

**TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT**  
**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**January 4, 2021**

A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Monday, January 4, 2021. This meeting was held electronically, via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 P.M. by the Council President. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Brad Macdowall	Dominique Baez
Mick McGarry	Jody Clouse
Valerie Horsley	Berita Rowe-Lewis
Justin Farmer	Adrian Webber
Austin Cesare	Kristin Dolan
Betty Wetmore	Marjorie Bonadies
Kathleen Schomaker	Athena Gary

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** (2<sup>nd</sup> District Vacancy)

**PRESIDING:** Mick McGarry, President

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Curt Leng, Mayor; Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; John Sullivan, Acting Police Chief; Walter Morton, Director of Town and BOE Legislative Affairs; Sue Rubino, Youth Services Coordinator; Suzanne Burbage, Elderly Services Coordinator; Mike Fazzio and Chris Kerin from Municipal Valuation Services

**PUBLIC INPUT SESSION:** 7:09pm – 7:42pm for reading the 102 comments submitted

<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/3340/PUBLIC-COMMENT---01-04-2021>  
<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/3507/PUBLIC-COMMENTS---LATE---01-04-2021>

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT:** Mr. McGarry said we are in a transitional stage and facing fiscal challenges from way back but they are the ones that have to deal with it, and through a pandemic, so he urged the Council members to work together, stay focused on their agenda and be respectful even when they disagree.

**REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS:** Report given by Municipal Valuation Services and Mayor Leng. (Department reports (generated with the help of Rose Lion) can be found attached to the end of the minutes)

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISONS:** None

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Mr. McGarry requested a motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held December 21, 2020. Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Schomaker and approved with 1 abstention (Bonadies)

**REGULAR AGENDA:** Mr. McGarry took a vote on suspending their rules and it passed with 2 opposed (Farmer) (Macdowall)

Mr. McGarry said he's going to take care of #1 last.

**2. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden to enter into a Service Site Agreement – Prevention Corps Program**

-- Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Wetmore. DISCUSSION: Ms. Rubino explained this item saying this year we host a prevention corp member and it is not costing the Town anything. She said their focus is on substance abuse prevention and they will be providing free narcan training and creating remote programming for youth, creating and updating resources and anything else that the community is in need of.

Mr. Farmer thanked Ms. Rubino for this and for her great work in engaging people who want to help. He asked if she was planning on doing anything virtually and if so will this person help. Ms. Rubino said they could sure do that and they would have to plan it out.

Ms. Bonadies said she has a great interest on this topic and asked if all of the 900 hours would be done virtually or if anyone would be coming in person. She said she thinks they work better like that. Ms. Rubino said she agrees but until everyone is vaccinated she's not comfortable with that plus they have a stipulation against it. Ms. Bonadies asked for a future follow up.

Mr. McGarry thanked Ms. Rubino for all the work she does. He then called for the vote and the item passed unanimously.

**3. Order authorizing the Elderly Services Department to accept and expend funding from the Department of Aging and Disability Services, State Unit on Aging Connecticut Senior Center: Cares Act Funding Opportunity**

-- Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Ms. Wetmore. DISCUSSION: Ms. Burbage said she's been seeking and needing this database management for years and Covid has magnified the need. She said this can be done from home and seniors can access it from home to reserve being on a program, but most importantly it will provide elderly outreach and a more modified and expedient and efficient system for their appointments, etc.

Mr. McGarry asked if this is entirely funded. Ms. Burbage said it's a reimbursement, we pay and the State will reimburse us.

Mr. Cesare said he thinks this is great and he supports it 100%.

Mr. Farmer thanked Ms. Burbage for the work she does and said he's glad the State is helping with the funding and that he will support this.

Ms. Wetmore thanked Ms. Burbage for this and asked if she has to renew a license every year. Ms. Burbage said this is for 2 years so not until 2022 and she'll then incorporate it as one of her line items but the cost won't be as much.

