

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

October 16, 2023

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A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on Monday, October 16, 2023. This was a hybrid meeting held both in person and electronically via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 P.M. by Council President Dominique Baez. The Clerk took the roll followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Sweet then read the Land Acknowledgement followed by a moment of silence.

Z= On Zoom P= In Person

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dominique Baez (Z)	Bob Anthony (P)
Katie Kiely (P)	Lesley DeNardis (Z)
Justin Farmer (Z)	Abdul Osmanu (Z) (after roll call)
Laurie Sweet (Z)	Adrian Webber (Z) (after roll call)
Ted Stevens (P)	Sarah Gallagher (P)
Paula Irvin (Z)	Cory O'Brien (Z)
Kristen Zaehring (Z)	Betty Wetmore (Z)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeron Alston

PRESIDING: Dominique Baez, President

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Sean Grace, Chief of Staff; Curtis Eatman, Finance Director; Sue Gruen, Town Attorney; Erik Johnson, Economic Development Director; Carol Hazen, Director of Grants & Capital Projects

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION: There were 6 speakers in person, 1 speaker on Zoom, and 8 written comments which can be viewed here:

<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/9129/10-16-2023>

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

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: President Pro Tempore Farmer made acknowledgement of the horrific attack in Israel stating he condemns violence.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS: None

REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISONS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Ms. Baez requested a motion for approval of the minutes from September 26, 2023. Moved by Ms. Zaehringer, seconded by Ms. Sweet and approved with 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

Ms. Baez then requested a motion for approval of the minutes from October 2, 2023. Moved by Ms. Kiely, seconded by Ms. Sweet and approved with 1 abstention (Wetmore)

CONSENT CALENDAR: None

REGULAR AGENDA:

1. Order to ratify vote amending the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year Budget (Legislative Council)

-- Moved by Ms. Gallagher, seconded by Mr. O'Brien and approved with 1 opposed and 2 abstentions (Farmer) (Wetmore)

2. Amendment to order authorizing the expenditure of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (aka American Rescue Plan Act Funds) – **TABLED ITEM**

-- Ms. Baez requested a motion to take this item off the table. Moved by Mr. Osmanu, seconded by Ms. Kiely and approved with 1 abstention (Farmer)

Ms. Baez then moved the following motion to add these lines:

1. Equitable PTA Boost - \$154,000
2. Small Businesses support & grants - \$242,500
3. Youth Mentoring Programs - \$40,000
4. Branch Library ADA Improvements - \$450,000
5. Public Works Vehicles - \$450,000

The motion was seconded by Mr. Webber.

Mr. Osmanu asked in regard to PTA boost how do we decide equity and who are the funds being given to? Ms. Baez said the thought is that we would like the PTA to be able to handle items that were previously not reachable for some of our more disadvantaged PTA's which includes classroom trips and educational enrichment programming.

There was discussion on the 10% administering costs.

Ms. Zaehringer said she doesn't see the structural repairs for Newhall. Ms. Baez said she did not put it in this amendment. Ms. Zaehringer said she has a problem with removing it as well as with the 10%.

After more discussion on the 10% Ms. Gallagher said it's her understanding all the previous approved items will remain whole. Mr. Johnson said yes, exclusive of the

community campus. Mr. Anthony asked if this number for structural damage gets it done. Mr. Johnson said he can't answer that tonight.

There was discussion on previous allocations, the library ADA, as well as discussion on Newhall structural repairs. Mr. Farmer said in terms of ADA compliance he hopes his colleagues will heed the community concerns and considerations, there's a need.

Ms. Zaehringler asked about the resolution they have and the one that was shown saying the amounts were different. Mr. Johnson explained the discrepancy. There was then some discussion on the math.

Mr. Stevens stated ADA is needed but with the community campus plan he's concerned with making improvements to something the Town may sell. He will support this tonight. After some more ADA discussion Ms. Kiely said she too will support this.

There was some discussion on a consultant. Mr. Johnson reminded them of the timeline for use of the ARPA dollars.

Mr. Farmer moved a motion to reduce administrative costs by \$200,000 and put \$40,000 for Community Outreach and Input for 6 Lakes and \$160,000 towards the Library Branch. The motion was seconded by Mr. Osmanu.

There was discussion on administrative fees. Mr. Stevens said it's not his expertise to say what admin costs are so he won't vote for this. He doesn't think it's practical and he doesn't think we can get the job done doing it that way.

