

TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FY 2022-2023 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS
May 3, 2022

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Legislative Council budget deliberations were held on Tuesday, May 3, 2022. This meeting was a hybrid meeting held both in person and on Zoom due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called out of recess at 6:14 P.M. by Council President Dominique Baez.

* P = In Person – Z = On Zoom

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT:</u>	Dominique Baez (P)	Cory O’Brien (P)
	Justin Farmer (Z)	Sarah Gallagher (Z)
	Katie Kiely (P)	Betty Wetmore (Z)
	Abdul Osmanu (Z)	Laurie Sweet (P)
	Ted Stevens (Z)	Lesley DeNardis (Z)
	Kristen Zaehring (P)	Marjorie Bonadies (Z)
	Adrian Webber (Z)	Paula Irvin (P)
	Jeron Alston (P)	

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

PRESIDING: Dominique Baez, President

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Lauren Garrett; Sean Grace, Chief of Staff; Curtis Eatman, Finance Director

Mayor Garrett gave a PowerPoint presentation of her 5 year long term budget plan which can be viewed here: <https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/5961/Copy-of-Forecast-Final---5--3-2022-Council-Presentation>

President Baez then opened up the public hearing at 7:00pm and closed it at 8:00pm.

PUBLIC INPUT: There were 10 people who spoke in person, 6 people who participated

verbally on Zoom and 26 written comments submitted which can be read here:
<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/5845/05-03-2022>

Planning & Zoning Dept.

Ms. Baez requested a motion to open the Planning & Zoning budget. Moved by Mr. Alston, seconded by Mr. O'Brien.

Acting Town Planner Erik Johnson went over the department budget saying the department doesn't have enough staff and he would like some requested positions to be considered. There was then some discussion on salaries.

Mr. Stevens moved a motion to decrease the Assistant Town Planner to \$85,000 and fund the Planner 1 for \$65,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baez.

There was some discussion on comparing positions with other Towns our size, as well as discussion on the size of personnel and the responsibilities of each.

* (Mr. Osmanu and Mr. Farmer are both gone from the meeting at approximately 8:30PM)

There was also discussion on the previous consolidation of Economic Development and Planning & Zoning with Ms. DeNardis stating she thinks it's worth a try to return to that approach of "one stop shopping."

Mr. O'Brien asked which department needed help more, E&C or P&Z. Mr. Johnson said P&Z. There was then discussion on department positions. Ms. Irvin said she's in support of positions that will bring in revenue.

There was a lengthy discussion on positions. Ms. Gallagher stated the Town Planner is a charter position and asked if they could look at \$100,000 for the Planner or was that too low? Mr. Johnson said that would be too low. Mr. Grace stated they offered someone the position already at the \$110,000. There was then some discussion on the prof./tech. line. Mr. O'Brien stated the Asst. Town Planner was union and asked if they could adjust the salary. Mr. Grace stated it's vacant right now and they'd have to research a starting cost.

After more discussion Mr. Grace gave the following information saying the Entry Level (lowest it could go) in the CBA for Asst. Town Planner is \$90,318.91 and Step 1 would be \$91,857.81.

Ms. Baez offered a friendly amendment to Mr. Steven's motion for a salary of \$90,318.91 for the Asst. Planner position. Mr. Stevens accepted the friendly amendment. After Mr. Grace suggested budgeting at Step 1 for the extra space Ms. Baez changed her friendly to \$91,857.81 and Mr. Stevens agreed.

A vote was taken on the amendment to positions of funding the Assistant Town Planner at \$91,857.81 and the Planner 1 at \$65,000 and it passed with 4 opposed (O'Brien) (Bonadies) (DeNardis) (Wetmore) – 9 in favor – 2 absent (Farmer) (Osmanu)

Ms. Gallagher moved a motion to lower line 11101-0590 Prof./Tech. to \$25,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alston.

