

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

**November 8, 2023**

**\*To view the recording, please click the following link and observe the instructions when/if prompted:** [https://hamden.zoom.us/rec/share/CuMqpOae9MIixvVtjqe1KUtt2MI\\_BFIuvJIhoU-GzP9xxQAApreM6PpKjD05b50G.sN9OsPGk8wL9JR0R](https://hamden.zoom.us/rec/share/CuMqpOae9MIixvVtjqe1KUtt2MI_BFIuvJIhoU-GzP9xxQAApreM6PpKjD05b50G.sN9OsPGk8wL9JR0R)

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A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. This was a hybrid meeting held both in person and electronically via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 P.M. by Council President Dominique Baez. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Sweet then read the Land Acknowledgement followed by a moment of silence.

Z= On Zoom    P= In Person

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

|                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Dominique Baez (P) | Jeron Alston (Z)     |
| Katie Kiely (P)    | Kristen Zaehring (P) |
| Justin Farmer (P)  | Abdul Osmanu (P)     |
| Laurie Sweet (P)   | Adrian Webber (Z)    |
| Ted Stevens (Z)    | Sarah Gallagher (Z)  |
| Cory O'Brien (P)   |                      |

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bob Anthony; Lesley DeNardis; Paula Irvin; Betty Wetmore

**PRESIDING:** Dominique Baez, President

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Sean Grace, Chief of Staff; Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Sue Gruen, Town Attorney

**PUBLIC INPUT SESSION:** There was 1 written comment which can be viewed here:  
<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/9280/11-08-2023>

(Written comments can be sent to [LCpublicinput@hamden.com](mailto:LCpublicinput@hamden.com))

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT:** None

**REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS:** None

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISONS:** None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Ms. Baez requested a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held October 23, 2023. Moved by Ms. Kiely, seconded by Ms. Sweet and approved unanimously.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Ms. Baez requested a motion for approval of the consent calendar as is. Moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Osmanu and approved with 1 opposed (Farmer)

1. **Refund of property and motor vehicle taxes collected prior to July 1, 2023 – (11) totaling \$2,089.35**
2. **Refund of property taxes collected between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 –Overpayments on current grand list - (1) totaling \$5,793.06**
3. **Refund of motor vehicle taxes collected between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 –Overpayments on current grand list – (32) totaling \$7,772.07**
4. **Appointment of Roderick A. Melvin to the Parks & Recreation Commission for a term to expire January 31, 2025 (D-3)**
5. **Bid waiver for the repair of the Vacall Vacuum Truck #55 (Public Works & ParksDept.) Bahr Sales, Inc.- \$19,715.50**
6. **Order authorizing interdepartmental transfer 2022-2023 FY Budget - \$1,275,651(End of year budget close out transfer – multiple departments)**
7. **Order authorizing the acceptance and expenditure of funds from the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families – Youth Services Base Grant(\$32,391)**
8. **Order authorizing the acceptance and expenditure of funds from the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families – Youth Services EnhancementGrant (\$18,467)**
9. **Order authorizing the acceptance and expenditure of funds from the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families – Youth Services SupplementalGrant (\$12,992)**
10. **Order authorizing intradepartmental capital transfer 2023-2024 Fiscal Year Budget (BOE non-recurring -BOE District Wide Tech IMP)**
11. **Order authorizing the Green Infrastructure Parking Improvement Project – EliWhitney Museum**

12. **Order authorizing the Town of Hamden to apply, and if awarded accept and expend funds from the Department of Energy and enter into any necessary agreements, FY23 Congressionally Directed Spending Project entitled “Town of Hamden Administration Building Energy Efficiency Improvements” pending award No. DE-EE0010720**
13. **Order authorizing the Town of Hamden to apply, and if awarded, accept and expend funds from the Department of Energy, Office of State and Community Energy Programs and enter into any necessary agreements (\$119,730)**
14. **Order approving and authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with NextRequest**

