

# HAMDEN TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION

*Minutes of the meeting of*

*March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010*

**Attending:** E. Ariori, W. Folsom, U.M. Ford, S. Glenn, L. Salay, S. Seaforth, C. Sette, W. Spalter

**Call to Order** – the meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairman Sette, with Mr. Seaforth, Mr. Ariori and Ms. Ford arriving at 7:10 p.m.

**Approval of minutes** – Chairman Sette entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Chairman Sette noted the following corrections. Call to Order Chairman Settee should be *Chairman Sette*. Old Business, first sentence second line should be “*Chairman Sette met with Prof. Halawi, first with Mr. Spalter on the phone then later with the students*”. Under Department Activity the next to the last sentence the word contact should be “*contacting*”, and under New Business he first line Ms. Glenn should be “*Ms. Ford*” and the next to the last sentence Ms. Ford should be *Ms. Glenn*” and the last sentence the word weather should be “*whether*”. Mr. Salay motioned to accept the minutes with the corrections, seconded by Ms. Glenn. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

## **Old Business**

- a. Discussion on the Spring project and meeting with Quinnipiac students – Chairman Sette advised the Commission members that the project is not progressing as hoped. The Charter has not been received. Chairman Sette has received various phone calls and emails and has spent a substantial amount of time dealing with the students, the professor and the BOE. Chairman Sette was asked to go to the class this evening but due to this meeting he was not able to attend and asked Mr. Richards if he could go to meet with the faculty and students to answer questions and provide some direction regarding the project but at this time Chairman Sette is not sure if Mr. Richards was able to go. Chairman Sette also invited Mr. Callahan from the BOE to go if he could. Chairman Sette also informed the Commission that Mr. Callahan from the BOE informed him that without permission from the BOE he can’t talk to the students. Chairman Sette was advised by Mr. Callahan that he was about to meet with the Operations Committee and the outcome is that Mr. Callahan can talk with the students, but it is a limited condition, they want a report and see something in their hands for the April 6<sup>th</sup> BOE meeting. Mr. Seaforth inquired if Chairman Sette has talked with any of the students and he stated that he has not, he did respond to one student’s email but has been speaking with the faculty member. The subject of surveys was raised and Mr. Spalter noted that surveys are only good if you are surveying a large number of people and you aggregate the results of the survey and come to some conclusion. Surveys are for numbers, when working with one person the survey is of no use. Mr. Spalter stated that if Chairman Sette can get that across to the students and make them understand how rude more or less the survey approach is and how ineffective it will be if and when they become consultants. Chairman Sette did make that point to them after receiving the first email and he emailed the professor and made a follow up phone call. Mr. Folsom did say that the draft of the

statement was provided to the students which clearly states what is needed and not to reinvent the wheel. Chairman Sette noted that the students this semester are not as experienced as past groups and this may be a part of the confusion coming from them. Mr. Ariori noted that without that experience and with the faculty member being new to the school and the area this is also a concern. Mr. Spalter stated that the Charter needs to be in place in order to begin the project. The Charter defines the project, even though Chairman Sette has explained the basis and gave the students some procedural paths he believes the students aren't clear based on the emails he has received from them. Ms. Glenn inquired "what if the students don't come through will this project be cancelled," Mr. Sette stated no that what they get is what they get. Chairman Sette did note that the BOE has their own concerns and just wants to be sure they understand the program.

### **Department Activity**

- a. Update from Dave Richards on the status of IT – Mr. Richards was not present for the meeting but did speak with Chairman Sette. They discussed the project with some discussion about town technology. Chairman Sette asked Mr. Richards if he could please provide a monthly report either verbally or a quick email with what is going on in his department if he can't make the meetings. Mr. Richards did advise Chairman Sette that the town is going with Exchange '10. An RFP went out and it is still being reviewed. A brief discussion ensued regarding Grants. Mr. Ariori has done some searching and Ms. Ford and Mr. Seaforth did note grant writing is involved. The town did have a grant writer but no longer does so departments are on their own. The police department has someone who does this and they have been awarded a few generous grants over the last few years.

