

**TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT**  
**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING**  
**March 14, 2020**

A special meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Saturday, March 14, 2020 in the Legislative Council Chambers at the Memorial Town Hall. The meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m. by the Council President. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dominque Baez	Harry Gagliardi
Marjorie Bonadies (remotely)	Valerie Horsley (remotely)
Mike Colaiacovo	Brad Macdowall
Austin Cesare	Betty Wetmore (remotely; left early)
Kristin Dolan	Mick McGarry, President
Justin Farmer	

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Athena Gary; Kathleen Schomaker; Berita Rowe-Lewis

**PRESIDING:** Mick McGarry, President

**PUBLIC INPUT SESSION:** There were three speakers.

Mr. McGarry said that due to the Coronavirus epidemic, meetings are suspended indefinitely. Mr. McGarry moved that every item can be dealt as a regular item, versus going to committee than the regular agenda. It was moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Ms. Clouse. A vote was taken, and it passed, with one opposition from Mr. Farmer.

Ms. Bonadies made a motion to postpone item #14 to have the debate that she believes that it requires. Ms. Bonadies added that she believes that this is not immediate business. Mr. Farmer said that seeing as many people have come to discuss this item, he doesn't see any reason to further delay this, as it is a resolution of intent. Mr. Farmer added that there are many things that need to be flushed, and it seems silly to pull this. Mr. Macdowall said the Council has exhausted this, and we plan on continuing having this conversation. Mr. Macdowall added that it's up to us that the legislation looks good, and it's up to the State legislature, and we need to offer our residents more choice. Mr. Macdowall then added that he will be voting no on this.

Ms. Bonadies said that the State is going to conduct a study and come back in a year's time. Ms. Bonadies added that there is no emergency, and this is not immediate business of the town. Ms. Bonadies said that she believes that this should not be rushed out and be looked at very closely, which is why she is asking for a postponement.

Mr. Macdowall said that this is to no longer hesitate on the business of the Town, as this is about moving the business of the town forward. Mr. Cesare said that he thinks we should entertain this and would like to continue to this at a later date. Mr. Cesare moved to postpone this.

Mr. Farmer said he will be voting no as many of the items are non-emergency. Ms. Macdowall said he will be making a motion to move anything that's non-emergency.

Mr. McGarry said that one thing that we can certainly do is make sure that these items do will make sure that these items passed, as they are unsure when they will pass. Mr. Gagliardi asked why we are going to deal with them at all, as many of these items are non-emergency.

Mr. Macdowall made a motion to table 1, 2, 3, 6, 11, and 13, as they are items that are not emergency business, and especially item 11 as he doesn't believe that they should be allocating emergency business until the next meeting. It was seconded by Mr. Farmer. Discussion: Mr. McGarry said that the item 13 is mandatory, and since he is unsure what the next meeting will be, and it needs to be done by April. Mr. Macdowall we are not going to be able to do business of the town and not be able to meet for a month. Ms. Gruen said that it doesn't have a date. Mr. Macdowall said that this is a big deal, and how we are going to be able to do this and appoint people is another conversation.

Mr. Cappiello said that they give us a time frame and what's going on with the state, and he doesn't know what they are able to do. He is fine with them postponed.

Mr. Farmer said that we have the opportunity to look at the charter items, and it's not something pressing. Mr. Farmer added if it was passed now to start a charter revision process, we set ourselves out to fail. Mr. Farmer than said that in order for the process to begin, it needs to be voted on. Ms. Baez asked are we going to vote on who is going to go onto the next Commission.

Mr. Macdowall withdrew this motion. Mr. Macdowall then made a motion to table items 1, 2, 3, 6, 11 and 13. It was seconded by Mr. Farmer. DISCUSSION: Mr. McGarry said that he would like to move things through.

The motion had two votes for yes, and ten nos. The motion did not carry.

## **AGENDA:**

### **1. Appointment of Kristin Morico to the Inland Wetlands Commission for a term to expire April 30, 2021:**

Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Mr. Farmer, and passed unanimously.

