First Selectman for four-year staggered terms.

The Conservation Commission meets the first Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at Town Hall. For more information, call 203-622-6461 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

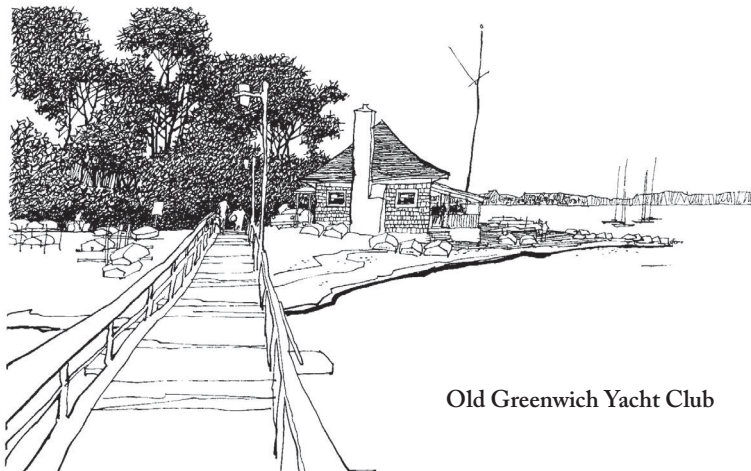
## Flood and Erosion Control Board

The Board's five members are authorized to plan, construct, maintain and supervise flood and erosion control systems and may enter into agreements with State and Federal governments to accomplish this. Four members are nominated by the RTM Appointments Committee and appointed by the RTM for four-year staggered terms. The First Selectman is the fifth member of the Board. Two alternate members were added to this Board by the RTM in 2011.

## Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA)

Operating under State statutes and Town regulations, the Agency is responsible for the establishment of the boundaries of inland wetlands and watercourses in the Town. It determines the permitted uses of such lands, regulates development within these areas, and enforces strict applications of the regulations. The Agency consists of seven members and three alternates nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM. Members serve four-year staggered terms.

The IWWA meets the fourth Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall. For more information, call 203-622-7736 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).



Old Greenwich Yacht Club

## Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z)

The Commission consists of five members and three alternates. They are nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for three-year staggered terms. Action by this Commission requires at least four affirmative votes.

Every ten years, the Commission prepares a Town Plan of Conservation and Development for approval by the RTM. The agency also prepares the Open Space Plan and the Sewer Boundary Plan for RTM approval. It devises and implements zoning regulations in accordance with the Plan and state statutes, and promulgates subdivision regulations which also require RTM approval.

The Commission is empowered to:

- Rezone land for an area or a single lot.
- Change zoning regulations by, for example, reducing or adding to permitted building height or allowing other new uses.
- Act on requests for a floating zone in which, for example, land can be classified as both a historic zone and a business zone.
- Review flood zone and coastal properties.
- Review site plans for residential and nonresidential buildings under certain circumstances such as when enlarging or altering the exterior of a nonresidential building, or when building or enlarging two-family or multifamily housing and properties within 100' of Long Island Sound. (The above decisions may be appealed to the courts.)
- Regulate the development of subdivisions. (These decisions may be appealed to the Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals.)
- Review any use of land or buildings for Town purposes or any Town-owned property for other uses.
- Review the purchase or sale of Town-owned properties. (These decisions may be appealed to the RTM.)

The Commission also decides whether to issue special permits under certain circumstances such as requests to construct a building larger than a specified size in business and residential zones, to build two-family and multifamily housing for special uses in a zone for two-family housing. The process takes into account

the Town Plan of Conservation and Development, significant views enjoyed by surrounding buildings, open space and the natural environment, the impact on pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic, and the impact on surrounding areas and properties. (Special Permit decisions may be appealed to the courts.)

Planning and Zoning review is not required if the building or land is in the proper zone for:

- Building or renovating a single-family house.
- Renovating, without enlarging or changing the use of a nonresidential building.