### **New Business**

- a. Discuss ideas – Ms. Glenn provided a draft of ideas for projects as follows. Ms. Glenn advised the Commission members that the ideas were a combination of what was discussed at the February meeting, conversations with Mr. Spalter and Ms. Ford
  1. Educate the Town of Hamden employees on Open Office technology
  2. Review Technology Grants
  3. Inform the town of Hamden on technological assets and their availability
  4. Create a portfolio which includes all existing Technology within the town of Hamden

Chairman Sette reviewed the ideas and a discussion ensued regarding how to do some of these and how they would be handled. Ms. Glenn wasn't sure who brought up the Open Office at the last meeting but training has been an issue for some time. At previous meetings Mr. Richards stated that coordinating training and the cost of training and that the town employees can't be away from their department for a one or two day time period. Ms. Glenn mentioned possibly doing a survey of the employees asking what kind of technology they are familiar with, what they would like to see in the town. An across the board training was also mentioned but again, the cost and time is a

factor. Item number 3, a technology fair, what would it be, to providing an ability for the public to see technologies and ask questions and learn about technologies or is it for the community to learn about the technologies available in the town, show what the town does with technology, can it be all of these? Possibly approaching the Chamber and be part of their annual fair to provide the town with information regarding what the town is doing to advance technology for the residents. It appears the town has recently given out a survey to the employees but would it be possible for the Commission to get any of the information pertaining to technology. The Commission without appearing to assume they would be provided any of the information from the survey would be interested in any technology questions and the responses. It would be beneficial to the employees to get a broader understanding of training, how it would benefit them in their job and make the town more efficient. Technology grants need to be researched. Mr. Salay mentioned Sisco offers grants and NSF grants for all kinds of education which would benefit the BOE, and stimulus money both Federal and money given to the states for various types of technology but these should be researched. There has to be some money to apply for. Mr. Seaforth will email everyone a list of various monies available that can be researched. Mr. Ariori did find a grant writing site but it wasn't free. Grant writing is involved, some of the Commissioner's have done this but it would have to be a collective effort, searching, finding, writing and submission. Mr. Spalter discussed giving the town a report card regarding the technology that it has employed, compare what the Commission has done from a technological perspective with what other towns with similar resources and similar populations have done, but focus it on ten key areas or maybe only five key areas. This could give the Commission an opportunity to congratulate the town and its IT staff for being in the forefront of implementation of technology to make the town run more efficiently and advise the town of deficiencies that are easily correctable. Analyze the town from a departmental perspective, how are the various departments using technology and compare that to model towns that were identified and present a grade based on this information with recommendations based on the information. The second idea from Mr. Spalter is creating a test bed, sort of a sand box that is managed by IT outside of departments where individual departmental software, new stuff, stuff that should be marketed to the various departments with demonstrations to the department heads and then let the department heads evaluate the information in a comparable setting that is within the town. This means having the department heads agreeing to this and letting the Commission know what direction they want their departments to go in and what software do they feel would be useful, bring in the vendors to market it to the department heads, lend a copy to IT for hands on exercise. Another idea from the prior Mayor is free wireless internet zone and maybe several of them in the downtown business area. Mr. Ariori inquired if we had a zone and yes we do at the Gazebo at Meadowbrook and Chairman Sette is presently on it here at the meeting on his computer. Chairman Sette talked about seeking input from the Community. One possible way is to enclose a double sided insert in either tax bills or sent home with students from the schools and sent to businesses around town to put out for the public to take. These inserts can ask basic questions giving the public the opportunity to go to the web site and respond to the

questions or even give input in a notes section on the web site. Of course a budget would have to be found to print the insert. The ideas discussion will continue at the next meeting.

**Adjournment**

At 8:30 p.m. Mr. Ariori motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Seaforth. *The motion carried unanimously.*

*The next regular meeting will be Thursday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Government Center.*

Recorded by,

Catherine E. Gempka  
Commission Clerk