

TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 20, 2020 – July 21, 2020

A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on July 20, 2020 and went into the next day of July 21, 2020. This meeting was held electronically, via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 P.M. by the Council President. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dominique Baez	Brad Macdowall (@ 7:10pm)
Mick McGarry	Jody Clouse
Valerie Horsley	Berita Rowe-Lewis
Harry Gagliardi	Justin Farmer
Austin Cesare	Kristin Dolan
Betty Wetmore	Marjorie Bonadies
Kathleen Schomaker	Athena Gary

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

PRESIDING: Mick McGarry, President

At this time Mr. McGarry read a Proclamation dedicated to Mike Colaiacovo announcing July 20th Michael Colaiacovo Day in the Town of Hamden.

Mr. Gagliardi said Mike was a great guy who he always talked to before a meeting and he will miss him a lot.

Mr. Cesare said he served 3 terms with Mike and he will miss him dearly. He thanked the 7th District for sending him and said he was sad to lose him.

Ms. Horsley said when she thinks of Mike she thinks of his huge heart and how welcoming he was to everyone, how he loved Hamden and she wishes he had a few more years here to help fight for the Animal Shelter.

Ms. Clouse said she remembers when she was first elected Mike was one of the first to welcome her with open arms.

Ms. Bonadies said she sat next to him and would ask him a million questions and he always offered help to her. She said she will miss him greatly, he was a gem.

Ms. Schomaker said when she came on the Council he took her under his wing and made her feel right at home. She said he was always congenial and quick with a smile. She also thanked the 7th District for sending him.

Mr. Macdowall echoes what everyone has said, especially the welcoming part. He said Mike offered himself and his expertise a number of times, was always responsive and was always honest. He too will miss him.

Ms. Baez said she didn't know him for long but it didn't take long for her to see his heart. She said he was very welcoming, patient and kind. She too will miss him.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis said he is gone too soon. She said he was an amazing Council person who would make jokes so that things wouldn't be taken too seriously, and he loved animals. She will miss him dearly.

Mr. McGarry echoes what everyone says. He said Mike had a good nature and was dedicated to his constituents. He appreciated his sense of humor, but also his insights and he will be sorely missed.

Mr. McGarry called for a 5 minute recess.

In recess at 7:32 PM
Out of recess at 7:38 PM

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION: There were 197 public comments submitted and read aloud.

Mr. McGarry called for a 10 minute recess.

In recess at 9:30 PM
Out of recess at 9:43 PM

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: Mr. McGarry said they've received many applications for Charter Revision and to keep sending them in, they'll be accepting them until July 27th. He said if any citizen wants to be part of the Fiscal Stability Committee to send those in and if there are comments to the Fiscal Stability Resolution send them in.

Mr. Gagliardi asked what they should do with their budget amendments. Mr. McGarry said to email them to either himself or the Finance Chair.

Ms. Horsley suggested maybe they should have a conversation about the F.S resolution. Ms. Gruen said if the public hasn't seen it you shouldn't speak on it.

Ms. Dolan said she wanted the budget amendments on tonight's agenda.

Mr. McGarry said they'd schedule a finance update for the August 3rd meeting.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS: Chief Sullivan Gave an update about the shooting over the weekend.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISONS: None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Mr. McGarry moved a motion to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2020 meeting, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA: Mr. McGarry took a vote to suspend their rules for tonight's meeting and it passed unanimously.

Mr. McGarry said since there was a representative here tonight for item #6 he would do that first.

6. Resolution confirming commitment and participation in a regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Ms. Schomaker. DISCUSSION: Mr. C. Cesare explained the process of bringing this stuff to the facility and how they're billed for it. Ms. Lori Vitagliano said this program runs from mid-May through October to bring hazardous household waste.

Ms. Baez asked what kinds of things they accept. Ms. Vitagliano said things such as pesticides, gasoline, pool chemicals, etc. and they average about 25-30 users a week.

Mr. Macdowall asked if they were the same users each week. Ms. Vitagliano said no, it's regional so they come from all over and they keep track of participants by having them sign in.

Ms. Dolan asked what the annual cost of the program is. Mr. Morton said in FY 2019 it was \$38,983.06, FY 2018 it was \$42,370.32 and in FY 2017 it was \$35,486.29.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

1. Appointment of Ashley Dwyer to the Human Services Commission for a term to expire March 1, 2023

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Mr. Farmer. DISCUSSION: Mr. McGarry thanked Ms. Dwyer and all the people who serve on our boards and commissions. A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

2. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden Community Services Department to accept and expend funds from New Haven County's Emergency Food and Shelter Program Board as part of the Cares Act Supplemental Funding (\$24,900)

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Mr. Gagliardi. DISCUSSION: Mr. Sendroff explained this is federal money and that we apply for these grants every annually which helps supplement funds for food, rent and utilities.