Ms. Bonadies asked how the barcode scanner would be used. Ms. Burbage said to initiate appointments and then explained how it works.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

#### **4. Order authorizing the Finance Department to reclassify uncollectable taxes to the Suspense Tax Book Connecticut General Statutes §12-165**

-- Moved by Ms. Schomaker, seconded by Mr. Farmer. DISCUSSION: Mr. Eatman said these are taxes deemed uncollectable by the Tax Collector and the Finance Department. He said it's a necessary required process listed in C.G.S. §12-165 and the total they're deeming uncollectable is about 2.1 million. He said and although it goes to the suspense line they still try to collect it and some of these have been assigned to the Town's collection agency and any revenue collected from these accounts will be reflected in the appropriate budget line in the tax office budget. Mr. McGarry asked if this was an accounting practice. Mr. Eatman said this is an accounting practice that has a State mandate and one we should be doing.

Ms. Schomaker thanked Mr. Eatman for this work saying he explained it to her in detail and she appreciates his attention to the details on behalf of the appropriate reporting of our finances. Mr. Farmer thanked Mr. Eatman for his due diligence on this (and after reading section 3 of the statute out loud) he mentioned that some of these date back to 2010 and asked if we had a responsibility to backdate seeing that we haven't done it in the past and we're past that 30 days of ending the fiscal year. Mr. Eatman said we haven't met those mandates in the past the books aren't as pristine as he'd like them to be but they're working on that and are starting a process going forward that his will be done by May to June of each and every year and they're looking to get this done before the upcoming budget as the last one had too many other difficult things they were all dealing with.

Mr. Farmer asked if these would be collectable going forward or do we write this off as a loss? Mr. Eatman said it is not a writing off and the Town is still trying to collect this. There was a little more discussion on turning this information over to the auditors and where the records are kept.

Ms. Horsley said this was the #3 recommendation on the Fiscal Stability Report and she thanked him for following up with this.

Mr. Macdowall asked this not an exhausted list, correct? Mr. Eatman said no. Mr. Macdowall said he's interested in our collection rates over the last few years and said he knows they got previous ones but doesn't believe they got the 2018-2019 or 2019-2020 and asked if he could have those. Mr. Eatman asked him for an email to clarify his request and he'll respond to the entire Council.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

## **1. Order providing for the appointment of John Sullivan as Chief of Police**

– Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Rowe-Lewis. DISCUSSION: Mr. McGarry said before they start Mr Farmer asked for a moment of clarification.

Mr. Farmer said he would like to apologize for a joke he made earlier about the Chief getting paid under the table, he said knowing the character of the Chief he doesn't believe that so he just wanted to clarify that it was not an accusation.

Mr. McGarry then asked Chief Sullivan if there was anything he wanted to say. Chief Sullivan thanked Mayor Leng for having confidence in him and also thanked the Council for having this on their agenda tonight. He then read a statement.

Mr. Farmer said one of his concerns is how we are going to address vigilantism, he feels it's an oppressing matter and he thinks it's important that we don't spiral into chaos. The chief said they do preach vigilance. They want the community to be their eyes and ears but let them do their job, they don't want to make a situation more dangerous. He said we need to come together as a community and work together on the increased crime that we're seeing. He wants citizens to keep themselves safe but they don't promote vigilantism at all.

Mr. Farmer then mentioned some of the not so nice comments being said about certain communities and said to the chief I assume your department doesn't share that sentiment. Chief Sullivan said no, everyone is equal, they treat everyone equally and they protect the entire town. Mr. Farmer then asked his plan on community policing. Chief Sullivan said we tried to adopt the Camden model. We want them out of the cars making relationships and engaging with the communities and it's been very successful. Mr. Farmer asked what's different from the past and going forward. Chief Sullivan said they weren't actively engaging with the community in the past so they're more active with that now and it's been positive.

Ms. Bonadies said the letters of support sent in for Chief Sullivan were overwhelming and we need to be the voice of them. She said he's an exemplary officer in every position he's ever filled. He does an amazing job and she looks forward to voting yes for this appointment.

Miss Horsley spoke a little on the transparency committee that she and Ms. Baez had previously served on and said what they did was come up with a job description and create interview questions. She then said as in the rules of our charter the mayor appoints the chief and a contract can be made but really the appointment is what most department heads in Hamden have. Miss Horsley said we heard three conversations from the community and what we heard is that the community is interested in having a police force that is more invested in the community and she's impressed with his work on that. Miss Horsley then asked Chief Sullivan how his efforts as chief will change the force to look more like the population of Hamden. She said so when we look at the number of black policeman or women officers there were very few as of the time of that committee almost two years ago so she's curious as to what efforts he will take to try to recruit and promote up the ranks so that in the future we can have a chief that is black and has grown up in Hamden like himself.

