

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

**July 12, 2022**

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

[https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/WGO55DFUfRrQxjmo7zu4MgKB6XWUCvrN6vLmcb7FI0g7TNuGRIVUnxFKc0WQcIxn0tX3Myr8t3LAOMBg.Oc4rdACeeU2bbrb?continueMode=true&\\_xzm\\_rtaid=N7BoxoWERLqI5zOHISQfpw.1657741181257.36e31200fdca6cc6a922ab38e9daa900&\\_xzm\\_rhtaid=497](https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/play/WGO55DFUfRrQxjmo7zu4MgKB6XWUCvrN6vLmcb7FI0g7TNuGRIVUnxFKc0WQcIxn0tX3Myr8t3LAOMBg.Oc4rdACeeU2bbrb?continueMode=true&_xzm_rtaid=N7BoxoWERLqI5zOHISQfpw.1657741181257.36e31200fdca6cc6a922ab38e9daa900&_xzm_rhtaid=497)

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A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022. This meeting was held electronically, via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called out of recess at 6:20 P.M. by Council President Dominique Baez.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dominique Baez	Laurie Sweet
Cory O'Brien	Sarah Gallagher
Katie Kiely	Adrian Webber
Abdul Osmanu	Kristen Zaehringer
Justin Farmer	Jeron Alston (approx.. 7:20pm)
Ted Stevens	Paula Irvin (approx.. 8:00pm)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Marjorie Bonadies; Lesley DeNardis; Betty Wetmore

**PRESIDING:** Dominique Baez, President

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; Steve Mednick, Counsel; CRC Member Patricia C. Vener Saavedra

**PUBLIC INPUT SESSION:** There was 1 speaker and 2 written comments submitted which can be read here: <https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/6314/07-12-2022>

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

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

**1. Charter Revision Workshop**

**Chapter VII:**

Ms. Baez stated the other night for the Police Commission they talked about language in regard to the power to appoint, promote and remove personnel, and she thinks that should pertain to fire as well.

Ms. Zaehring said her question would be does the CBA allow that? Ms. Baez said that is the burning question and she doesn't know if there's an answer or if they need more time. Mr. Farmer mentioned parody in language of police and fire as they do similar things. He said he wanted to get a better understanding of things for public documents if they were to have a similar clause that we have for policing files. He said he'd come back with his things and pass it on to the Council President and see where she wants to go from there. Mr. Mednick said he'd be happy to take a look at them.

Mr. Mednick then went through the changes for the rest of Chapter VII. He said there were virtually no changes made in the Fire Commission but the Town Attorney did raise an issue and wanted to make sure that we were using language in subsection E.3.C rather than dealing with the rule of three having more generalized language regarding how the lists are developed by the Civil Service Commission. After some more discussion Ms. Baez asked him to read the language so they could vote on it. Mr. Mednick said we're going to replace subsection 3 C (i) with the following language "said power to promote personnel shall be exercised by majority vote of the Commission present and voting in accordance with the certification rule that the selection of candidates on any applicable eligibility list that has promulgated under civil service rules and regulations of the Commission and consistent with law and the provisions of any applicable collective bargaining agreement." **Ms. Baez moved a motion** to send this back to the CRC to tweak and finalize that language in section 3.C (i). The motion was seconded by Mr. Webber and approved with 1 abstention (Farmer)

**Ms. Baez moved a motion** to add to 3.C (iii) with regard to the power to appoint, promote and remove personnel, the fire chief "**and/or the mayor**" shall provide a recommendation to said commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Webber. DISCUSSION: Ms. Zaehring said she's opposed to this just as in the police section. Ms. Gallagher also expressed concern saying it's the Chief's role and she doesn't agree with including this. Ms. Kiely said she thinks it's essential that the Mayor has a say in all commissions. Mr. O'Brien said he would support sending this back to the CRC for legal review. Ms. Zaehring said she has a hard time because CBA set forth procedures for this and her understanding from Attorney Gruen and Attorney Mednick is that CBA's are binding and take precedence so for that reason she's opposed to the language. Ms. Baez called for a vote to send this to the CRC for more research and it passed with 2 opposed (Gallagher) (Zaehring)

There was then some discussion on what documents from the fire department are publically available and what Mr. Farmer thinks should be available. Ms. Gruen said she doesn't think it's a charter issue and if code enforcement violations change you have to be very careful to remove that information and any mandates made would have to be maintained very carefully. She said she would talk to the Fire Marshall tomorrow.

Mr. Mednick went over the rest of Chapter VII. He said the Library Board went from 5 members to 9 members and is created the same way as the Finance and Police Commissions. He said they also added a requirement to adhere to best practices and standards. There was some discussion on terms. Ms. Zaehring asked about the new requirement for training and asked if we're confident that folks will be able to get this type of training and wonders how these categories came about. Mr. Mednick said right from the Library Director and the Library Board saying these are the concepts that were proposed to them.

Ms. Baez said she also wanted to talk about training in this section. Adherence to best practices and standards we mentioned when to get the training for the Commissioners, but it does not say the Town shall as in other sections to support or pay for the training in case they need it, but in other places says show support and fund mandatory training and this training is also mandatory so she thinks that they should also write in there that the Town shall support that training. Mr. Mednick said that was a good catch. Ms. Baez stated there was no need to vote as it was the intention that it would all be the same. Mr. Mednick said he'd provide the language. There was then some discussion on when this training gets done.

For Inland Wetlands Commission Mr. Mednick said they changed from 11 members to 9 members but added three (3) alternates. He said this was a request from the commission. There was some discussion on how alternates work.

