

TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FY 2023-2024 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS
April 27, 2023

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Legislative Council budget deliberations were held on Thursday, April 27, 2023. This was a hybrid meeting held both in person and electronically via Zoom. The meeting was called out of recess at 6:20 P.M. by Council President Dominique Baez.

Z = Zoom P = in Person

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dominique Baez	Kristen Zaehring (Z) (approx.. 6:30pm)
Katie Kiely (P)	Jeron Alston (Z) (approx. 7:00pm)
Sarah Gallagher (Z)	Abdul Osmanu (Z)
Ted Stevens (P)	Laurie Sweet (Z)
Bob Anthony (P)	Justin Farmer (Z)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lesley DeNardis; Paula Irvin; Ms. Wetmore; Cory O'Brien; Adrian Webber

PRESIDING: Dominique Baez, President

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Sean Grace, Chief of Staff; Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; Erik Johnson, Economic Development Director

PUBLIC INPUT: None

Economic Development:

Expenditures:

Ms. Baez moved amotion to open the expenditures, seconded by Mr. Anthony.

Mr. Johnson explained his department. He then explained zeroing out the Marketing Consultant and replacing it with the Digital Media & Marketing Coordinator. There was then discussion on the Prof./Tech. line with Mr. Johnson saying there were a few more properties they want to put out for sale next year and they want to work with professionals to make sure that process is done right.

There was then a brief discussion on the Digital Media & Marketing Coordinator.

Mr. Stevens asked about the \$15,000 raise in the Marketing Coordinator and asked if that was the stipend from the last budget. Mr. Johnson answered that is correct. Mr. Farmer asked how that affects accrued benefits. Mr. Johnson said it has no impact because the compensation hasn't changed. Ms. Kiely asked if the stipend was included in the pension. Ms. Baez said she thinks it was in the last budget. Mr. Stevens said he thinks it's well deserved. Mr. Johnson explained the stipend had two functions, Economic Development and Town Planner. There was then discussion on the stipend. Mr. Farmer said as the chair of personnel he wants to clarify, in terms of asking about benefits, he wants to make sure that we went about it the right way so that we're not spending money on litigation if we're not compensating people the correct way.

Mr. Anthony asked if prof./tech. pertains to the Chamber of Commerce also and Mr. Johnson said yes.

Ms. Baez took the vote on expenditures as proposed and they passed with 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

Positions:

Ms. Baez moved a motion to open positions, seconded by Mr. Stevens.

Mr. Farmer asked if he has the tools he needs to be successful. Mr. Johnson said he thinks there should be more project management level in Hamden.

Ms. Baez took the vote on positions as proposed and they passed with 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

Planning & Zoning:

Mr. Livshits gave a tour of his office as he explained it.

Revenues:

Ms. Baez requested a motion to open revenues. Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Kiely.

Mr. Farmer moved a motion to remove 10911-1602 Student Housing. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baez.

Mr. Livshits said he asked for this to be removed because they no longer collect these fees. Mr. Stevens mentioned how Finance Director Eatman said these should remain. Mr. Grace said generally it's kept there for a couple cycles for auditing purposes. Ms. Gruen suggests if the auditors say to keep it in there then maybe just add a note.

Mr. Farmer and Ms. Baez both withdrew their motions.

Mr. Livshits explained hi anti-blight line and there was some discussion on it. Ms. Gallagher stated it shows application fees for Economic Development are zeroed out and says it's been moved to the Economic Development Dept. but she didn't see it there. Mr. Livshits said it was separated from his department. Ms. Gallagher asked if it should be put in. Mr. Grace said it's old language and there are not fees that Economic Development collect and after a couple cycles this can be taken out. Mr. farmer said he thinks it's pertinent to keep track of lines removed.

Ms. Baez took the vote on revenues as proposed and they passed with 1 opposed (Farmer)

Expenditures:

Ms. Baez requested a motion to open expenditures. Moved by Mr. Anthony, seconded by Ms. Kiely.

Mr. Farmer asked if they were still required to publish in a newspaper. Mr. Livshits said yes. Mr. Alston asked how long the Zoning Enforcement Officer has been vacant. Mr. Livshits said since September of last year.

A vote was taken on expenditures as proposed and approved unanimously.

Positions:

Ms. Baez requested amotion to open positions. Moved by Mr. Anthony, seconded by Ms. Kiely.

Mr. Farmer asked how much crossover there was between the blight officer and the litter agent in P.W. Mr. Livshits explained how their duties were different. Ms. Kiely asked if the Zoning and Assistant Zoning Officers were union. Mr. Livshits said yes, and said the Zoning Enforcement Officer will be starting at Step 1 with that salary. He then went on to explain the job descriptions. Mr. Alston stated he thought the Town Code was part of enforcement. Mr. Livshits said only for zoning regulations. QVHD is responsible for the housing code. Mr. Alston stated he thinks there's a lot of crossover. He also wonders if the Zoning Officer hasn't been filled because of the salary. Mr. Livshits said he has his 3rd interview tomorrow and he's comfortable with where it's at. Mr. farmer asked if there were any new responsibilities added when the job description was updated. Mr. Livshits said no, just a new provision about having a certification. Mr. Farmer asked if his staff adequate to deal with housing issues. Mr. Livshits said it's difficult to evaluate without a full staff and said it all develops on the volume of complaints that come in.

There was then discussion about violations.

Ms. Baez took the vote on positions as proposed and they passed unanimously.

There being no further business, Ms. Baez recessed the meeting at 7:38 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta
Clerk of the Council