

**EAST HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2015**

The East Haven Town Council held a special (reorganizational) meeting Monday, November 16, 2015, at 7:00PM at the East Haven Senior Center, 91 Taylor Avenue, East Haven, CT 06512.

Mayor Joseph Maturo Jr. calls the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Item #1

Roll Call -14 present - 1 absent (Palladino).
A quorum is present.

Item #2

Appointment of a temporary Clerk of the Legislative Town Council.

Councilman Vincent Spaduzzi makes a motion to appoint Danelle Feeley.

Councilman Butler III seconds the motion.

Roll call vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Councilman Robert Parente requests a Republican Caucus.

Councilman Joseph Santino requests a Democratic Caucus.

Republican & Democratic caucuses begin at 7:02PM.

Republican & Democratic caucuses end and meeting comes back to order at 7:06PM.

Item #3

Election of a permanent Chairperson of the Legislative Town Council.

Councilman Parente makes a motion to nominate Fred Parlato.

Councilman Robert Sand seconds the motion.

Roll call vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #4

Election of a permanent Vice-Chairperson of the Legislative Town Council.

Councilman Parente makes a motion to nominate Robert Sand.
 Councilman Vincent Spaduzzi seconds the motion.
 Roll call vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #5

Appointment of a permanent Clerk of the Legislative Town Council.

Councilman Parente makes a motion to nominate Danelle Feeley.
 Councilwoman Linda Hennessey seconds the motion.
 Roll call vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Item #6

Short review of Town Council policies, standing rules, pertinent Freedom of Information Act provisions, and relevant procedures.

- Town Attorney Joseph Zullo addresses the Council and indicates a lot of the members have been on the Council before so they understand the rules that govern how they operate; this is mostly for the newer Council members.

Councilman Ken McKay makes a motion for a brief recess.
 Councilman Joseph Santino seconds the motion.
 Voice vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.
 Recess begins at 7:09PM.
 Meeting comes back to order at 7:10PM.

- Attorney Zullo continues on to explain that the Charter is the authority that guides the Town Council in everything that it does, then there are Ordinances and Resolutions that the Council passes. Beyond that, there are procedural guidelines that direct how they operate. First and foremost are the standing rules which are filed in the Town Clerk's Office which guide how a meeting is called, the content of regular meetings and special meetings, it guides how public comment is elicited which is at the Chairman's authority and it guides how subcommittees are set up. If they are not aware or do not have a copy of the standing rules either he or the Chairman or Clerk can get them a copy. All of the new Chromebooks when they have them will be equipped with these items directly on them. The second thing that he stresses which also guides how the Council operates are the sunshine laws also known as the Freedom of Information Laws for the State of Connecticut. It is very critical when the Council conducts themselves they have to do it in public session because if there were a

quorum that got together for a meeting outside it would be an illegal meeting and any business done at that meeting would be void. For example, if members were to engage in a debate on policy over email where more than a certain number participated in it, they would be violating the State's Freedom of Information laws. This doesn't mean that members can't check in with one another about logistics of a meeting date or time; anything substantive is what they want to avoid.

Another topic he will focus on is the difference between a caucus and executive session. A caucus is a meeting of the members of the same party of the Council. No other people are allowed in a caucus except members of the Council.

Whereas, with executive session, it is a meeting of the entire Council regardless of party and the Council can elicit testimony about sensitive matters such as contracts, leases, personnel matters etc. and members outside the Council can participate. Finally, the way the Ordinances are passed is they will initially come to members at a meeting in draft type form for their review and to vote on setting a meeting for public input. In the old days there would be a public hearing one month and a regular meeting the following month, this has been fast tracked so we now have the public hearing the same night as the regular meeting because it takes a long time to get these things done as it is, better to get it done as soon as possible. As far as the public hearing, according to the standing rules the Council members are all members of the Public Hearing Committee, so all members will take in testimony and all vote to forward that to the full Council to be considered for passage. It is essentially a three step process; they set a hearing, hold the hearing, then have a Council meeting directly after to weigh in on it. He will leave it up to the Chairman to answer any questions or defer any to him. His role is not as a member of the Council, he does not vote on anything his job is to simply answer questions and he will only answer questions at the direction of the Chairman when asked.

- Chairman Parlato says it may seem a little bit confusing to start but once they get started if there are any questions let himself or Vice Chairman Sand know; they are open to communications. It is routine up to some point but then there can be some items that require research. He doesn't want the members having to come to a meeting when they don't understand something or have enough information to make an intelligent and correct decision, they can ask himself, the Vice Chair or the Clerk for help at any time.

Item #7

Councilman Spaduzzi makes a motion to adjourn.

Councilman Ken McKay seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:16PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danelle Feeley, Clerk, East Haven Legislative Town Council