Chief Sullivan said hiring is a huge investment for the Town and we invest a lot of money in a candidate when we hire them and minority hiring is a priority for him and the department . He said he's been part of the hiring process for quite a while now because of his role in professional standards and ethics and integrity and said since 2007 60% of those hired are either female or of color.

Ms. Horsley said she doesn't like the process of how the committee's work wasn't completed but does think that what they heard at those conversations are embodied by Chief Sullivan so she'll be supporting this.

Ms. Wetmore said it's an honor to be voting for him and that he's proved himself over and over.

Mr. Farmer said it's been years since any women have been promoted. What will you do to make sure they have the opportunity to move up the ranks? Chief Sullivan said they have training to help people make their way up the ranks and said he thinks you'll see more female and minorities getting promoted. There was then little discussion on expired lists and how some issues may be handled. Mr. Farmer asked how he would have informed the public when an officer does something wrong. Chief Sullivan said they can't talk about personnel matters. Mr. Farmer asked about the undocumented individuals policy. Chief Sullivan said they let an agency know. Mr. Farmer asked if there is racial sensitivity training and the chief said yes. There was little discussion on the police accountability bill. Mr. Farmer asked how he can bring down overtime costs to have money for wraparound services. Chief Sullivan said they're down \$164,000 compared to last year and said officers on toy drives and things like that are now on regular schedule or they volunteer their time.

Ms. Shomaker thanked him for his broad vision of Hamden. She said his leadership is invaluable and he had her vote since he brought the Department of Justice to them to vote on and she holds that as a symbol of a kind of leader he'll be.

Mr. Cesare said he'll be supporting this tonight. He said Chief Sullivan brings a lot of experience that we wouldn't get from someone else.

Mr. Macdowall said there's a debate on how to handle rising crime in Town and can he lay out broadly his plans for addressing these crimes. Chief Sullivan said they have increased patrols which will cost a little money but it's appropriate. He said they work with neighborhood crime watchers, they work with local businesses and towns and he has discussions with the Mayor. He said we've made crime prevention signs to put around Town, they use technology, and they have detective bureaus on different shifts. He said he's also open to any suggestions from anyone in the public. Mr. Macdowall asked if he feels that the actions he's taking are going to result in a reduction. The Chief said it seems to be working it was a pretty quiet weekend.

Mr. Macdowall said many folks in Town feel like the police have had their hands tied by the Legislative Council, the Mayor, State legislators, etc. and asked the Chief if he feels that is accurate, and if so what does he need from them in order to get there and do the job. Chief Sullivan said the lawmakers make the laws and as law enforcement they enforce the laws. He said he doesn't want to say that they tie their hands, they give them the boundaries that they have

to abide by and that's what they do. Mr. Macdowall asked if there was anything he thought the Legislative Council should be doing or should not have done that has hampered him from doing his job and what would he hope to see differently as Chief. Chief Sullivan said as department head now the resources that he's given is what he works with and would he like to have more just like every other department head yes of course and he could probably do more with more resources but he does understand the fiscal restrictions we have here in Hamden and they will do their best with the resources that they have. He said with budget season coming up he'll probably be asking for more resources and that comes down to a fiscal decision that is made by the Legislative Council who has tough decisions to make at budget time, but with what he is given he and his department will do their best to keep this town safe.

There was then some discussion on racism and the Chief said everyone is equal and that they train on this.

Ms. Baez said she was also a member of the committee for a Chief search. She said the work was never solidified or published and expressed her frustration with the whole process went and that it was never finished. She said they are also voting on something this important with no representation from the Second District and she in good conscious can not vote on this for those reasons.

Mr. McGarry said this is not unprecedented to do this when down a Council member. He said the business of the Town must go on and the Second District is represented by 6 at-large Council members.

Ms. Gary said when we speak of crime going up and all the things in place to not spend for overtime, if the crime goes up what do you have in place for that? Chief Sullivan said I went over those measures and I hope it doesn't increase but we'd have to come up with some new ideas. Ms. Gary said she can't vote yes for this because of the process and that constituent voices should be heard and they saw no other applicants.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis said she will be voting yes. She said he's an honorable man and that the process had nothing to do with the Chief and she appreciates everything he has does and continues to do for Hamden.