Ms. Baez mentioned the Inland Wetlands commission was concerned about the 12 year term limit. Mr. Mednick also spoke to the commission about the concerns and shared the concerns on term limits and said if they think they're going to be hobbled by the provision you could put in a two (2) year sunset or extension of time or exception for the Inland Wetlands Commission, so that they could be appointed if we found out that that was going to be true, and that that may be something you could do.

Ms. Baez reminded everyone of the public input they received that night about how no one should have to leave a board or commission if no one is in line waiting.

**Ms. Zaehring** moved a motion to amend the term limit section to have a two year sunset provision consistent with what was said, but suggests making it across the board, not just for one Commission in case there's other conditions out there that have this issue that we're not aware of at this time and to avoid a potential problem down the road. Mr. Mednick said what would the standard be that you're going to lose one third of your members, a quarter of your members, a half of your members what it should there be a standard is if you just do a general sunset or you think just do a general sunsets over the next two years, the rule doesn't apply, you can appoint people. Ms. Zaehring said right, and that would give everyone on commissions and the Mayor kind of fair notice of this change, and would avoid any kind of immediate issue when the new protocol went into effect. Mr. Mednick said so we could simply instead of doing this, if you're doing it for everybody, then you just make the effective date two years. Ms. Zaehring said yes, she thinks less is more and would amend her motion to make it two years hence as suggested by Mr. Mednick. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sweet.

Ms. Gallagher said she won't support this motion as it is she thinks it's kicking the can down the road and thinks it should go back to the commission for a broader view. Mr. Farmer agrees with Ms. Gallagher and is opposed to this amendment. Mr. Stevens said he doesn't see a need for term limits and said if people want to serve they should be allowed to serve until the Mayor or Council doesn't want to reappoint them. He said he'd be in favor of striking this clause. There was then a lengthy discussion on term limits and practically carrying this out and who tracks the expirations.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it failed with 7 opposed (Baez) (Gallagher) (Osmanu) (Webber) (Sweet) (Farmer) (O'Brien)

Ms. Gallagher gave an overview of the new section on the DEI Commission saying it was proposed from the first CRC and no changes have been made.

Mr. Stevens suggests for the Inland Wetlands there is a municipal wetlands training program online and it's free and he thinks it should be required and **he then moved a motion** to add training to Inland Wetlands. The motion was seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved unanimously.

There was then some discussion on the Mayor being ex-officio. Mr. Farmer moved a motion to require ex-officio members do training. There was no second to the motion.

Ms. Gallagher then went over the rest of Chapter VII saying there's an addition of Arts & Culture added as a Charter commission, and that for the Board of Assessment Appeals they added two (2) alternates. Ms. Baez asked if this new commission changes the duties of the Arts commission and Ms. Gallagher said no.

Ms. Baez moved a motion to accept the amendments in Chapter VII. The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Brien and approved with 1 opposed (Zaehringer)

### **Chapter VIII**

Ms. Gallagher said the biggest change in this chapter is the renaming of Personnel to Human Resources and Community services to Human Services Departments, and a few provisions inside. Mr. Mednick then went over some minor changes and clarifications under Chief of Police.

Mr. Farmer said in E-2 under Appointments it says "term of contract, etc..90 day probation period" and he thinks there should be a number of probation periods. He then moved a motion to say you can have two 90 day probation periods. Ms. Gruen explained that this isn't what he's thinking of and what he's thinking of is in a resolution. Mr. Farmer said he would like to see it in the Charter. There was some discussion. Mr. Mednick said there are two approaches. You can establish a standard or policy created by ordinance and modify it as needed and that would be his preference. There was then some discussion about department heads.

Mr. O'Brien said his question is under the Director of Finance additional duties and responsibilities, the last bullet point states that they should prepare monthly reports to the Legislative Council on transfers, as they are prescribed in 10-7 D and he thinks this is going to need to be amended, where it speaks to not just the transfers, but just other reports, both requested the Council and Finance Committee. He said he wants to refer this back to the CRC for any changes to this to include subsequent changes later that they're going to talk about the changes to reporting, both for them and the Finance Committee.

**Mr. O'Brien then moved a motion** to have this refer back to the CRC for appropriate language, based upon the changes that they're going to make when they pass the subsequent sections regarding the finances of the Town. He said right now it only mentions the LC and only transfers. He wants it to be modified based on what they pass in subsequent sections. Ms. Zaehringer asked which section he was referring to. Mr. O'Brien said 8-4 A 1 d 4. Ms. Zaehringer then clarified the motion was to continue to prepare monthly reports to the Legislative Council, but also to coordinate with the Finance Committee. Mr. O'Brien said yes, right now it speaks of just the transfer reports. A vote was taken on the motion and it passed unanimously.

There was some discussion on the renaming of the Personnel Dept. to Human Resources and Community Services to Human Services.

Mr. Stevens **moved a motion** to amend the dept. to “Community & Human Services”. The motion was seconded by Mr. Osmanu. DISCUSSION: Mr. Stevens said he’s afraid people will not know Human Services is Community Services. Ms. Gallagher said she thinks it’s redundant and pulls this one service out from under the umbrella and it now not being true to its structure. A vote was taken on the motion and it failed with 3 in favor (Farmer) (Stevens) (Osmanu) – 2 abstentions (Irvin) (Zaehring) and all others opposed. Mr. Mednick pointed out that it’s not “Human Services Department but is “Human Services Departmentsu”.

Mr. Farmer referring to 8-2 H asked if there was an ordinance that establishes residency. Ms. Gruen said none she’s aware of. Mr. Mednick said he’s not aware of any either but the requirement is in the Charter doesn't mean you have to do it. There was then a brief discussion on this.

Ms. Baez moved a motion to accept Chapter VIII as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gallagher and approved with 1 opposed (Zaehring)

There being no further business Ms. Baez recessed the meeting at 8:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta  
Clerk of the Council