

**TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING**

June 29, 2021

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<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/bJsWdT6AzHyzjCkviwDS23gvwN6BXgk7zLqbihNGKHboS34SXsH4JDZoGncJS7fh.mipSHICpoejSYvIu>

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A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Tuesday, June 29, 2021. This meeting was held electronically, via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 7:16 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	Kathleen Schomaker
Betty Wetmore	Jeron Alston
Justin Farmer	Adrian Webber (after roll call)
Marjorie Bonadies	Austin Cesare (after roll call)
Berita Rowe-Lewis	

MEMBERS ABSENT: Athena Gary; Kristin Dolan; Jody Clouse; Valerie Horsley

PRESIDING: Mick McGarry, President

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; Steve Mednick, Counsel to Council; Frank Dixon, Charter Revision Commission Chair; Jackie Downing, Charter Revision Commission Vice-Chair

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION: There were 3 speakers which can be heard on the meeting recording at Time Code 00:34:30 and 2 written comments which can be read here: <https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/4304/PUBLIC-COMMENT-06-29-2021>

The following are lists of recommendations to send back to the CRC for changes.

Preamble: No action needed.

Chapter I:

§1-3 – Repeal of the following sentence “Any meeting required by this Charter to be held on a certain day shall be deemed, for all purposes, to be a regular meeting.

Ms. Schomaker moved a motion to repeal the sentence, seconded by Ms. Bonadies.
DISCUSSION: Ms. Gruen said it doesn't make sense, some may be a special meeting and gave some examples. A vote was taken and it was approved with 1 abstention (Cesare)

Chapter III:

§3-3 – Town Clerk should be an appointed position.

Mr. McGarry moved a motion to recommend this section, seconded by Ms. Schomaker.
DISCUSSION: Mr. McGarry said he thinks this position is best filled by a professional and that quite a few municipalities have it professionalized.

Mr. Farmer said he agrees with it being professionalized but regionalization is his first concern and thinks it should be considered.

Mr. Macdowall asked who would be the direct supervisor. Mr. McGarry said the Mayor. Mr. Macdowall said he thinks if it's professionalized it gets a little sticky. He said it's one of the most successful departments in Town and thinks this will get politicized.

Ms. Schomaker said she doesn't understand why the Town Clerk wouldn't be appointed like the rest of the department Heads. She also thinks they should be hired based on qualifications as any other.

Ms. Bonadies also thinks it should be professionalized.

Mr. Cesare said he doesn't think there's a layer of oversight and agrees with Mr. Macdowall on this.

There was then some discussion on regionalization as well as discussion on it being a possible ballot question.

A vote was taken and Mr. McGarry announced it failed with 3 opposed (Cesare) (Farmer) (Macdowall) and 2 abstentions (Wetmore) (Webber)

§3-4 – The standard for “residency” should equally apply to “at-large” and “district” appointments.

Mr. McGarry requested a motion to recommend this to the CRC. Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Schomaker. DISCUSSION: Ms. Gruen suggested this requirement be for any person seeking to be a resident of the Town or resident of the district.

After some discussion on the termination clause for moving out of a district and how someone would verify residency Ms. Bonadies said she wants to make a motion to have all Boards, Commissions and members of the Council to provide proof of address. Ms. Rowe-Lewis seconded the motion.

Mr. Farmer said this concerns him and he'd rather make a friendly that says all Boards, Commissions, and Council addresses be made public.

Mr. Macdowall said he's concerned with this. These are volunteers and not what they are signing up for and it just creates an additional barrier.

Mr. McGarry said he doesn't see the necessity for this. There was then a lengthy discussion on safety concerns of addresses being public.

Ms. Bonadies said the only reason she's asking for a residency requirement is because it says if you move out of a district you lose your seat and she'd rather see that stricken. Mr. Mednick asked her where she saw that. She said on page 54 of the annotated copy from May 12th under §7-1 F-1. Mr. Medick said it says if they move that they can finish their term before getting off. Mr. McGarry said whatever they do here they have to keep 7-1 consistent.

Mr. McGarry then called for a recess at 9:00pm and called them out of recess at 9:19pm.

Ms. Bonadies withdrew her motion and Ms. Rowe-Lewis withdrew her second.

Mr. McGarry called for the vote on the changes as recommended for §3-4 and it passed unanimously. He then said they'd add it to the list for the 7th.

Chapter IV:

§4-4: Mr. Mednick said here the Director of Finance recommended that hiring of Legislative Council Clerk is consistent with the applicable CBA. He said he's not sure what he means so he will call and talk to him tomorrow. They then passed over this item.

Another concern brought up in this chapter was Mr. Farmer's concern under 4=11 approval of Mayoral appointments and that he feels there should be a provision added on how long an interim department head can be active without coming to a vote to the Council. Ms. Gruen gave an explanation of how interim and acting Department Head appointments work. Mr. Farmer said he could see a potential a lapse and he thinks they should be notified when there's an interim and they can give the Mayor 6-7 months to decide if this is the department they want, or enough time to find one. Ms. Gruen then said she wants to clarify that interim and acting is not to serve a probation period.

Mr. McGarry asked Mr. Farmer if he had language he wanted to add. Mr. Farmer said he'd like to hear from others.

Ms. Schomaker said if it's not broke don't fix it. She knows of no problem with this and it seems like a solution in search of a problem and she would vote against it.

Mr. Cesare said he agrees with Ms. Schomaker.

Mr. Farmer said he thinks there have been well established problems of departments without department heads and they can't keep going a year to 2 years with no department head.

Mr. McGarry said he also agrees with Ms. Schomaker and is not sure he sees a problem either.

Ms. Gruen stated that there are different department head positions and that some are union, some are a contract and some appointed and so they don't all fall under the same period that you refer to as interim/acting. She then told him to refer to the resolution she sent the Council awhile back on this.

Mr. Farmer said he's thinking of a motion that administration appointments, with the exception of CBA's, allow 6 months to have them work as interim and then 45 days to be notified if they will be hired or not. Ms. Gruen told him he really needs to look at that resolution.

Mr. Farmer said he thinks this should go to the working group and he then moved a motion to send this to the working group and it was seconded by Ms. Baez and approved with 3 opposed (Schomaker) (McGarry) (Rowe-Lewis)

Chapter V:

§5-2 D (1): Ms. Schomaker said she's not clear about what they're being asked to do here. After an explanation from Mr. Mednick about the request for quarterly contracts with the exception of those protected by law, Ms. Schomaker said she doesn't think they have enough information to vote on this tonight and thinks it should go to the working group. There was a lengthy discussion on these reports. Ms. Gruen said they're all public documents. Ms. Schomaker said this would have to be someone's job, it's a bookkeeping requirement.

Mr. McGarry said if they do nothing the charter will require all contracts to go to the Council quarterly and he moved a motion to not take up this recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Webber and approved with 2 opposed (Baez) (Cesare) and 1 abstention (Farmer)

Mr. Mednick asked if the start date was commencing on July 1st and if everyone was okay with that date and the consensus was yes.

Mr. McGarry then announced the meeting was in recess at 10:09 pm until tomorrow evening at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta
Clerk of the Council