### **2. Appointment of Bruce Sweyd to the Community Development Citizens Advisory Commission for a term to expire May 31, 2021:**

Mr. Gagliardi moved to approve items 2 and 3. It was seconded by Ms. Dolan and passed with one opposition from Mr. Cesare.

### **3. Reappointment of Donald Moses to the Economic Development Commission for a term to expire January 31, 2025 – See item above.**

### **4. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden to accept and expend funds from State of Connecticut and to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for such funds (Hamden Knights Basketball Program -- \$30,000):**

Moved by Mr. Gagliardi, seconded by Mr. Cesare. Discussion: Mr. Cappiello gave a brief history of the program. Mr. Farmer asked if there was tutoring in the program, which is something that that Councilwoman Rowe-Lewis said that she wanted to see. Chief Cappiello said that he did not. Mr. Farmer asked if there were any additions to the program. Ms. Gruen said that the scope of services has not been officially signed off on, to the extent that it's there, but hasn't seen any defined scope.

This passed unanimously.

**5. Refund of property taxes collected between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020 – over payments on current Grant List – (65) totaling \$52,482.54:**

Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Mr. Cesare, and passed unanimously.

**6. Appointment of Carol L. Noble to a vacancy on the Retirement Board with a term expiring June 30, 2020:**

Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Ms. Clouse, and passed unanimously.

**7. Appointment of Deputy Chief of Police – John Sullivan:**

Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Dolan. DISCUSSION: Mr. Donnelly gave a brief history of Mr. Sullivan's background. Mr. Gagliardi said that he thinks that he is going to be a great assistant to the town of Hamden. Mr. Farmer asked what the difference is between the two positions. Mr. Cappiello said that he is just the second in command in the department, whereas the other is a more union position. Mr. Cappiello added that it's mainly outside the union so that he is actually management, and in his absence, he would be in charge of the department. Mr. Macdowall asked for a brief history, where he will focus all of his time and energy. Mr. Sullivan said that he is looking forward to implementing community policing. Mr. Macdowall asked if there are any projects that he is looking forward to working on. Mr. Sullivan replied that he would like to do more active community policing, which is different in different neighborhoods, and it's kind of different than the. Mr. Sullivan added that he would like to see more professionalism in the department. Mr. Colaiacovo congratulated Mr. Sullivan on his new position and added that he will be an asset to the Department.

The item passed, with one opposition from Ms. Baez.

**8. Appointment of Finance Director – Curtis M. Eatman:**

Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Mr. Farmer. DISCUSSION: Mr. Donnelly addressed the commission and gave a history of his background. Mr. Eatman addressed the Council and said that he is looking forward to working to put Hamden in the black.

Mr. Cesare said that he is very pleased to work with Mr. Eatman, and thanked Myron Hul.

The motion passed unanimously.

**9. Order authorizing intradepartmental transfer 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget Police Dept. \$225,000 (Overtime) from Regular Salaries:**

Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Mr. Macdowall. DISCUSSION: Mr. Cappiello addressed the council and said that the necessity is out of contractual obligations, and staffing. Mr. Cappiello added that it's the cost of doing business and the department does everything in its power to live within the contract. Mr. Cappiello also stated that the department does everything they can to reduce cost, but currently it has

between 5-10 people out injured, and seven vacancies. Mr. Cappiello added that the Department is on track to spend less than the overtime cost and hopes that this would get him through to the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. McGarry asked if the injury level is abnormally high. Mr. Cappiello said that he tries to get them back as soon as possible and put them on light duty. Mr. Macdowall said he wants to reflect that he is concerned that his concern is pulling out of medical. Mr. Cappiello said that he is putting together a line item that will prevent this from occurring.

Mr. Farmer asked if there was a certain amount of preparation before retirements occur, and that people were retirement said that there is a certain amount of preparation before retirements occur and that we are not having people are not retiring for the “right” reasons. Mr. Cappiello said that the Department is currently testing for entry level police officers.

This passed unanimously.

**10. Order authorizing interdepartmental transfer 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget Fire Dept. \$350,000 (\$225,000 to Sub/Straight Overtime -- \$125,000 to Garcia Overtime) \$120,000 from Salaries; \$230,000 from Medical Self-Insurance:**

Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Mr. Gagliardi. DISCUSSION: Mr. McGarry asked if the finance director can speak in regard to the issue. Mr. Eatman said that the department is projecting a closeout of 1 million and will use that closeout to this potential transfer. Mr. Eatman added that this doesn't include the latter half, and with the new pandemic that hit the U.S., it may increase, but there is a contract that needs to be paid.