Mr. Webber thanked the Chief for coming and answering their questions and he congratulated him on his appointment. He said that there is a lot of community support for the Chief as well as on this Council and he himself has had a lot of interaction with him and finds him reasonable, flexible and more importantly willing to listen and commends him on that. Mr. Webber then asked about the process everyone keeps mentioning and asked what it was that we did wrong. There was then some discussion on this.

Mr. Webber said he was under the understanding that they were going to have a scenario tonight where someone spoke about the benefits of having a contract verses not having a contract.

Mr. Morton said historically department heads like this and others have largely been by appointment and that's been the norm and it was really an (unintelligible) In the town's history

that a particular police chief did receive a contract but there were particular circumstances that were different but in this case acting Chief Sullivan was more than content with accepting the job as an appointment as is and not looking for any change or looking to negotiate anything.

After some more discussion on a contract verses no contract and how the process went **Mr. Farmer moved a motion to postpone this for one month, seconded by Ms. Baez.**

DISCUSSION: Ms. Wetmore said they have postponed this long enough and it's a disservice to the Chief and people are going to vote the same whether whether it's tonight or postponed so she thinks they should vote on it tonight.

Mr. Cesare said he's also against postponing it, it's been long enough. He said also if you look at the letters of support that came in the Hamden residents want this done

Ms. Bonadies said she's also against postponing this and said the community spoke up loud and clear. Ms. Bonadies then **moved a motion to call the question, seconded by Mr. Cesare.** Mr. McGarry stated this is to call the question on the motion of postponing this item. He then called for the vote and it was approved with 5 opposed (Farmer) (Macdowall) (Baez) (Webber) (Gary)

The vote was then taken on the motion to postpone and it failed with 3 in favor (Baez) (Farmer) (Gary) and all others opposed (Ms. Wetmore was marked absent from this vote due to a computer crash)

**Mr. Webber said he'd like to make a motion to amend the motion** on the appointment to include language that's contingent on passing a contract with a term of employment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Farmer.

Mr. McGarry asked Ms. Gruen for her thoughts on this and could they do this.

Miss Gruen said she thinks you can do it but she doesn't know what will happen as a result and don't know that it works. She said you're making an appointment contingent on something that doesn't exist and if the parties can't come to an agreement what happens? And then that contract would have to come back to the council pursuant to the Charter so from a procedural point she doesn't know how we peel the layers back with that motion. She said she understands Councilman Webber's goal but she doesn't know how we get to that if you approve it contingent on a contract the contract has to come back to the council so you essentially don't have an appointment. She said you're basically saying no in an indirect manner to the motion that's before you.

Mr. Webber said he wants to vote for the appointment but he's not happy with the process or lack of a contract and said he thinks contracts work so he thinks we should have a contract and a contract time. He said he thinks the Chief is going to do an excellent job and if the Chief wants to come back and re-up one more time he doesn't think that would be a problem.

**Ms. Dolan moved a motion to call the question,** seconded by Ms. Schomaker and approved with 4 opposed (Farmer) (Baez) (Macdowall) (Gary)

A roll call vote was taken on the amendment to the appointment contingent upon a contract and it failed with 3 in favor (Farmer) (Gary) (Webber) and all others opposed

Mr. McGarry said we return to the original motion of the appointment of Mr. Sullivan as Chief of Police. **Mr. Cesare moved a motion to call the question**, seconded by Ms. Bonadies and approved with 4 opposed (Baez) (Farmer) (Macdowall) (Clouse)

A roll call vote was then taken on the appointment of John Sullivan as Chief of Police and it passed with 4 opposed (Baez) (Farmer) (Gary) (Macdowall)

There being no further business Mr. McGarry requested a motion to adjourn. Moved by Ms. Rowe-Lewis, seconded by Ms. Bonadies and the meeting was adjourned at 11:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta  
Clerk of the Council

Meeting recording:

[https://zoom.us/rec/share/qNkt24MY7QJDbeREMT\\_y6xr4ebWhNzFpYi5-7AfvFcRMkZ5KuFdCdct9G-uf2L1u.ygeVR0cfv7O0oo9l](https://zoom.us/rec/share/qNkt24MY7QJDbeREMT_y6xr4ebWhNzFpYi5-7AfvFcRMkZ5KuFdCdct9G-uf2L1u.ygeVR0cfv7O0oo9l)