The Planning and Zoning Commission meets at least twice-monthly on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. at Town Hall. For information, call 203-622-7894 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

Applications to the Planning and Zoning Commission are reviewed by other appropriate Town departments, such as the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, the Conservation Commission, the Public Works Department, the Health Department, the Architectural Review Board and the Historic District Commission.

## Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

The Board consists of five members and three alternates nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for four-year staggered terms.

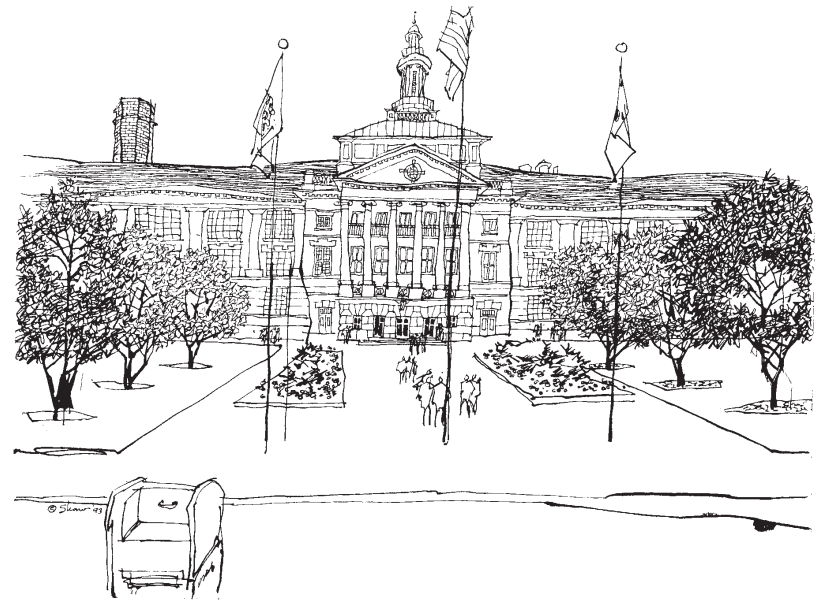
This Board hears and makes decisions on:

- Requests for Variances where, owing to conditions affecting a lot, strict application of the zoning regulations would result in an unusual hardship to the owner. Variances may be granted if the public welfare will not suffer. For example, an addition to a house may be built closer to lot lines than the regulations permit if there is no other place to build because of site conditions and the addition does not adversely affect the neighbors.

- Requests for Special Exceptions as required by the regulations. For example, a property owner may wish to construct an accessory building which exceeds the square footage limitations for such buildings.
- Requests for review of decisions made by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.
- Requests for reviews of Planning and Zoning Commission decisions on subdivisions.

Determinations are made by the Board of Appeals following public notice and public hearing. Abutting property owners are given written notice by the applicant. Considerations for Special Exception approval include traffic, physical hazard, nuisance condition and detriment to the neighborhood. Decisions of the Board of Appeals may be appealed to the Superior Court

The ZBA meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Town Hall. For information, call 203-622-7753 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).



Town Hall



## OTHER APPOINTED BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AGENCIES & OFFICIALS

### Alarm Appeals Board

The five-member Board is empowered to hear and decide appeals from fines levied against alarm users for false alarms.

### Assessor

The Assessor, who is salaried, is appointed by and serves at the will of the BET for a two-year term. The Assessor is responsible for the accurate assessment of all real and personal property in Greenwich. By state statute, property revaluation is required every four years. Property is assessed at 70% of market value. Personal property, which includes automobiles, horses and business equipment, is assessed at 70% of market value every year on October 1st. Property owners who disagree with their assessment may appeal it before the Board of Assessment Appeals.

The Assessor can be reached at 203-622-7885 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

### Board of Ethics

The Board consists of five members whose duties include soliciting and reviewing annual statements from Town Officers describing any business relationship they may have with the Town; hearing and adjudicating complaints of violations of the Code of Ethics; and advising Town Officers on the application of the Code to specific transactions.

### Board of Health

The Board consists of seven members nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for four-year staggered terms. They are responsible for public health needs and regulations.

