

**TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT**  
**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**November 2, 2020**

A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Monday, November 2, 2020. This meeting was held electronically, via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 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	Adrian Webber
Valerie Horsley	Berita Rowe-Lewis
Harry Gagliardi	Justin Farmer
Betty Wetmore	Marjorie Bonadies
Dominique Baez	Athena Gary
Kathleen Schomaker	Austin Cesare

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jody Clouse

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Rick Galarza, Deputy Finance Director; Walter Morton, Director of Town and BOE Leg. Affairs; John Sullivan, Acting Chief of Police

**PRESIDING:** Mick McGarry, President

**PUBLIC INPUT SESSION:** Recess from 7:09pm to 7:19pm for reading public comments submitted

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT:** Mr. McGarry said he wanted to let everyone know that the only reason the UI Agreement was on tonight's agenda was because it was postponed from a previous meeting to tonight's date and that they weren't going to take action on it tonight other than postponing it again to a future date. He then reminded everyone that the following day was Election Day and to get out and vote. He also reminded everyone that because of Election Day the Fiscal Stability Committee would be meeting on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup>.

**REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS:** Updates were given on the Animal Shelter and the Capital Budget. (Both updates can be found at the end of the minutes)

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISONS:** None

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Mr. McGarry requested a motion to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2020 meeting. Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Horsley and approved unanimously.

**REGULAR AGENDA:** Mr. McGarry took a vote on suspending their rules for tonight's agenda and it was approved with 1 opposed (Farmer)

**1. Order authorizing the Town of Hamden on behalf of the Hamden Public Library to accept and expend \$64,713 in funds from the State of Connecticut's Coronavirus Relief Funds**

-- Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Ms. Baez. DISCUSSION: Mr. Morton gave a brief explanation of this item. Mr. Farmer thanked the State and the taxpayers but more the Library for doing a phenomenal job serving people throughout COVID. A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

**2. Order authorizing the Hamden Police Department to accept and expend funds from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation**

-- Moved by Ms. Wetmore, seconded by Ms. Schomaker. DISCUSSION: Chief Sullivan explained this item saying there are two waves, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. He also said this is 100% grant money and has no impact on the budget.

Mr. McGarry asked if the Town was obligated to match and the Chief answered no.

Mr. Farmer asked how this is different from the grant that they approved a couple of weeks ago. Chief Sullivan said this one is for seatbelt enforcement and the other one was for hand held devices/cell phone violations.

Ms. Baez asked if this was an annual fund. Chief Sullivan said they've been participating in this grant over the past few years. Ms. Baez then asked about the dates for using these funds. Chief Sullivan said the Fall cycle is November 26<sup>th</sup> through December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 and the Spring cycle is May 17<sup>th</sup> through June 6<sup>th</sup> 2021. He said if we continue into the (COVID) spike that we're in right now they would probably wait until the Spring. Ms. Baez asked if there would be a public notice or press release that accompanies this. Chief Sullivan said they could that.

Mr. Macdowall asked if they were taking into consideration COVID and making sure they're keeping people safely distanced. He said it seems to him as though this could put people in a situation where they are in close proximity with others and given that police officers already interact with the public this seems that it might perpetuate that. He said it's certainly a program worth doing but under the circumstances he's concerned that we should be looking to keep people as socially distanced as possible. Chief Sullivan said they probably will not do the Fall session because of the spike that we're having right now and they'll reassess in the Spring and if there's any (unintelligible) to the officers or the public they will suspend it. Mr. Macdowall said if you aren't using the funds in the Fall can those funds be used in the Spring for more hours? Chief Sullivan said it's his understanding that the entire amount can be used in the Spring. Mr. Macdowall said he knows this is clear in the back-up documentation but just to reiterate this is no cost to the Town and no implications on overtime or any other account that the Town is responsible for funding. Chief Sullivan said there is absolutely no impact on our operating budget.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

**3. Order authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with United Illuminating Company Street Light Conversion Project**

-- Moved by Ms. Horsley, seconded by Ms. Rowe-Lewis and Ms. Schomaker. DISCUSSION: Mr. Morton explained the administration is moving forward with an RFP to find a vendor and the goal is to

get it out by the end of November. He then asked if this could be postponed again until the audit is done.

There was some discussion on when to postpone this until. Mr. Gagliardi said if you table it you can bring it up anytime.

After some more discussion on a date to postpone this until **Ms. Schomaker moved a motion to postpone this item until their February 16<sup>th</sup> 2021 meeting, seconded by Mr. Farmer.** DISCUSSION: Ms. Baez mentioned that they received a petition and she wants to be sure we are forwarding on that language for the agreement.

Ms. Bonadies asked if there was a time crunch for them to be on the Spring schedule. Ms. Schomaker said she will check back with UI about that. She said the last time they spoke about this they were very concerned with this and she'll see if she can get an update.

There being no further business Mr. McGarry requested a motion to adjourn. Moved by Mr. Farmer, seconded by Mr. Macdowall and the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta  
Clerk of the Council

**Report of Boards and Departments**  
**Legislative Council Meeting**  
**November 2, 2020**  
**Animal Shelter Update**

Mr. Morton provided an update on the status of the plans for Hamden Animal Shelter. Mr. McGarry asked Mr. Morton to provide an update on the status of plans for the Animal Shelter with regard to funding and time frame. Mr. Morton said they have been working with the Assessor's office to obtain a list of Town properties in order to review with the Engineering Department which of these properties might be viable for an Animal Shelter and would be feasible with the fixed dollar amount the town has. Mr. McGarry said that the Public Input had questions about funding and asked Mr. Morton to address that further. Mr. Morton said there is money in a capital account which he believes is \$400,000. He indicated it is too early to name an exact figure of how much will actually be spent.