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**REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS  
HAMDEN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING  
JANUARY 4, 2021**

**REPORT FROM MUNICIPAL VALUATION SERVICES ON HAMDEN REVALUATION**

Mr. Eatman stated that pursuant to Section 12-62 of the State of Connecticut General State Statutes, the Town of Hamden is mandated to conduct and perform a revaluation of all properties. He stated the Town has secured a third party Connecticut certified revaluation company, Municipal Valuation Services to perform the revaluation for Hamden. Mr. Eatman introduced Mr. Mike Fazio from Municipal Valuation Services.

Mr. Fazio began by stating that Mr. Chris Kerin of Municipal Valuation Services, MVS, was also in attendance to address the commercial aspect, and that he, Mr. Fazio would address the residential portion of revaluation. Mr. Fazio said that in the summer of 2020, MVS sent data mailers to every home in Hamden and they received an 80% return which is very good for participation in the revaluation, and they are still coming in. He said the data mailers give the homeowners the opportunity to review the data on their property record and make corrections, send it back to MVS for review and make the necessary changes. They also sent out teams of employees to visit and photograph each and every residence. They are currently in the process of uploading those pictures. They have uploaded about 50% and expect to have them all up loaded by the end of the month so there will be a new picture on every property record card. Mr. Fazio said that while photographing, they also looked at different physical exterior characteristics because, due to Governor Lamont's Executive Order they were unable to do physical inspections of the interior of homes. If a property owner contacted them requesting an interior inspection or to provide them pictures, they provided the owner such opportunity and will provide it during the informal hearings. The informal hearings are currently in process and are a result of them sending out the assessment changes in notices that went out the week prior to Christmas. Currently residents are calling and also making on line appointments for the informal hearings. As of today, (1/4/21), there are 300 informal hearings, 58 of which are commercial and the rest residential properties. The hearings give the property owner the opportunity to question the value, get information or correct any type of physical characteristic problem on the Field Card, or just answer general questions about the Revaluation, how the model works, how the company comes up with the values etc. Mr. Fazio said that everything is based on sales. He said when he was performing the revaluation on residential properties he looked at from January 1, 2019 to October 1, 2020 for his analysis. He said the state requires that they submit the statistical results from October to October. He said some neighborhoods that didn't have a lot of sales, or property types that didn't have a lot of sales, or condominium projects that didn't have a lot of sales of typical units, caused them to expand their search even wider than the January 2019 date to get an idea of what properties in that category are trading for. He said there was a good sampling of sales. He said the Real Estate market in Connecticut is healthy. Interest rates are low. There was a late summer boost due to the delay in the Spring market as a result of COVID. He said that as of right now, (and this is subject to change as the hearings continue), there is an 8.2 and ½ % increase in the Real Estate portion of the Grand List. He said that is a healthy increase. He said

we are on the higher side of increases of towns in Connecticut. He said it is a good sign that our Real Estate market is healthy. Single family homes went up approximately 3 and ½ %. Condos went up approximately 2%. Multi families had a big increase of about 19 and ½ %. Commercial Real Estate values had a very healthy increase of over 20%. He said it is a good sign and takes some of the burden off of home owners and moves it over to commercial properties.

Mr. Fazio went on to say the State requires the coefficient of dispersion which he explained is, “if you look at a bell curve, it is how wide the curve is”. The narrower the curve, the better the revaluation is, the tighter the numbers are. He said the State requires a COD(?) of less than 15 and Hamden is at 7.3% on the condos and 7 and ½ % on the residential properties and that is very good. It means the sales and the model are all working very well. Mr. Fazio said he did a lot of work looking at some neighborhoods and making sure the boundaries were correct. He worked on cleaning it up and splitting up some neighborhoods or making sub-neighborhoods because he felt the values have changed over the last few years.

At this point Mr. Fazio introduced his partner Chris Kerin for the review of commercial property. He added that they would answer questions at the end, but not on individual properties.