Among other activities, the Board:

- Appoints Director of Health.
- Sets policy for the Board.
- Makes, alters, repeals and enforces ordinances, bylaws and regulations affecting the health of the Town.
- Requires and regulates inspection of schools and food services.
- Tests and preserves the quality of all sources of water supply.
- Regulates location and construction of wells, sewers, drains and septic tanks.
- Tests for radon and ticks.
- Provides flu shots and public health education and disease prevention services.
- Controls nuisances that are detrimental to the public health.
- Regulates the transport of offensive substances through the Town.
- Provides school dental health programs and other adult, maternal and child health services.
- Plans for public health emergencies

The Department of Health is headed by a Director, who is responsible for carrying out all the policies established by the Board.

The Board of Health meets the last Monday of the month at Town Hall. For information, call 203-622-6488 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).

### Board of Parks and Recreation

The nine-member Board is an advisor to the Department of Parks and Recreation and its Director. The members are nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for four-year staggered terms.



## Board of Social Services

The Board sets policy for the Department of Social Services, oversees its operations and hires the Commissioner of Social Services.

The Social Services Department is responsible for the welfare of various high-risk and special needs groups, including the mentally ill, the indigent, the disabled and persons addicted to drugs or alcohol, and for the administration of all municipal social services. The Department is also responsible for commitment of the mentally ill to institutions and application for conservator of a person or estate when indicated.

The Board of Social Services consists of seven members nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for three-year staggered terms.

The Board of Social Services meets the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. For more information, call 203-622-3800 or visit [www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org).



Old Town Hall now a Senior Center

## Commission on Aging

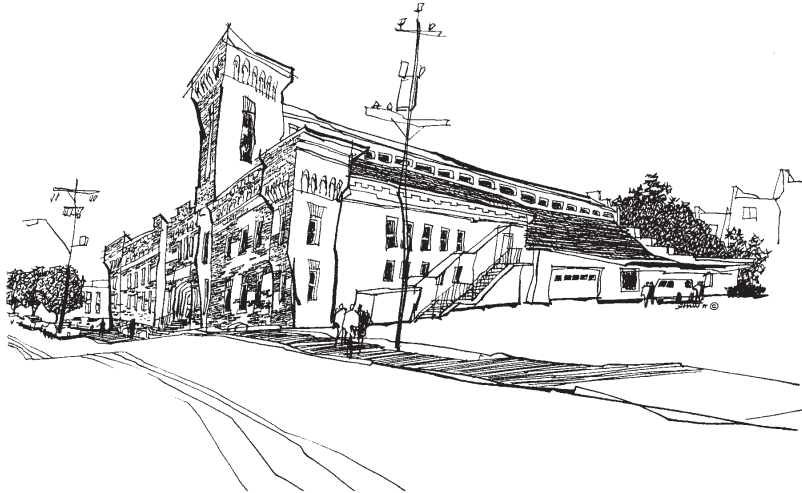
The Commission identifies the needs of the elderly, and plans and coordinates services to meet those needs. It also operates the Senior Center. It provides current, comprehensive information and referral services to the Greenwich community regarding issues affecting older adults. A volunteer committee offers confidential free counseling regarding Medicare supplemental health insurance coverage. The Directory of Services for Senior Adults is available free of charge at the Commission Office.

The seven members are nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for three-year staggered terms.

## Historic District Commission

The Commission promotes the educational, cultural and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of historical buildings and places, oversees the Town's historic districts and advises the Planning and Zoning Commission on properties of historic interest.

It is composed of five members and five alternates nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for five-year staggered terms.



The Armory

## Housing Authority

The Housing Authority Board consists of five Commissioners appointed by the Board of Selectmen for five-year staggered terms. The Board appoints the Administrator.

