

**TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT**  
**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**FY 2022-2023 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS**  
**April 14, 2022**

**\*To view the recording, please click the following link and observe the instructions when/if prompted:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/Rw9h7blwnpJPSE1PqJD7DLVVRc7bjkTIYJgJf0wc2rOoWKKkbcO8dSOCWT2cixT1qTCb6U3v7rPxJJFC.KMXQcz4gUng6-qMM?continueMode=true>

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Legislative Council budget deliberations were held on Thursday, April 14, 2022, electronically, via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called out of recess at 6:08 P.M. by Council President Dominique Baez. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the reading of the Land Recognition.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dominique Baez	Cory O'Brien
Justin Farmer	Sarah Gallagher
Katie Kiely	Betty Wetmore
Abdul Osmanu	Laurie Sweet
Adrian Webber	Lesley DeNardis
Kristen Zaehringer	Marjorie Bonadies
Jeron Alston	Paula Irvin (after roll call)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ted Stevens

**PRESIDING:** Dominique Baez, President

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Sean Grace, Chief of Staff; Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Rick Galarza, Deputy Finance Director; Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; PW&P Asst. Director Mike Siciliano and Supervisor, Joe Colello

Mr. Siciliano and Mr. Colello went over what the department does and what each supervisor is responsible for.

Ms. Wetmore asked if there are any outside vendors for mowing, plowing or anything. Mr. Siciliano said no. Ms. Wetmore asked if there were vacancies or were they full. Mr. Siciliano said they were full.

There was some discussion on recycling totes.

Ms. Bonadies asked why the number of 1.5 for Tipping Fees. Mr. Siciliano said they haven't been billed for March yet and there might be a little extra there and that's what they used for totes. After more discussion on recycling Ms. Bonadies asked if they'd be comfortable lowering the Tipping Fees line. Mr. Eatman said he does not and thinks they should keep it at the department request and take a conservative approach that the budget was built with and that they get totes out of here. Ms. Bonadies stated she thinks totes should have a line of its own.

There was some discussion on bulk pickup. There was also discussion on All American's contract being up next year with Mr. Siciliano saying they'll have to go out to bid and that All American already said the difference would be off the charts.

Ms. Bonadies said she thinks the scale fees will produce the \$200,000 revenue. Mr. Colello said about a quarter million is what they figured a few years back and now they're thinking more than that. There was some discussion on composting as well as discussion about getting the scale online with Mr. Colello said they needed to come up with a fee schedule that suits everyone.

Mr. Alston stated the ask for waste removal is 2.6 and the Mayor gave 2.3 and then asked why the reduction? Mr. Grace said there's now a market for recycling that wasn't there before. Mr. Alston asked for flexibility and Mr. Grace said he'd get back to them. Mr. Alston asked someone to explain about the pre-covid funding. Mr. Grace said they hope to offer summer employment to people who need work. Mr. Siciliano said summer camps are coming back this year and that's what those funds are for.

There was discussion on storm cleanup.

There was discussion on the temp. wages line with Mr. Siciliano saying this is mostly for youth hiring and for recreational camp counselors and workers. Mr. Farmer said he hopes we reach out to the community members in southern Hamden to serve our community. Mr. Farmer asked how much we pay per ton to have waste removed. Mr. Siciliano said about \$95 a ton and 10,500 tons year to date.

There was discussion on Community Gardens. Mr. Farmer asked why the revenue line was \$0. Mr. Grace said he thinks they are plot fees and would find out. Ms. Baez said the Miller garden has fees and the Keefe one doesn't. Mr. Farmer saying he'd like to see more community gardens in place.

Mr. Farmer asked if the lubricant line had enough money. Mr. Grace explained the previous 2 years and Mr. Siciliano said he agrees that they can do with what the Mayor gave. Mr. Farmer asked for a breakdown of Temp. Wages. Mr. Siciliano said he'd put something together.

Mr. Alston stated for Bulk Pickup he prefers there were 2 passes. There was then some discussion on a plan for whatever is left over after one pass.

Ms. Irvin asked about efficiencies and where he might see some. Mr. Siciliano said they've done that giving an example of having 49 drivers previously down to 36 and 17 routes down to 13. He said they also put computer sanders in the trucks years back, another investment that saved a lot of money.

There was some discussion on potholes and response time. There was also some discussion on

condo fees and Mr. Grace said they were comfortable with the number.

