

TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 5, 2020

A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Monday, October 5, 2020. This meeting was held electronically, via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 P.M. by the Council President. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brad Macdowall	Kristin Dolan
Mick McGarry	Jody Clouse (@ 7:12pm)
Valerie Horsley	Berita Rowe-Lewis (@ 7:17pm)
Harry Gagliardi	Justin Farmer
Betty Wetmore	Marjorie Bonadies
Dominique Baez	Athena Gary (@ 7:19pm)
Kathleen Schomaker	Austin Cesare (@ 7:56pm)

MEMBERS ABSENT: VACANT SEAT (7th District)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; Walter Morton, Director of Town and BOE Leg. Affairs; Sue Rubino, Youth Services Coordinator; Mary Hall, JRB Lead Case Manager; Shirley Ellis-West, JRB Executive Director

PRESIDING: Mick McGarry, President

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION: There were no comments submitted

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: Mr. McGarry announced there would be a Fiscal Stability Committee meeting the following night at 7:00pm and that there will be a Charter Revision Commission meeting the next week on the 14th at 7:00pm. He also announced there were some full time openings at the daycare center for 3 to 4 year olds. Mr. McGarry reminded everyone of the upcoming debate for the 17th District State Senate. He then said he was putting together a working group for CivicPlus website for better access and better and better flow of information and also that he put together a Rules Committee which includes Kathleen Schomaker as Chair, Austin Cesare and Jody Clouse. Mr. McGarry went on to say that storm clean-up is ongoing and taking a lot of time as there was a lot of debris to be picked up and also mentioned there'd be no bulk pick-up in October but it will hopefully be available for July 2021.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS: None

REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISONS: None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Mr. McGarry requested a motion to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2020 meeting. The motion was moved by Mr. Gagliardi, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA: Mr. McGarry requested a motion on suspending their rules for tonight's agenda. Moved by Mr. Gagliardi, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved with 1 opposed (Farmer)

1. Vote to fill the 7th District Vacancy

-- Moved by Mr. Gagliardi, seconded by Ms. Schomaker. Mr. McGarry moved a motion for the nomination of Adrian Webber to fill the seventh district vacancy. Seconded by Mr. Gagliardi and approved unanimously.

2. Order authorizing intradepartmental transfer 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget – (Youth Services – Juvenile Review Board) - \$15,000

-- Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Bonadies. DISCUSSION: Ms. Rubino said this is not additional money she's asking for, it's in another account and they don't need it there so she'd like to move it here. She said it would pay for a part-time Case Manager to assist with the Senior Case Manager for this fiscal year and she plans on continuing it next year.

Ms. Horsley asked why help is needed. Ms. Rubino said current re-offenders and some youth being seen more than once, it's prevention and intervention.

Mr. Farmer asked how many cases there are this year and how many there were last year, and what the driving factors are that youth are seeking this program. Ms. Hall said she doesn't have the numbers but knows this year surpassed last year's numbers. She said there are many reasons they are referred to the JRB and the numbers have gone up because she has gained the trust of the Town and is getting more referrals. She then explained how the kids get referred.

Mr. Gagliardi said he's okay giving more help but every time they give part-time people it turns into full-time so he'd rather see a contract for this employee rather than it be an employee of the Town. Ms. Rubino said both positions are contracted, they do not work for the Town and are not on the Town's payroll.

Ms. Bonadies said she just wants to point out that the results of 19-20 in the backup all seem positive.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis asked about the population. Ms. Hall said there's definitely a disparity. She said they get more African Americans and Latino than white. Ms. Rowe-Lewis said all kids need help and she's concerned with the school system. Ms. Rubino said they're working on that.

Ms. Gary thanked all that are involved with this and asked if this goes on the children's future record. Ms. Hall said no.

Ms. Bonadies said there are numbers in the backup that is not proportionate. She said out of 92 kids served last year 51 were African American, 9 were Hispanic, 2 were Asian, and 30 were white.

Mr. McGarry thanked everyone for all the work they do.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

3. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden to accept and expend funds from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) from the U.S. Department of Justice (\$24,474)

-- Moved by Ms. Rowe-Lewis, seconded by Ms. Schomaker. DISCUSSION: Chief Sullivan explained the Tasers in the order saying that some were expired and some are about to retire. He also said this includes training and cartridges. Mr. McGarry asked if expired Tasers are safe and the Chief said yes.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis asked what they do with the expired Tasers. The Chief said they get credit for them.

Mr. Gagliardi asked if he worked in conjunction with Mr. Cesare (PW&P Director) who uses a lot of these cones to see if they could get good prices if purchased together. Chief Sullivan said he could look into that for the future but he has his own stockpile.

Mr. Farmer asked as he goes over his capital budget is he thinking of the things he needs or doesn't need. The Chief said what he needs mostly in the capital is vehicles. Mr. Farmer asked what are the requirements from the State to wear and use Tasers and asked how they play into the accountability law. Chief Sullivan said there is nothing in the accountability law and the department has a policy on usage and they are compliant with State regulation.

Mr. Cesare asked if this isn't approved tonight what are the potential problems for old Tasers? Chief Sullivan said there shouldn't be a problem, they're just told after 5 years they should come off-line.

Ms. Baez asked what the dollar amount was. The Chief said 5 installments of \$32,494 – 5 year purchase \$162,000. He said they already have the money in old capital so there are no new dollars on this. Ms. Baez asked what the savings were. Chief Sullivan said \$29,500 in trade-ins.

