

**MINUTES OF MEETING
FINANCE COMMITTEE
September 26, 2023**

To view the meeting's recording, please click the following link:

https://hamden.zoom.us/rec/share/AK_6qXnMJqgJUq6lUi5Ho1rnSH49igiW6akd5Uz98kE0SHU6JtWp6NsYXFqjdC1B.VlbvSrUIOoN_g9fn

(Meeting starts at Time Code: 02:08:48)

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A meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Tuesday, September 26, 2023. This was a hybrid meeting held both in person and electronically via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 9:12 P.M. by the Chair, Jeron Alston.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeron Alston, Chair; Sarah Gallagher, Vice-Chair; Cory O'Brien; Justin Farmer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Betty Wetmore; Lesley DeNardis; Bob Anthony

PUBLIC INPUT: None

The following items were addressed:

- 1. Refund of property and motor vehicle taxes collected prior to July 1, 2023 – (19) totaling \$6,886.47**
-- Moved by Ms. Gallagher, seconded by Mr. Alston and approved unanimously.
- 2. Refund of property taxes collected between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 – Overpayments on current grand list - (8) totaling \$20,455.07**
-- Moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Farmer and approved unanimously.
- 3. Refund of motor vehicle taxes collected between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 – Overpayments on current grand list – (67) totaling \$13,124.12**
-- Moved by Ms. Gallagher, seconded by Mr. Alston and approved unanimously.
- 4. Order amending the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year Budget (Town Clerk) \$20,000**
-- Moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Alston. DISCUSSION: Finance Director Mr. Eatman explained this creates a budget line to purchase equipment and support our Boards and Commissions. Constituent Services Manager Mr. Murphy added that these funds are to create a more standardized process for the clerks. The devices they purchase would help manage the meetings and offer a better workflow, etc. and allow clerks to do the work without using their own personal devices.

There was some discussion on capital funds. Mr. Murphy explained the charter language and the need for it now.

Mr. Farmer asked about the next item. Mr. Murphy said that's for training for the new things being implemented, including a new agenda center, as well as the transition between the Council Administrator retiring and renewing and updating the system. He also said it'll help train all the clerks on the new software. Mr. Farmer asked if there was someone who will hold this knowledge and be able to teach people going forward. Mr. Murphy said they'd be updating the Council operating procedure and creating training that we can use for clerks going forward as they come in and out for the commissions.

Mr. Alston stated that this is putting a laptop in each one of the clerk's hands and would add additional entry points to the town because we're adding more users to the network. Mr. Murphy explained how only certain software would be added to the laptop and that they wouldn't have access to the server.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

5. Order amending the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year Budget (Legislative Council) \$50,000

-- Moved by Ms. Gallagher, seconded by Mr. O'Brien. DISCUSSION: Mr. Murphy explained this allows for work to be done through the Legislative Council office and provide a way to take and codify the training materials from the current administrator and create training materials and develop software for the roll out of Civic Clerk to make meetings hybrid quickly due to the Charter.

Ms. Baez said she is very proud to have Ms. Renta working with them and is very proud that she has worked with them for so many years. She carries knowledge and expertise of over a decade that is going to be lost if we don't transition properly, so she would like someone to help translate and carry on her legacy to the next rung. Ms. Renta has been working with Ms. Lion and creating a manual that brings together all the processes that the office does currently. Ms. Baez said she wants this person to work with Ms. Renta before she leaves and then be able to speak those things to the clerks that are around us on our boards and commissions.

A vote was taken and the item passed unanimously.

Info Items:

1. The establishment and operation of the Fair Rent Commission Escrow Account

Mr. Eatman explained this was created by §33.81 of the Fair Rent Commission ordinance and that they've created this account with Webster bank and it will act as a repository for rent deposits ordered to be paid to the Fair Rent Commission to be held in escrow until the Commission determines the funds should be released. He then referred to the Town's Fiscal Policy Manual §3.6 which requires that (unintelligible) the appropriate internal controls over cash management and requires the information of checks and balances. The fund policy manual will dictate how the commission escrow account will operate as long as it's managed by the finance department. The policy has been discussed and reviewed with the auditor. Mr. Eatman went on to explain more of how it would work.

Fair Rent Ordinance:

<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/9036/fair-rent-ordinance>

Fiscal Policy Manual:

<https://hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/8421/Town-of-Hamden-Fiscal-Structure-and-Policy-Manual-May-18-2023?bidId=>

Ms. Gallagher asked if they could address notification or receipt to the tenant that they have in fact deposited the money to Hamden and that it is escrow and letting them know it's a non-interest bearing account and then whoever is putting the money into the escrow can have an accounting of where the money is and what interest it's collecting which can also be useful if there's potential retaliation so that they have a receipt that would show it has been paid. She then wondered about examples of other Towns.

There was then a brief discussion on non-interest bearing accounts.

There being no further business, Mr. Alston adjourned the meeting at 9:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta, Clerk
for Jeron Alston, Chair