Ms. Sweet asked if the \$38,000 in 13076-0590 is for tree planting. Mr. Siciliano said it's for the on-call arborist fees. Ms. Sweet asked if all of money in 13076-0695 was for backlog of trees. Mr. Siciliano said yes, that's correct and that the line is dedicated for trees. Ms. Sweet asked if there was any tree planting in line 13081-0683 (Anthony Greene Memorial Fund). Mr. Colello said that line was created to bring more minorities to Public Works and see if they'd be interested in a career there.

Ms. Gallagher asked about regionally or partnership anything with neighboring Towns. Mr. Siciliano said there are some benefits to that but more negatives giving an example such as when it comes to shared equipment who's responsible for maintenance and/or replacing it, etc.

There was then some discussion on what they buy off of State contract, discussion on a regional garage, discussion on the amount of workers at the Transfer Station and who would operate the scale, more discussion on bulk pick-up, and discussion on the fee schedule.

Ms. Baez asked about putting a bid out for asphalt. Mr. Siciliano said he doesn't think it would be any lower, he knows the prices and this is a huge savings. Ms. Baez asked about take put recyclables. Ms. Gruen said if you mean a polystyrene ban the Town had one and repealed it and now the new State Statute says we can't do it.

Ms. Baez asked about composting in schools. Mr. Grace mentioned the Pilot Program and there was discussion on this.

After a discussion on garbage and recycling totes Ms. Baez asked if All American can pay for replacement totes. Mr. Colello said no, the life expectancy is up on them. He said there are over 300 people on the waiting list needing totes. Ms. Baez asked finance for a cost breakdown of totes.

There was some discussion on grant writing for compost and solar. Ms. Baez asked if there was any opportunity in Town to put solar panels. Mr. Colello said he could take a look and make a list. There was then some discussion on leaf pick-up.

**Ms. Baez moved a motion** to open up expenses, seconded by Mr. Farmer.

**Ms. Baez then moved a motion** to reduce tipping fees by \$150,000, seconded by Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Farmer asked what about \$140,000 and transferring \$10,000 to education. Ms. Baez said she agrees with that but wants to keep them separate. Ms. Zaehring stated they need to be aware of inflation at a 40 year high. There was then some discussion on price increases next year for this. Ms. Wetmore said she doesn't want to underfund this and thinks it should stay where it is as past experiences had us pay more so she'll be voting no. After a lengthy discussion on this Ms. Kylie said she agrees with Ms. Wetmore and it's crucial they don't end in a deficit and she'd like to see a healthy balance.

A vote was taken and the motion passed with 2 opposed (Wetmore) (Kiely)

**Mr. Farmer moved a motion** to add a line funded at \$10,000 for the sole purpose of outreach and public education in bringing down our tipping fees. The motion was seconded by Mr. Osmanu. There was some discussion on this program as well as the Pilot Program. Ms. Bonadies said she won't support it until they get more information. Mr. Alston asked if there was

another line in here they could use for this. Mr. Grace said they could find a way to make it happen within the lines. Ms. Wetmore said she'll also vote against this and also wants to wait for the Pilot Program info. Mr. Farmer stated if they're serious about this it's not something just our kids can do, it involves every single person in Town. Ms. Baez asked if he would accept a friendly to \$5,000. Mr. Farmer and Mr. Osmanu both accepted the friendly of \$5,000.

A roll call vote was taken and the item passed with 7 in favor (Alston) (Farmer) (Kiely) (Osmanu) (Sweet) (Webber) (Baez) – 5 opposed (Bonadies) (DeNardis) (Gallagher) (Wetmore) (Zaehringer) and 3 absent (Irvin) (O'Brien) (Stevens)

**Ms. Baez moved a motion** to reduce 13001-0563 Waste Removal Contracts by \$250,000, seconded by Mr. Alston and approved with 2 abstentions (Wetmore) (Kylie)

**Ms. Kylie moved a motion** to reduce 13001-0553 Waste Removal Condos to \$0, seconded by Mr. Osmanu. Mr. Farmer in explaining this talked about equity to homeowners and stated he is concerned with cutting this.

After some discussion on this Ms. Baez said she got word that there's more history on this they'll be getting and thinks they should wait. She then announced it was **tabled**.

There was then discussion on the Temp Services increase as well as the Overtime increase. After a little discussion on these lines Ms. Baez asked to scope out spots for community gardens.

Ms. Baez announced their next meeting would be an Executive Session on Tuesday with labor counsel to talk about contracts.

There being no further business Ms. Baez recessed the meeting at 9:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta  
Clerk of the Council