There was some discussion on consultant costs and how work is done in phases.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion and it failed with 9 opposed (Alston) (Bonadies)

(DeNardis) (O'Brien) (Stevens) (Sweet) (Webber) (Wetmore) (Baez) – 4 in favor (Gallagher) (Irvin) (Kiely) (Zaehring) and 2 absent (Farmer) (Osmanu)

A vote was taken on the expenditures as amended and approved with 3 opposed (O'Brien) (DeNardis) (Gallagher)

Ms. Baez moved a motion to accept the revenues as proposed. Seconded by Mr. Stevens and Ms. Sweet and approved unanimously.

Economic Development Dept.

Ms. Baez requested a motion to open positions. Moved by Ms. Kiely, seconded by Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. Johnson explained the positions and the title change of one.

Mr. O'Brien moved a motion to not fund the Marketing Coordinator. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alston.

There was some discussion on the Marketing Consultant line and the Marketing Coordinator position. Ms. Baez said there are only 3 people in this office and she talked about branding our Town saying the branding for our Town is beautiful and she won't vote to cut this position.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion failed with 2 in favor (Alston) (O'Brien) – 11 opposed (Bonadies) (DeNardis) (Gallagher) (Irvin) (Kiely) (Stevens) (Sweet) (Webber) (Wetmore) (Zaehring) (Baez) and 2 absent (Farmer) (Osmanu)

Ms. Baez requested a motion to open expenditures. Moved by Ms. Kiely, seconded by Mr. O'Brien.

* Mr. Osmanu has rejoined the meeting at approximately 10:11pm

Ms. Zaehring moved a motion to reduce line 11411-0548M Marketing Consultant to \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kiely. After some discussion Ms. Irvin requested a friendly amendment to \$5,000. Ms. Zaehring and Ms. Kiely accepted.

Mr. Stevens said he thinks \$5,000 is meaningless so he'll be voting no. Ms. Gallagher agrees and is good with \$10,000 so she'll be voting no for the \$5,000. Ms. Baez also agrees with the \$10,000. A vote was taken and it failed with 1 in favor (Irvin)

Ms. Baez then took the vote on \$10,000 and it passed with 1 opposed (Irvin)

Ms. Baez took a vote on the expenditures as amended and it passed unanimously.

Arts, Culture, Recreation and Wellness:

Ms. Baez moved a motion to open the positions, seconded by Ms. Kiely.

* Mr. Farmer rejoined the meeting at approximately 10:25pm

Ms. Irvin asked about the Arts Assistant. Mr. Grace said this could be paid out of Temp. Wages. After a lengthy discussion on programming, past positions and who did what a **roll call vote was taken** on positions as proposed by the Mayor and approved with 10 in favor (Alston)

(Bonadies) (DeNardis) (Gallagher) (Kiely) (O'Brien) (Osmanu) (Sweet) (Webber) (Baez) – 4 opposed (Irvin) (Stevens) (Wetmore) (Zaehring) and 1 abstention (Farmer)

Ms. Baez moved a motion for the expenses as proposed, seconded by Ms. Bonadies.

Ms. Bonadies moved a motion to reduce line 14301-0576 Special Projects to \$120,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. DeNardis and approved with 1 abstention (Farmer)

Ms. Baez then called for the vote on the expenditures as amended and it was approved unanimously.

Ms. Wetmore moved a motion to create a revenue line, seconded by Ms. Bonadies. After some discussion it was decided to wait for Mr. Eatman's report and this was tabled.

Recreation positions: Ms. Baez moved a motion to untable positions, seconded by Ms. Sweet. After some discussion Ms. DeNardis moved a motion to table until they get revenues, seconded by Ms. Bonadies and approved with 2 opposed (Baez) (Gallagher)

There being no further business Ms. Baez recessed the meeting at 11:25 P.M.

At this point Ms. Kiely announced she would be rescinding her vote on condo trash.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta
Clerk of the Council