Mr. Kerin began by saying it (Commercial Property Reval), was “pretty much the same” as the residential process with the exception that they are looking at income and expense and sales data. Property owners supply them with incoming expense data usually in the Spring time. They look at all of that information and establish trends for rental rates, cap rates, expense ratios and what properties are selling for. They use that information to develop income models for the different income producing properties in Hamden and they stratify them depending on use.

He said they will look at all the apartments, industrials, office properties and retail together as a grouping and compare one property to another and what they are reporting in rent to establish a market rent(?) for those properties. They are looking at an income approach, a sales approach and also the cost approach. He said “as Mike mentioned”, they sent out the notices at the end of last year and are now going through the informal hearing process which he said is similar to our Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) process, but with their company, and it takes some pressure off the BAA because hopefully, issues which property owners have, can be rectified at this level so everything doesn’t go to BAA. Because of COVID, this is happening by phone which he said is very convenient for the property owner and very safe for everyone involved. He said this hearing process will be finishing in January and they expect the Grand List to be signed on time. He continued, “with regard to commercial properties we have seen a growth in Hamden particularly in apartment properties” which he said is not unusual. They have been seeing apartment properties go up in value and strong demand in apartment properties over the last 5 years in Connecticut. They also saw growth in the retail market in Hamden. Retail has not done as well as apartments in the past 5 years. It depended upon the type of retail. Essential use retail like a grocery store, which stayed open during COVID, did not see any decline over the past year. They saw some commercial businesses “get hit” due to COVID, also health clubs, bars, restaurants and day care centers, so, some of those values came down. He added, talking to investors, they do not see COVID as something structural which will stay in place for the next 5 years they see it as a temporary bump in the road. They (MVS) are trying to mirror the market expectations as of the reval date and that is what investors are mostly seeing. They are paying less, but not too much

less for the apartment properties and some other properties. He said because of COVID, the sellers are not really lowering their prices, they are holding out, perhaps not putting their property on the market as they otherwise would. Interest rates are historically low and that puts upward pressure on sales prices for commercial properties. People can afford to pay more for commercial properties if their mortgage is going to be less.

Mr. Kerin referenced the hearing process again and said they are in the process of the informal hearings. They respond to any issues property owners have, they explain the process and they get good information in this process. They expect to finish on time, get the notices in on time and finish this job on time.

**REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS**

**HAMDEN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 4, 2021**

**ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT REPORT- STATEMENT**

**BY MAYOR CURT LENG**

**REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF JOHN SULLIVAN AS POLICE CHIEF**

Mr. McGarry introduced Mayor Leng. Mayor Leng began by saying he would like to offer a statement regarding the appointment of John Sullivan as Chief of Police and some questions raised regarding the process.

Mayor Leng began: Upon the retirement of Police Chief Tom Wydra, we were fortunate to have John Capiello as Deputy Chief. He worked side by side with Chief Wydra for over a decade. Naming him Acting Chief was in the very best interest of the town in every way as evidenced by his ethical integrity and his continuity to forward public safety in our community. Soon after, there was community outcry and input, asking for a voice in the process of who would be Hamden's next Police Chief, with the driving factor being a strong desire to fully implement and embrace a true community policing platform, which is an effort in which we have taken positive and significant strides, but for which we still need a lot of work: to rebuild community trust, address systematic racism and implicit bias and to get the training our officers welcome and which we need. From this, with full administration support, was born, the Police Chief Community Input and Transparency Committee with Reverend King as Chair, joined by many dedicated community members from stakeholders throughout the Town. This committee was tasked with the following: **1.** Listening to the community and collecting public comment and feedback on what the Town wanted to see in the next Police Chief. **2.** Working to amend the job description as needed to ensure the highest values offered were included, and finally, in following up with the recruitment effort in selecting the the top 3 to 5 candidates from whom an internal panel and ultimately myself, (Mayor Leng), would interview and finally make appointment of the next Chief of Police.

Mayor Leng continued saying, this committee held many internal working meetings working on goals and the job description. They held three major public input sessions at 2-3 different locations throughout town and developed an initial recommendation for a job description. The job description draft was given to Personnel to review and offer feedback. They offered a lot of feedback. There was still work to be done to come up with a final version which met the goals of the committee and myself, (Mayor Leng), and which also met the traditional appropriate human resources practices.