Mr. Farmer asked what the timeline is for the completion of this project. Mr. Morton answered that there is no date and time available yet and that Mr. Donnelly has prioritized this and is speaking with Ms. Bonadies about this project and will be providing updates. Mr. Farmer asked about contractors. Mr. Morton said that there is no contractor involved and that the Town is not yet at the point for an RFP. Mr. Farmer asked if all information on this project could be forwarded to the Legislative Council for review and that he wants to make sure all funds which will be used are clearly earmarked for this.

Ms. Bonadies said that they have a lengthy list of Town properties. She said Chief Sullivan has negotiated a one year agreement to shelter our animals in North Haven and that there is approximately a one year projection on the time frame for completion of this project. She said there is \$33,500 in the Animal Shelter Gift Fund donated by Hamden residents.

Mr. Macdowall asked Mr. Morton who the point person is on this project and stated he would like to have a Q and A on this project. He said three concerns are cost, location and selection of the contractor. He said that he is concerned about the Town's bond rating and asked Mr. Morton what implications or roadblocks the bond rating could create for the completion of this project. Mr. Morton confirmed that the point person is Mr. Donnelly. Mr. Morton said there is money already earmarked for this project and so, the bond rating should not affect the project.

Mr. McGarry suggested that Mr. Goodwin be asked to prepare a presentation on what the expected process of this project would be.

Mr. Farmer asked Mr. Morton if the Legislative Council can expect to have Mr. Donnelly's information by the next Council meeting. Mr. Morton said he will ask Mr. Donnelly to relay whatever documentation he has to the Legislative Council.

Mr. Farmer asked Chief Sullivan about the current housing of animals. Chief Sullivan explained that the Town currently has an MOU with North Haven to house our animals for one year. He said the number of animals varies from week to week and right now the agreement is working well.

## **Mayor Leng Summary of Capital Budget**

### **Presentation to Legislative Council**

**November 2, 2020**

Mayor Leng began by explaining that the information he would be presenting involves capital Plans, capital projects, capital budgets, capital project progress reports, capital bond ordinances, capital funds available and capital expenditure levels. He said he would be reviewing a very detailed set of excel sheets which the administration had provided to the Fiscal Stability Committee on October 5, 2020 with information on capital projects and their funding availability. He said this information is complex and all aspects are intertwined and require a case by case analysis. The Mayor said this information is preliminary and is being reviewed by the Town's bond counsel and financial advisor. He said the basic concept is to reduce the amount borrowed, reallocate funds and maximize dollars. He said he will be providing a written version of this to the Legislative Council. The Mayor said, also included in this packet are 2 six year plans. One is the original which was submitted with the budget and one is a new updated 6 year plan which attempts to reduce the number of projects and costs.

Mayor Leng explained the first four pages are called the "All Departments" and contain the most current information on existing project funds. He emphasized that this information is fluid and is constantly changing and updating. He said the information on these four pages is sorted by ordinance and describes the project title, what is approved, what has been completed, what is expected to be expended and what is encumbered.

Next, Mayor Leng explained the "Department Totals Page" which contains a balance column from each of the segmented years shown in the previous four pages, to further explain where funds are allocated by departments, and realigns them with balances available, not the original program cost which looks falsely larger.

Next, the Mayor went to pages 6 to 16 which contain special projects approved by specific departments and which give an account of project status by the Department Head and includes updated notes by Department Head on the right side of the page. These pages are color coded and high- lighted to illustrate which projects are completed and potential proposed reallocation funds.

Here, the Mayor said he wished to remind the Council that the Board of Education just completed a lengthy and detailed project of reapproving their six year plan which has significantly reduced capital requests while keeping the core ideas of the 3-R Plan and it is included in this packet.

Mayor Leng said the next part of the package is the "Potential Project Close out Page" which is 12 pages long. It is a preliminary series of potential accounts containing projects which could be considered for closing. That money would then go to the general fund or to paying down interest or existing principal. He said he is seeking input from the Fiscal Stability Committee to recommend projects to be removed or closed or prioritized. He also welcomes input from the Legislative Council. He said he hopes a consensus on these matters can be achieved early in the process because that would make it less expensive in the future due to many legal procedures which must be followed to make these changes.

Mayor Leng said the next pages contain potential preliminary reallocation of capital funds. If reallocated, these funds can go to either replenish an existing capital project or fund an entirely new project that is approved in the six year plan. The goal is to reduce amount borrowed reducing annual costs, or maintain costs while still accomplishing projects. At this point he said he wished to point out that over the past 4 to 5 years, our borrowing has been less than earlier in the decade. He said it is 45% less.

Next is the 6 Year Plan, the original one and the new one. The Mayor said the new 6 Year Plan is leaner than the original and he wishes to point out that it contains shaded and highlighted areas where the initially prioritized reallocations will appear for the review of the Legislative Council. He pointed out that every single change in the plan will need to be finalized and formalized after being deemed appropriate by the bond counsel and financial advisors, and will require action by the Legislative Council. A series of action items will be required: approval of a new reduced and updated 6 Year Plan, approval of fund reallocation to newly and more highly prioritized projects, action recommending close out of certain projects and close out of projects no longer deemed mission critical, action pertaining to new bonding and bond ordinances, action on amended bond ordinances case by case according to planned years.

Mayor Leng said he and Attorney Panico will be happy to meet and answer any questions after Attorney Panico and Mr. Bernabe have completed their review of the information. At this point, Mr. McGarry asked to clarify the next steps. Mayor Leng explained that this exact same document has been given to Attorney Panico and Mr. Bernabe and they are going through it line by line and tying it to each of the ordinances and reviewing the notes to determine which projects can or should be closed out, reallocated or pay down principal or interest, all of which will require different actions.