Ms. Baez thanked him for spotting and applying for this.

Mr. Farmer asked if there were any stipulation on spending the money. Mr. Sendroff said they had to spend it by May 31, 2021.

Ms. Schomaker said she'd like to acknowledge the new food program in the State Street neighborhood. Mr. Sendroff said it is a mobile pantry that is not a Town project but run by United Way and St. Ann's

Soup Kitchen.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis thanked Mr. Sendroff for getting this grant because it's really needed in Hamden.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

3. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden Community Services Department to accept and expend funds from New Haven County's Emergency Food and Shelter Program Board (\$12,450)

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved unanimously.

4. Order authorizing the acceptance and expenditure of funds from the Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice "BJA 20 CORONAVIRUS Emergency Supplemental Funding Program"

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Mr. Cesare. DISCUSSION: Chief Sullivan explained how the drone in this grant could do good with examples like relaying to the homeless about available resources saying there is a PA accessory on the drone to communicate, it can be used for search and rescue saying there were 1,300 missing person complaints in the last year. He said the cam has a wide angle, and is a thermal cam with a hybrid optical zoom. He said it's very rare for the department to receive a grant of this magnitude which can be used for many years to come.

Mr. Gagliardi said they asked for a policy and they received a draft that wasn't approved by the Police Commission and this may not be what the Council wants.

Mr. Farmer said this grant was for Covid and the same info just given was the same info given by the last Chief. He said this is for PPE and he saw one of our officers 4 times who did not have a mask on so maybe it should be used for that. He also said they shouldn't even be talking about this before there's a policy.

Mr. Macdowall said first he wants to clarify that this drone isn't \$20,000 but is \$33,500. He said there is no protocol in place yet for the traffic lights but here they are talking about this and it's like putting the cart before the horse. He said he can't support this, now is not the time to add this while all the national things are happening. He said when he thinks of something we needed or could have used for the 2018 tornado a drone wasn't one of them.

Ms. Bonadies asked about a cost to create department operators and train them. Chief Sullivan said they have some that are trained already and that they'd probably reach out to the Fire dept. and get some of those guys trained. Ms. Bonadies said she thinks it's an invaluable tool to have for missing persons and things like that. She's against surveillance so the policy needs to be very tight as well as discipline for misuse. The Chief said there is a current policy in place stating that for the misuse of any equipment and this would fall under that.

Ms. Horsley asked how much this could save on manpower. Chief Sullivan said he doesn't have a number but is sure it could save on overtime or injuries of officers when they go search.

Fire Chief Merwede gave some examples of how this could be useful for many reasons and said he was excited to share this resource with the PD.

Ms. Dolan asked how this grant works. She asked if the drone was the only choice left. Chief Sullivan said they could swap it out for another piece, there was a list to choose from. Ms. Dolan asked if they could see the list and asked what his second choice would be. Chief Sullivan said an industrial sweeper for their lower garage level. He said they now pay a company to come in and do that. Ms. Dolan then suggested maybe there's a way this can be used by the Fire dept. so it could only be used for search and rescue.

Mr. Farmer **moved a motion** to postpone this until a public hearing is held. The motion was seconded by Mr. Macdowall and it failed with a tie roll call vote of 7 in favor (Baez) (Clouse) (Dolan) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Macdowall) and 7 opposed (Bonadies) (Cesare) (Horsley) (Rowe-Lewis) (Schomaker) (Wetmore) (McGarry)

Mr. Cesare said we're in the 21st century and most Towns are going this way and he's concerned that if we don't do this now we may then have to spend money on it anyway one day in the future. He said he understands the concerns and he also wants a tight policy, but we are a growing Town of an elderly population and if his mother or kid were missing he'd want our police to have the tools needed. He thinks there are few negatives but a lot of positives.

Mr. Macdowall asked if they could remove the drone with a motion. The clerk pointed out that the drone was removed by motion at the June 15th meeting and those minutes would reflect that.

Mr. McGarry said maybe they could agree to two things, one maybe they could house it with the fire dept. and two, maybe they could have a liaison between the council and Police Commission for the policy.

Ms. Horsley asked if they would accept a friendly amendment to put the drone back in. Mr. McGarry accepted the friendly and Mr. Cesare also accepted it. (The drone is now back in)

Ms. Rowe-Lewis said she thinks if a policy would have come with this tonight there'd be stronger support for this. She said she also thinks this is a good tool to be used for advertisement to advertise Hamden to other Towns and thinks this could be good for Hamden if used right.