Mr. McGarry asked if it was possible for it to go forward with that line. Rick Galarza, Deputy Finance said that if you run that negative, and as of yesterday, that there is 2 million medical and the pension. Mr. Galarza added that it is the only line with flexibility.

Ms. Dolan said that she appreciates that the department looked at it step by step until the town can submit a financial plan and look it with a holistic approach, and she doesn't think that makes sense. Ms. Dolan encourages we vote no, see where they stand, and it sounds that the information is outdated. Ms. Dolan also asked for a written plan.

Ms. Bonadies said that she has repeatedly asked for a plan, as the Town can't afford to run this government, and if there is any money in these lines, it should be allocated elsewhere. Mr. Gagliardi agreed, and said that we should support this to get it off the table, and have it gone forward as both people have to be paid, and bills have to be paid.

Mr. McGarry asked about what the effect would be if this didn't pass. Gary Merwede, Fire Chief, said that the minimum staffing is for the safety of the firefighters, and collectively, “we manage risks of the community and it exists to keep our contracts safe.” Mr. Merwede added that this a false choice, and it's his job to enforce this, but his concern is the health of the people.

Ms. Horsley asked if it was possible for the transfer to not go through without the documentation that was requested.

Ms. Dolan said that one of the reasons why we need this information is to protect the funds. Ms. Dolan added that to protect public safety, we run the risk of running out of money and the Council needs to make sure that it's fully funded.

Mr. Gagliardi said money that you are looking for is for the rest of the year and added that he supports Councilwoman Dolan's that we get the financial items, as they can always withdraw the approval of this money.

Mr. Cesare moved a call to question. It was seconded by Mr. Macdowall. A vote was taken, and it passed, with one abstention from Mr. Gagliardi.

A vote was taken, and this item passed, with two oppositions from Ms. Baez and Ms. Dolan.

**11. Order to accept and expend Grant Funds from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation 2020 Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Program (DDHVE) -- \$60,000:**

Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Mr. MacDowall. DISCUSSION: Mr. Macdowall asked about the two dates were concrete, seeing as there is a current pandemic. Mr. Cappiello replied that if the State of Emergency is still in effect at this time, then he will not go forward with this program.

The motion passed unanimously.

**12. Order authorizing interdepartmental transfer 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget – Public Works \$819,882 (\$655,092 to Tipping Fees - \$164,790 to Waste Removal Contracts) \$400,000 from E&C Account; \$50,000 from Snow Removal; \$334,000 from Medical Self-Insurance; \$35,882 from Extra Duty Salaries:**

Moved by Mr. Gagliardi, seconded by Ms. Clouse. DISCUSSION:

The motion passed, with two oppositions from Ms. Baez and Ms. Dolan.

**13. Resolution establishing a Charter Revision Commission:**

Mr. Cesare moved; Ms. Horsley seconded. DISCUSSION: Mr. McGarry said that the Council has to be thoughtful on this. Mr. Farmer said that the he wants to make sure that they fall into the same trap where they can't put into it and wants to make sure that we are on top of it. Mr. McGarry said that the conversation of what the commission needs to look like needs to be done prior, as the Council is capable of having special meetings, and needs to take the time to vote on this the right way.

Mr. Cesare moved to enact a call to question and was seconded by Ms. Horsley. A vote was taken, and the motion passed, with four oppositions from Ms. Baez, Mr. Farmer, Mr. Gagliardi, and Mr. Macdowall.

Mr. Gagliardi asked why the Council still was not meeting. Mr. McGarry reminded Mr. Gagliardi of the current pandemic.

A vote was taken, and the motion did not pass.

**14. Resolution urging the Connecticut Greater Assembly and Governor Lamont to enact a  
Community Choice Aggregation Law for Connecticut -- TABLED**

There being no further business, Mr. McGarry adjourned the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie Barletta  
Acting Clerk of the Council