The Housing Authority provides and administers:

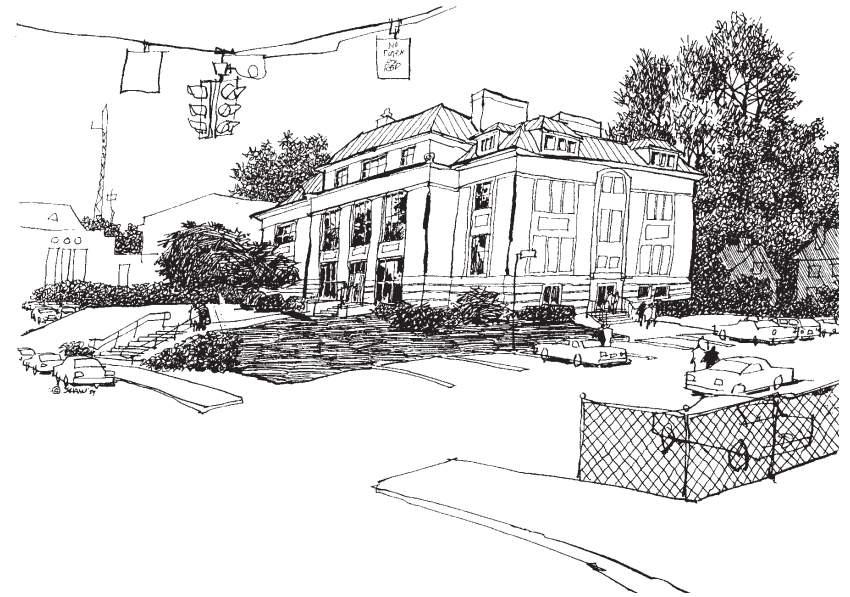
- Housing for the elderly and/or disabled at McKinney Terrace, Quarry Knoll and Agnes Morley Heights.
- Housing for low—and moderate—income families in locations such as Adams Gardens, Armstrong Court, McKinney Terrace, Town Hall Annex and Wilbur Peck Court.
- Housing in the private sector which is supported by a federal rental assistance program.
- Housing for low—and moderate—income families at scattered sites such as Greenwich Close.
- Housing for the frail elderly at Parsonage Cottage, a licensed home for the elderly.

The Housing Authority is also the Housing Site Development Agency for the Town, and may receive and disburse site development funds.

## Nathaniel Witherell Board

Nathaniel Witherell is a nursing home owned by the Town. It provides long-term-care for the elderly and shorter-term care for patients needing rehabilitation. It is administered by a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator and a Medical Director. The Board is responsible for the operation of the facility in accordance with government regulations and standards. It has the authority to appoint and dismiss the Administrative and Medical Directors, make rules governing the admission of patients and set appropriate charges for those able to pay. The Board has applied to the State for a Certificate of Need to renovate the facility.

The nine-member Board is nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the RTM for three-year staggered terms.



Town Hall Annex converted to public housing

## Shellfish Commission

The Commission is responsible for the recreational and commercial shellfish programs in Town. The Commission regularly monitors water quality and the Greenwich waters of Long Island Sound. In conjunction with Town and State officials, the Commission designates which areas may be opened or closed for shell fishing. It also issues shell fishing permits. By State law, all monies collected must be used for the propagation and protection of shell fish under Commission control.

The nine-member Shellfish Commission is appointed by the Board of Selectmen for four-year staggered terms.

