

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

July 31, 2023

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

https://hamden.zoom.us/rec/share/zsiGZHPHEydkCToaPIvSp7nqYF3PFzgOIFOJLD2UOd_BnaKRbr2yJkigKYmXNa5w.kXEg9Ld7RB6h5QPM

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A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Monday, July 31, 2023. This was a hybrid meeting held both in person and electronically via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:29 P.M. by Council President Dominique Baez. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the reading of Land Recognition by Ms. Sweet.

Z= On Zoom P= In Person

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dominique Baez (P)	Abdul Osmanu (Z)
Katie Kiely (P)	Kristen Zaehring (Z)
Justin Farmer (Z)	Bob Anthony (P)
Laurie Sweet (Z)	Adrian Webber (Z)
Lesley DeNardis (Z)	Jeron Alston (Z)
Sarah Gallagher (Z)	Ted Stevens (Z)
Paula Irvin (Z)	

MEMBERS ABSENT: Cory O'Brien; Betty Wetmore

PRESIDING: Dominique Baez, President

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Sean Grace, Chief of Staff; Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; David Panico, Bond Counsel; Barry Barnabe, Financial Advisor

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION: There were no speakers

(Written comments can be sent to LCpublicinput@hamden.com)

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

REGULAR AGENDA: (Requires a vote of 2/3rds of the members present and voting for

suspension of the rules under §14(a) of the Standing Rules)

Ms. Baez moved a motion to suspend their rules for tonight's agenda item. The motion was seconded by Mr. Anthony and approved with 3 opposed (Farmer) (Zaehringer) (Osmanu) and 1 abstention (Gallagher)

1. An ordinance appropriating \$3,765,000 for various public improvements for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and authorizing the use of \$3,765,000 of unexpended bond proceeds of the town to meet said appropriation
-- Moved by Ms. Baez, seconded by Ms. Kiely.

Ms. Baez moved a motion to add the following language.

Section 5. The Mayor shall present to the Council for its consideration as soon as practical an order providing that \$799,999 (representing the cost of the Revaluation of Town Grand List project above) shall be transferred from the General Fund to the Capital Nonrecurring Fund - Board of Education Account, with the intent being to pay for the Revaluation of Town Grand List project from the General Fund.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Farmer. DISCUSSION: Ms. Zaehringer said for more clarity she'd like to make it August 15, 2023. Ms. Baez said she'd accept that as a friendly.

A vote was taken on the amendment and approved with 2 abstentions (DeNardis) (Anthony)

Mr. Panico explained how this failed at the last meeting and is now back with a dollar difference between two projects because you can't bring the same exact item back as it was when failed. He also mentioned it's a good idea to spend money that is being sat on and that the BOE is not ready to spend on capital projects at this time.

Ms. Zaehringer said the reason she was opposed last week was because there was no safeguard that the money would go back into the school's capital that was taken out for these projects and she believes that with Ms. Baez's amendment and the motion she is going to make that safeguard will be there.

Ms. Zaehringer then **moved a motion** to add the following language to section 5 as she showed it on her screen and mentioned fixing the math as she adjusted a few numbers. **“Upon completion of the audit of the Town's fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, the Mayor shall present to the Council for its consideration an order providing that to the extent that unassigned fund balance set forth in such audited financial statements exceeds \$20,107,853 (representing seven percent (7%) of the operating budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 of \$287,255,043), such excess, if any, not to exceed \$2,965,001, shall be transferred to the Capital Nonrecurring Fund - Board of Education Account, with the intent being to reimburse the Board of Education for the transfers made by this Ordinance from surplus for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.”**

The motion was seconded by Ms. Gallagher. DISCUSSION: Mr. Panico said that's an item to the ordinance and he suggests making it section 6. Ms. Zaehringer agreed. Ms. Gallagher said she supports this motion. It ensures the reimbursement back to the BOE if there is a surplus at the time of audit but doesn't commit. And she thinks it's important to ensure they keep capital

needs of all across Town. She said it's a good check and balance to close the loop.

Mr. Anthony said he doesn't know what this says or fully comprehend it, it came out of their caucus, and he doesn't know what it's about.

Mr. Farmer said he will support this and he hopes as other capital items come they can have discussions about it. He knows there are important needs but he doesn't want to piece meal it out.

Ms. Kiely said she too will support this tonight, she thinks it's important to keep our entire Town running, and she understands Mr. Anthony's frustration that this came out of nowhere. A lot of people looked at this and came up with what they think is best and she appreciates the administration and BOE for this.

Mr. Anthony asked if this was the complete package all together and not several line items. He's very disheartened and doesn't understand this last section and would hate to vote no for not understanding it. He knows the items need to be done but doesn't understand the amendment.

Mr. Panico explained the attempt to restore as much back to the BOE as possible if there's a surplus this year. Ms. Zaehring also stated it's a mechanism to restore funds to the BOE capital account.

Ms. Baez said she originally didn't want to go with this option and felt it was too far away from the audit. She wanted the \$800,000 as the 2.9M is a big bullet to bite but because the Council is considering this again, and because of this promise from the Mayor, she will vote yes.

Ms. Kiely stated the original plan that these funds supported does not exist and this is an immediate project so she thinks they need to be responsible and do that.

Mr. Anthony stated he has a problem with the word "shall" saying it doesn't mean they have to do it.

A vote was taken on Ms. Zaehring's amendment and it passed with 1 opposed (DeNardis) and 1 abstention (Anthony)

A roll call vote was taken on the ordinance as amended and it passed with 11 in favor (Alston) (Farmer) (Gallagher) (Irvin) (Kiely) (Osmanu) (Stevens) (Sweet) (Webber) (Zaehring) (Baez) and 2 abstentions (Anthony) (DeNardis)

There being no further business Ms. Baez adjourned the meeting at 8:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta
Clerk of the Council