Ms. Baez moved a motion to join all items 1-14 from the consent calendar together for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Webber. Mr. Farmer then asked if she would take a friendly amendment to pull items 4 through 11. Ms. Baez said she would not accept that as a friendly. DISCUSSION: Mr. Farmer thanked all who serve on Boards and Commissions. Ms. Baez then took the vote on combining the items and it passed with 3 opposed (Farmer) (Sweet) (Osmanu) and 1 abstention (Kiely) Ms. Baez then took the vote on approval of all items as a whole and it passed with 3 opposed (Farmer) (Sweet) (Osmanu)

### **REGULAR AGENDA:**

1. Standing Rules amendment to committee names and corresponding departments, boards and commissions

-- Moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Ms. Baez. DISCUSSION: Ms. Baez explained how this would change page two (2) of their current standing rules. She went on to say how they're looking to consolidate committees to have less committees and she's hoping to strengthen the Chair/Vice-Chair relationship with boards, departments, and commissions. She said it is also an attempt to streamline meetings so that there are less committees per evening, and also be able to have better communication amongst all those departments.

(Ms. Baez then displayed her document on the screen):

<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/9301/Doms-motion-doc>

Ms. Baez said her motion is to submit this list but first she wants to add to the Human Services (Committee) Hamden Partnership for Young Children and Yale Behavioral Health; and she is taking off the Sub-Committee “Legislative Affairs Committee”.

New doc after changes mentioned above:

<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/9302/Doc2>

Mr. O'Brien said he thinks this is a fantastic idea. He said it empowers the chairs and vice-chairs to be more engaged with the administration and boards and commissions as opposed to just relying on Council leadership to be those gatekeepers. He strongly supports this.

Ms. Kiley said she echoes Mr. O'Brien. She said part of the work that they have is being willing to look at traditional structures that are in place and make sure that they're able to work better so that everyone has more access.

Mr. Farmer asked how this changes the dynamic between the Legislative Council and the administration and how it empowers boards and commissions. Ms. Baez explained how she's hoping having a stronger chair and vice-chair relationship, because folks won't be spread so thin, and that there will be a current member sitting in their current chair seat, this might enable those relationships to grow. She said when they started this past term one of the things that they talked about is being able to empower the chairs to discuss with the department heads, with chairs of boards and commissions, what kind of items they will be sending through to the administration and it is her desire that chair people would be able to deeply understand what their departments, boards and commissions need and what they're looking to get out of the Mayor's office, and that we could also usher and edit and be a voice within that thinking process.

There was then discussion on Boards and Commission consolidating. Ms. Baez stated that is not in their rules and is up to the administration.

Mr. Farmer asked who is contact? Ms. Kiely stated she thinks it would make sense if they list the contacts for boards and commissions, and different department heads.

Mr. Osmanu asked for clarity that they were just voting on the specific amendments and not the whole thing. Ms. Baez said yes, it is her list that is the motion.

Ms. Sweet said she knows they've talked about this before, but she just wants to put a pin in all the different environmental committees. She said she had some great conversations at the polls yesterday, with some ways to structure it, and sort of a re- envision. One person thought that thinking about it as sustainable CT might be an interesting way. She's also been asked to kind of find a way to convene some of, especially the environmental committees, that she's been working with over the years to hear from them and see what everybody's up to. She understands this is a separate process but would love for them to take a look at that and for it to be a priority.

Ms. Baez called for the vote on the new list of committees and their corresponding boards, commissions, and departments and it passed with 1 opposed (Farmer) and 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

After some confusing on whether or not the motion included Ms. Baez's changes to the document on the floor she said she takes everything back.