Ms. Dolan (in referring to a capital plan she received from Ms. Bonadies) said it doesn't show the amount talked about here. She asked if there would be a capital budget coming out that they'll be approving. Mr. Morton said yes, there are tweaks being made by the BOE and they will vote on it next week and that Mr. Garretson was working on the other piece. Ms. Dolan asked if they could have that in 2 weeks. Mr. Morton said he'd have to check, he's not going to agree on a date that he can't meet.

Ms. Horsley asked if the current Tasers worked. The Chief said they work, but it's standard that they like to take them out of service after 5 years. Ms. Horsley mentioned they need to find 6 to 8 million in cuts right now and she didn't know they'd would have to spend \$160,000 to receive \$24,000 in grant money so she'll be a no on this tonight.

Ms. Bonadies said they've had no updates or report on the capital so she will not vote on anymore capital.

Mr. Cesare said he doesn't want to see bad Tasers out there so he will support this.

Ms. Wetmore said there are too many if's, maybe's and I don't knows and asked if they would lose the grant I this was postponed. Chief Sullivan said they were trying to save \$6,000 but they wouldn't lose the grant just the \$6,000.

Mr. Gagliardi moved a motion to postpone this until October 19th, seconded by Mr. Farmer. There was some discussion on amending the order.

Ms. Schomaker moved a motion to call the question, seconded by Mr. Gagliardi and it passed with 5 opposed (Baez) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Macdowall)

A vote was taken on Mr. Gagliardi's motion to postpone and it failed with 6 in favor (Baez) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Macdowall) (Wetmore) and 8 opposed (Bonadies) (Cesare) (Clouse) (Dolan) (Horsley) (Rowe-Lewis) (Schomaker) (McGarry)

Mr. McGarry expressed his concerns with Mr. Morton on not having what they need to make these decisions and asked him to please pass those concerns on to the administration.

Ms. Horsley moved a motion to amend the order and remove the language for the Tasers from it. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wetmore. After some more discussion and a suggestion from Ms. Gruen on what to remove **Ms. Horsley revised her amendment** to remove the words "sixty-two (62) and Plan". The motion was seconded by Mr. Cesare.

Ms. Schomaker moved a motion to call the question, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved with 3 opposed (Farmer) (Baez) (Gary)

A roll call vote was then taken on Ms. Horsleys amendment and approved with 5 opposed (Clouse) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Macdowall)

Mr. Cesare moved a motion to call the question, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved with 4 opposed (Baez) (Farmer) (Gary) (Macdowall) and Mr. Gagliardi not voting.

A roll call vote was taken on the item as amended and it was approved with 6 opposed (Baez) (Clouse) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Macdowall)

Mr. McGarry then called for a recess at 9:33pm. They came out of recess at 9:40pm.

4. Order to accept and expend grant funds from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation 2021 Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Program - \$60,000

-- Moved by Mr. Cesare, seconded by Mr. Gagliardi. DISCUSSION: Chief Sullivan gave a brief overview of this grant saying we do this every year but this year due to Covid-19 they may forgo October and do it all in April. Mr. Gagliardi asked if they operated on weekends. Chief Sullivan said it's usually during the week but if there is still money in place at the end they may do some Saturdays. Mr. Gagliardi the asked if this could be used at the high school to talk to kids about driving and using cell phones. Chief Sullivan said its use is strictly enforcement, no education.

Mr. Macdowall asked when he'd be doing this in November. Chief Sullivan said right now because of Covid he may not do this in the Fall. Mr. Macdowall then thanked him for his communication on Saturday at the Sleeping Giant incident.

Ms. Bonadies asked where the ticket money goes and how much is it. Chief Sullivan said the money goes to the State and the fine is \$150.

Mr. Cesare moved a motion to call the question, seconded by Ms. Schomaker and approved with 3 opposed (Farmer) (Baez) (Macdowall)

A vote was taken on item #4 and approved unanimously.

**5. Order authorizing interdepartmental transfer 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget
(Year-end close out for various departments) - \$2,850,000**

-- Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Mr. Cesare. DISCUSSION: Mr. Eatman stated this was the last transfer needed to close out for the annual audit. Mr. McGarry asked if there was a number of deficit. Mr. Eatman said the deficit still stands at about \$6,000,000.

Mr. Farmer asked if there are other ways to close out the books that make more sense. Mr. Eatman said the Town has done this for years and it's just continuing and it's been effective. He said in his experience of others places his answer is no.

Mr. Gagliardi asked if any of the TAN was used towards the \$6,000,000. Mr. Eatman said they only used \$5,000,000 of it and it was for payroll.

Ms. Dolan said this close-out number reflects the budget number and not actuals. She said she doesn't understand why this is good practice and why we do it and thinks the best thing to do is not do this close-out and learn from their mistakes.

Mr. Eatman stated there would be issues with the audit if we didn't do this. Mr. Morton said they got part of the concessions but not the full amount they looked for. He said there's no guarantee in getting those numbers and they have no control over the unions.

Ms. Bonadies stated she remembers some concessions that were given and said they should have been put in this line.

There was some discussion on lines that had money left in them and why that was.

Ms. Horsley asked why the money is going into the accounts its going in to. Mr. Eatman said those are accounts that we budgeted for so we're covering that.

Mr. Gagliardi asked what unions gave concessions this year. Mr. Morton said he didn't know but he'd get the answer for them. Mr. McGarry stated moving forward they need to keep track of concession lines more closely.

A vote was taken and the item failed with 7 in favor (Bonadies) (Cesare) (Clouse) (Rowe-Lewis) (Schomaker) (Wetmore) (McGarry) and 7 opposed (Baez) (Dolan) (Farmer) (Gagliardi) (Gary) (Horsley) (Macdowall)

There being no further business Mr. McGarry requested a motion to adjourn. Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Bonadies and the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta
Clerk of the Council