Mr. Anthony asked if the money is appropriated and misspent who's liable. Mr. Johnson said in the event something goes wrong the Town is and that liability has to be spent out of non-federal non-state local funds.

Ms. Kiely stated she agrees with Mr. Stevens on their not having the expertise and then asked if this was an up to 10%. Mr. Johnson said it's an up to amount.

Ms. Zaehringler said she understands they need administrative costs, her problem is with the number. She said she's concerned with the 1.2 million in salaries, it seems high. Mr. Johnson said he'll continue to say, respectfully, who is doing the work. He said there's a bunch of stuff that happens in the middle and that stuff has cost to it. There's time associated with it, and there's responsibilities that are embedded in the people that are supposed to be doing that. If Council wants to hire a consultant that sits there and then somebody can ask them questions as to what's done, the consultant is not doing the work, and that's a number over 3 1/2 years.

A vote was taken on the motion and it passed with 7 in favor (Farmer) (Osmanu) (Gallagher) (Sweet) (Zaehringler) (Wetmore) (O'Brien) – 2 opposed (Stevens) (Baez) and 4 abstentions (Irvin) (DeNardis) (Kiely) (Anthony)

Ms. Baez announced they're back to her motion.

Ms. Zaehringler clarified that the 3.5 million for Newhall is still there. Ms. Baez said yes it is.

Ms. Gallagher said she supports the motion. It brings them to a good place with a nice balance. She's hoping they can start implementing these projects and she's proud to put this forth.

A vote was taken on the motion and approved with 1 abstention (DeNardis)

Ms. Zaehring moved a motion to change the paragraph that reads "BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that ARPA funds will be used for direct and indirect administrative expenses involved with administering the program and the Legislative Council hereby authorizes and approves funding for program management, administration and compliance costs associated with each of the above described ARPA funded activities in an amount of 10%".

AMEND TO READ:

"BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that ARPA funds will be used for direct and indirect administrative expenses involved with administering the program, and the Legislative Council hereby authorizes and approves funding for program management, administration and compliant costs in an amount up to \$242,000 through June 30, of 2024, and that any such contracts come to Council for its approval.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Osmanu.

Mr. Stevens said he wonders if this hampers our projects and getting them done. Mr. Johnson said he doesn't know but they just asked them to do more with less.

Mr. Stevens offered a friendly amendment of \$300,000 rather than \$242,000. The friendly was accepted by both parties.

Paragraph as amended with friendly accepted shall now read:

"BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that ARPA funds will be used for direct and indirect administrative expenses involved with administering the program, and the Legislative Council hereby authorizes and approves funding for program management, administration and compliant costs in an amount up to \$300,000 through June 30, of 2024, and that any such contracts come to Council for its approval.

Ms. Kiely expressed concern with the timeline and how often they meet.

Ms. Gruen mentioned the 5 year agreement with the consultant coming up in committee next and how they just changed what they went out to bid for. Ms. Zaehring said she was going to do a separate motion for the consultant and leave this as management administrative cost and compliance costs to the extent there might be compliance cost separate and apart from the ARPA consultant and have a separate line item and amendment for the consultant. Ms. Gruen said that would suffice and address her concern.

A vote was taken and approved with 4 opposed (Baez) (Stevens) (O'Brien) (Kiely)

Ms. Zaehring moved a motion to approve up to \$240,000 for an ARPA consultant. The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Brien.

Ms. Zaehring said her thought process is that they have in their materials a contract for an ARPA consultant that went out to bid for over 5 years is \$239,000 so she went with a round number of \$240,000. Ms. Baez asked if that was the correct amount for the contract. Mr. Johnson said yes.

A vote was taken and the motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Baez then moved a motion to approve the order as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sweet and approved unanimously.

Ms. Baez called the meeting into recess at 9:11pm.

Ms. Baez called the meeting out of recess at 9:20pm.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Baez moved a motion to add the following 3 items to new business. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stevens and approved with 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

Public Input for new business: None

1. Appointment of Hannah Leckman to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a term to expire January 31, 2026 (D-6)
-- Moved by Ms. Baez, seconded by Mr. O'Brien and approved unanimously.

2. Order approving and authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with UHY Advisors
-- Moved by Ms. Baez, seconded by Mr. Stevens and approved unanimously.

3. Order authorizing amendment #1 to agreement between the Town of Hamden and Colliers Project Leader USA NE, LLC
-- Moved by Ms. Baez, seconded by Mr. Stevens and approved with 1 abstention (Zaehringer)

There being no further business Ms. Baez closed the meeting at 9:23 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta
Clerk of the Council