Ms. Baez then made a motion to add Hamden Partnership for Young Children and Yale Behavioral Health. The motion was seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved with 2 abstentions (Farmer) (Zaehringer)

As Ms. Baez started to call for the vote on the document as amended Mr. Osmanu stated he also had an amendment. He said he would like to take the Arts Council & Town Center Park, Parks & Recreation Commission, Arts, Recreation & Culture Dept.,

Public Schools and Board of Education out from under Public Works & Education Committee and move them into a new committee called “Education, Recreation and Culture Committee”. Ms. Baez announced he had a second by Mr. Farmer.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Osmanu said he’s excited to see the consolidation of committees and its intent of making sure that Council members and Chairs have the opportunity to be a little bit more empowered but this is done in the spirit of taking a look those proposed committees where it seems pretty hefty and deals with a great variation of different department heads and it seems a bit much to ask of a committee chair if we're going to ask them to be super involved, but then dealing with perhaps 3 or 4 different department heads. He thinks the rest of them really being streamlined and making sense, but this probably defeats the purpose a little bit.

Mr. Stevens said he appreciates the attempt here and agrees with the principal and theory but the reason he’ll vote against it is right now it works out very nicely with 6 committees and it won’t with 7 for everyone to be on the same number of committees.

Ms. Kiely said she worries that taking out those tied to one director won’t get the same eye when we talk about the opportunities that exist for youth in our schools, within our Public Works department, within our parks department, and vice versa, just even in the upkeep of our buildings that you know there are fields and things like that in our school buildings, and they do overlap. For those reasons she thinks it makes sense to keep these under Public Works.

Mr. Farmer said he appreciates this motion made and thinks it adds clarity.

Ms. Sweet said she totally appreciates efficiency but is worried she’s losing environment and doesn’t want to get caught up in making sure committees have the right numbers. She’s in favor of maybe having Recreation, Culture and Education together but is afraid we're going to lose the focus of this committee. She said she will support Mr. Osmanu’s changes.

Ms. Gallagher said she worries that this has a real range of focus in departments and a lot of different issues to be focused on in one committee. She wants a balance of consolidation but supports the motion.

Mr. O’Brien expressed his concern with separating it out saying the ones to be separated out won’t have much to do once separated. He said he won’t support this, it’ll be a committee that meets infrequently.

Ms. Kiely again stated she is in favor of leaving it the way it is.

Ms. Zaehring said she supports the amendment and thinks it makes sense to separate them out.

Mr. Osmanu said he looks forward to seeing how these committees work.

Ms. Baez moved a motion to table this until November 20<sup>th</sup>. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kiely and approved with 2 opposed (Zaehring) (Gallagher) and 2 abstentions (Farmer) (Osmanu)

2. Appointment of Shaquilla L. McMillan to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a term to expire January 31, 2026 (U-2) - **Need to amend expiration date to January 31, 2024**

-- Moved by Ms. Kiely, seconded by Ms. Baez and approved with 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

3. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden to make application and to accept and expend funds from the State of Connecticut, Department of Economic and Community Development Community Investment Fund 2030 – Affordable Housing Project 2980 State Street

-- Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Kiely. DISCUSSION: Mr. Grace explained this is another application for the next round of funds to help with the State Street development and how each round is different and how our best chance of being successful is to resubmit.

A vote was taken and the item passed with 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

4. Order approving Education Partnership Agreement and authorizing the Mayor to sign agreement with Albertus Magnus College

-- Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Baez. DISCUSSION: Mr. Grace thanked Albertus Magnus for their generosity in offering this discount to Town employees.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

Ms. Baez said she's pulling numbers 5 and 6. During committee they talked about having general orders provided and that has not happened.

5. Order to accept a donation from Hometown Foundation, Inc. to the Hamden Police Department K-9 Unit and authorization to enter into an Indemnification Agreement with the Town of East Hartford

**THIS ITEM WAS PULLED**

6. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden on behalf of the Police Department to accept and expend a donation from Anna Mulvey

**THIS ITEM WAS PULLED**

### **Information Items:**

Mr. Eatman explained the 3 contractual items below and said after this there is \$526,668 remaining in the account.

1. Accrued benefits – Firefighter EMT Grade AIII – Fire Dept. - \$61,764.88
2. Accrued benefits – Assistant Director – Public Works & Parks Dept. - \$53,547.59
3. Accrued benefits – Transfer Station Gate Attendant – Public Works & Parks Dept. - \$26,884.03

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta  
Acting Clerk of the Council