Mr. Farmer said a cheaper drone could be used for all these things and this is an issue for him.

Ms. Baez said the Town needs things that are useful to the residents. She said last time she said she wanted to see services that directly affect the residents and she doesn't understand the stubbornness. She said this money is for Corona and this is a misuse of the money.

Ms. Horsley said she remembers removing this last time due to no policy and after hearing from both Chief's tonight she's comfortable with this and it is useful for residents.

Mr. Cesare moved a motion to call the question. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rowe-Lewis and approved by a roll call vote of 8 in favor (Bonadies) (Cesare) (Clouse) (Horsley) (Rowe-Lewis) (Schomaker) (Wetmore) (McGarry) and 6 opposed (Baez) (Dolan) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Macdowall)

A roll call vote was requested on approving the grant with the friendly amendment of returning the drone and with conditions that it be housed at the Fire Dept. and have a liaison from the PD with the

Police Commission to express the Council's concerns about privacy. By a roll call vote it passed with 7 in favor (Bonadies) (Cesare) (Horsley) (Rowe-Lewis) (Schomaker) (Wetmore) (McGarry) 6 opposed (Baez) (Clouse) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Macdowall) and 1 abstention (Dolan)

Mr. Gagliardi said he wanted to change his vote. Mr. Cesare asked hasn't the vote already been closed? Mr. McGarry said he doesn't know how long a vote can be changed after and asked Ms. Gruen. Mr. Cesare asked does this mean he can change his vote on the budget from two months ago to a yes? Mr. McGarry said they'll have to wait for a ruling from Ms. Gruen. Ms. Gruen said they would have to wait until tomorrow, she's not going to speak off the top of her head.

Mr. Farmer informed Mr. McGarry of his request to be the Liaison for the Council mentioned earlier.

5. Order authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the United Illuminating Company – Streetlight Conversion Project

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Ms. Rowe-Lewis. DISCUSSION: Ms. Schomaker said she will be recusing herself from this item tonight.

At this time it was requested to take the items to be added to the agenda for the Fire Dept. since the Chief has been waiting all night.

Mr. Gagliardi moved a motion to table this item, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved unanimously.

#5 IS NOW A TABLED ITEM

Mr. McGarry stated he needed 2/3's vote to add the following 3 items to the agenda as a bundle.

Information Item – Emergency bid waiver associated with the repairs to Fire Engine 2 (Cummins Sales and Service - \$22,297.90)

Order authorizing interdepartmental transfer 2020-2021 FY Budget – Fire Dept. Vehicle Maintenance \$22,297.90

Bid waiver associated with the Town Revaluation (William Graffney - \$18,240)

The vote passed with 1 opposed (Gagliardi)

Mr. McGarry said the information item will go below with the other info item's and the other two will be #'s 9 and 10.

9. Order authorizing interdepartmental transfer 2020-2021 FY Budget – Fire Dept. Vehicle Maintenance - \$22,297.90

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Ms. Schomaker. DISCUSSION: Mr. McGarry said Mr. Eatman had an amendment to his tonight. Finance Director Eatman said that instead of taking the funds from the E&C Account they'd like to take it from the Juvenile Review Board in the Police Dept. (12401-0366) as this line was captured twice in the budget in both the PD and Youth Services budgets. Mr. McGarry said he'd accept that as a friendly amendment and Ms. Schomaker said she also accepts.

Mr. Farmer asked if we are taking all that money from that line. Mr. Eatman said only \$30,000.

After some discussion on the amount of \$30,000 stated by Mr. Eatman, Mr. Gagliardi moved to amend it to the exact amount of \$22,297.90. The motion was seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved unanimously.

10. Bid waiver associated with the Town Revaluation (William Graffney - \$18,240)

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Ms. Schomaker. DISCUSSION:

(It is now 12:00AM and July 21, 2020)

After Mr. Eatman explained this item Mr. Gagliardi asked if this person was certified. Mr. Eatman said yes. Mr. Gagliardi said he wants to see the certification.

Mr. Farmer asked if there's any contingency if this isn't done timely. Mr. Eatman said he's unaware of penalties but would defer to legal or the administration.

A vote was taken and the item passed with 1 opposed (Gagliardi)

5. Order authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the United Illuminating Company – Streetlight Conversion Project – TABLED ITEM

-- Mr. McGarry moved a motion to take this item off the table, seconded by Ms. Rowe-Lewis and approved with 4 opposed (Baez) (Gagliardi) (Cesare) (Dolan)

DISCUSSION: Assistant Town Attorney Mr. Sharkey explained the process of the last two years leading up to this. He then went over a spread sheet given to the administration last fall and said he thinks it's the best way to go. He also said this is not a contract, but a letter of agreement that assures we go forward with UI for infrastructure and installation.