Mayor Leng continued: In the meantime, Hamden faced a series of extremely significant and in some cases horrifying situations or challenges and legal and personnel matters, which (required ?) a steady experienced hand on the wheel, someone who was here and understood what occurred in these extreme challenges, and the need to build and re-build the public trust. This led to a recommendation for then Acting Chief Capiello to be appointed as Hamden's Police Chief proper with a short term contract. The contract was an exception far from the rule, as it was used in this instance for a specific need and a demand for a very specific time period needed to ensure ethical integrity and continuity. Previously, the only other chief who was given a contract, to our knowledge, was Bob Nolan who had exceeded the state age maximum of 65 years old (which for the record I, Mayor Leng, find as age discriminatory), and the Town wished to continue him in his service as Chief. So he was allowed a contract because the State statute governing the position of Chief at the time, and still today, did not allow it individually. For perspective, not only did no other Police Chief have a contract for service as a Department Head, but neither did any other Department Head within the last 25 years plus, with the exception of Economic Development Director Dale Kroop who started his career with a 3 year contract and won the support to

continue that practice until his recent retirement. Otherwise the Hamden Town Charter prescribes a method by which the Mayor recommends an appointment and for how the Town Council is to consider such an appointment.

He continued: Essential to this discussion and why an appointment was submitted for your review, because in specialized, often in public safety positions, for example Fire Marshall, Building Official, Police Chief, State Law provides for them to conduct their functions without any undue influences: personal, political, familial etc. It protects our residents from any pressuring future influence affecting these positions that require independence for them to do their jobs for the safety and well-being of the Town. This is essential for public trust and ensuring these position autonomy in fulfilling their roles.

Mayor Leng continued, when recommending a limited contract for former Acting Chief John Cappiello, I also named Lieutenant John Sullivan as Acting Deputy Chief. I am so extremely grateful for former Acting Chief Cappiello's efforts and for Acting Deputy Chief Sullivan's efforts to support and build from the assignment he was given and took on with gusto. He was soon made our permanent Deputy Chief. This team helped to guide Hamden through some challenging times. When Chief Cappiello decided to "hang up the cleats", this summer, I appointed Deputy Chief Sullivan as Acting Chief to ensure continuity of Public Safety Services.

It was my initial intention to re-engage the Police Chief Community Input and Transparency Committee, however the performance of Acting Chief Sullivan excelling in his roles, made it difficult to imagine a better fit for Hamden at this time, in this place, with our goals before us at this moment in our Town's history.

His effort to develop a Camden(?) style department wide policing policy, his embrace of the importance of establishing community relationships and forming partnerships, his support for the incredibly successful Neighborhood Initiative which is hyper focused on true community policing, and support from people and (unintelligible) that this community hasn't seen in a long time from many different sectors. In addition, the teamwork displayed through weather or any other serious crisis the Town faces at any given moment, Acting Chief Sullivan working with Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director Merwede, Public Works and Parks Director Cesare and myself, during the two significant weather events and other high level challenges, his efforts to reach out and always make himself available to the community groups and individuals...it seems like he is on a 24 hour schedule.

Mayor Leng then explained how Acting Chief Sullivan extended a direct invitation to the Department of Justice, DOJ, to bring in its Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships program. The DOJ does not usually come in by invitation, they force themselves into town's where there are problems. But, Hamden "raised its hand" to do this program and said we would like to strengthen our partnerships with the community.

Mayor Leng said, all of these demonstrations of good intentions, good faith and good results, are the entire point of this correspondence tonight and the reason his appointment was submitted, and is before you tonight. Mayor Leng said "we have something unique and unquestionably valuable' in that we have an Acting Chief serving here in Hamden, who "checked all the boxes" in real time and with demonstrable results of being a/the Police Leader our community has asked for. Mayor Leng said he agonized over stopping the public process. However after strong consideration about what is best for Hamden public safety at this time, he found John Sullivan 'checked all those boxes". In circumstances fraught with challenges worldwide and locally, (he named several) it has become apparent we have captured "lightening in a bottle" in John Sullivan. He has the trust and respect of the Hamden Police Department, he has the ability to develop community bonds, embrace change and the needed evolution and bring us fully into the true community policing model. All of this and much more make it clear we have the right individual to lead our Hamden Police Department. Mayor Leng asked the Council to focus on the man, the person before them in John Sullivan and consider making this appointment.