## RELATED BOARDS, AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS

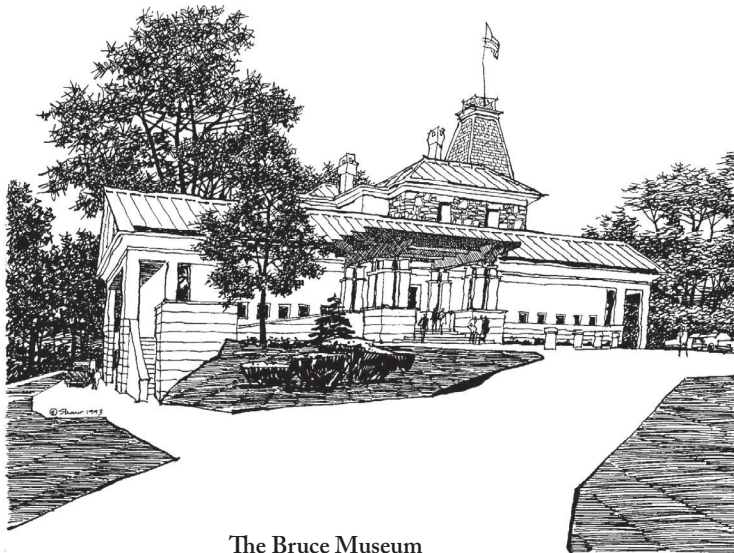
### Bruce Museum Board

Bruce Museum, Inc. is an independent, private, non-profit agency responsible for the operation and educational programs of the Bruce Museum through a Management Agreement with the Town, which owns both the Museum building and collections. The First Selectman, the Chairman of the BET and the Moderator of the RTM are voting members of the Board of Bruce Museum, Inc.

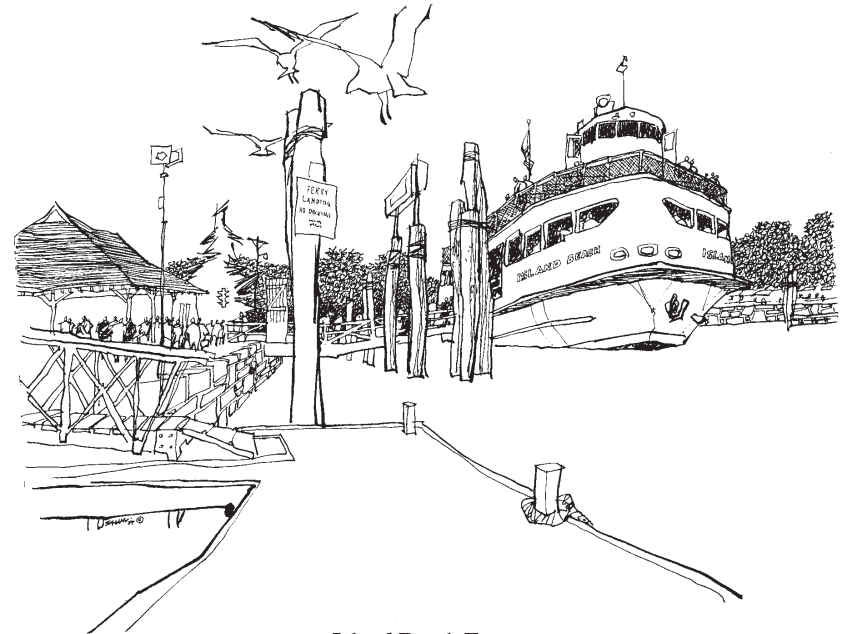
### Greenwich Emergency Medical Service, Inc. (GEMS)

GEMS provides first class advance life support service for the Town in accordance with a Management Agreement. It is supported by the Town, private contributions, and fees for service.

**For emergencies, call 911.**



The Bruce Museum



Island Beach Ferry

### Harbor Master

The Harbor Master, who is appointed by the State Governor, has the authority to enforce State regulations regarding docks, moorings, waterways and the like.

### Justices of the Peace

There are forty-five Justices, fifteen from each party. Regulations permit an additional fifteen unaffiliated Justices. Their duties consist mainly of performing marriage ceremonies and witnessing legal documents, for which the Justices are paid a fee.



## Libraries

The Greenwich Library and Perrot Memorial Library are both non profit corporations. The Greenwich Library has community branches at Cos Cob and Byram. The Perrot Memorial Library, which is independent, principally serves Old Greenwich, Riverside and North Mianus.

The libraries provide free access to information and materials in a variety of formats to meet the educational and cultural needs of their users. The Town pays operational expenses and private funds provide for some capital improvements. "Friends of the Library" membership contributions provide free cultural programs. The Peterson Wing of the main library is supported by a trust fund.

For more information, visit the home page at [www.greenwichlibrary.org](http://www.greenwichlibrary.org) or [www.perrotlibrary.org](http://www.perrotlibrary.org).



Greenwich Library



Riverside scene

This publication was funded by the generous  
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