Mr. McGarry asked about a Tanko proposal. Mr. Sharkey said there is none. He said Tanko has different ideas about these numbers but no disputes.

Ms. Bonadies asked how this landed on the Councils plate. Mr. Sharkey said for one it has the Town assuming extra duty, not a lot of money, but still fiscal, and two, the Mayor wanted to give some sort of presentation for the public and thought this was the way to go.

There was some discussion on kelvin wattages going from 4,000 to the present 3,000. Mr. Sharkey said this was thanks to the advocates.

Ms. Bonadies expressed her concern with the timeline of this being sat on and is now causing problems and asked if there was another viable option. Mr. Sharkey said eminent domain.

Mr. Macdowall said his understanding is Tanko was not involved with those assessments. Mr. Sharkey said Noresco knew ownership was one of the things we wanted to look at. He said they established a relationship and developed that analysis with no disagreement in the end and Tanko went with them to the Mayor to backup Noresco.

Mr. Macdowall stated that Tanko has been in the audience tonight until 1:00AM ready to present.

Mr. Macdowall and Mr. Sharkey briefly discussed case-law.

Mr. Gagliardi stated he asked for the ordinance to be sent to them about open-hole and is also upset because he got two things late today on this.

Ms. Wetmore said she thinks putting this at the end of the agenda is wrong. She said more than 2 hours of public input and all this conversation late night is ridiculous. She then left the meeting at 12:50 AM.

Ms. Horsley asked if it was possible that if they go into this agreement could they buy the lights next year. Mr. Sharkey said given the position that the lights are not for sale he doesn't think it's realistic that PURA would make UI give them up. He said the only way would be eminent domain.

Ms. Dolan asked would there be any reduction in this proposal. Mr. Sharkey said yes, in that it is always in our power to tell UI where we want street lights and how many lit whether they own them or not.

Ms. Dolan stated she'd like Council to receive that spreadsheet he showed earlier.

Mr. Farmer moved a motion to postpone this until August 3rd and they see a proposal from Tanko . The motion was seconded by Ms. Baez and it failed with a roll call vote of 5 yes (Baez) (Clouse) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Macdowall) and 6 opposed (Bonadies) (Cesare) (Dolan) (Horsley) (Rowe-Lewis) (McGarry) and 2 absent (Gary) (Wetmore)

Mr. Cesare asked if we own these won't we maintain them? He said they talk about making cuts but wouldn't this cost us more? Mr. Sharkey said a third party would be hired to do it. Mr. Cesare said he's not even sure why we're going down this road when they're not for sale.

Mick said so in two weeks we'll get two proposals and one will be not for sale. Mr. Sharkey said correct. Mr. McGarry said he's not willing to gamble \$400,000 in known savings every year for a possibility of more savings, but a break even until 5 or 6 years if we convince UI to sell something not for sale.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis moved a motion to postpone this item until the August 3rd meeting, seconded by Mr. Macdowall and approved unanimously.

7. Resolution establishing a Fiscal Stability Committee

-- THIS ITEM HAS BEEN PULLED

8. Resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis and emergency in the Town of Hamden

-- Moved by Mr. McGarry, seconded by Mr. Farmer. DISCUSSION: Mr. Farmer said he is glad we're taking this step and is assuming the vote will be unanimous. He said this is only the first step and there's a lot more work to do.

Mr. Macdowall said this is overdue, it's a good first step but they have to be serious about this.

Ms. Horsley said she appreciates the administration for coming up with this and also agrees that it's just the first step.

Ms. Bonadies pointed out some health concerns she read about connected with this and read some of the statistics.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis said this is the first step but it has to be an ongoing conversation. She said let's talk about it and bring solutions.

Mr. McGarry said there are a lot of conversations to be had and he'll explore some options for some training or something like that.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

Mr. Farmer moved a motion to move the remaining money from the Juvenile Review Board to the E&C account. The motion was seconded by Mr. McGarry.

It was decided that since the night was already late they would do this at the next meeting. Both motions were withdrawn.

There being no further business Mr. McGarry requested a motion to adjourn. Moved by Ms. Schomaker, seconded by Mr. farmer and the meeting was duly adjourned at 1:55 A.M. on July 21, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta
Clerk of the Council

- Meeting Recording: https://zoom.us/rec/share/7-54luzd52NIHq_f7XvRX40gXbTieaa8hikX_sNnU_beP-LzZOQ4WIK7BKYMGkl
- Access Password: Jf^0A=eV