



LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR
July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

The Twenty-Sixth Ledyard Town Council under Chairman Kevin J. Dombrowski continued to meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month.

The Twenty-sixth Ledyard Town Council was comprised of:

Kevin J. Dombrowski – Chairman	
Andra Ingalls	Gary Paul
Whit Irwin	S. Naomi Rodriguez
John Marshall	Timothy Ryan
Mary McGrattan	Bill Saums

At the Town Council's November 8, 2023 meeting Chairman Dombrowski and Mayor Allyn, III; presented Councilor Mary McGrattan (45 years of service – Town Council, Mayor & State Representative); Councilor Bill Saums (20+ years of service – Economic Development Commission, Ledyard Town Center Committee, & Town Council); and Councilor Andra Ingalls (7 years of service- Board of Education & Town Council) with Town of Ledyard Proclamations recognizing their many years of service, as they each chose not to seek reelection in 2023. In addition, State Senator Cathy Osten presented the Councilors with State of Connecticut General Assembly Citations that were introduced by herself, Representative Kevin Ryan, Representative Greg Howard and Representative Brian Leneau.

We extend a sincere Thank You to each of them for their tireless years of service, commitment, integrity and perseverance during a period of growth and change in our community. The citizens of Ledyard are fortunate to have been and will continue to be served by their forethought and leadership qualities.

The Twenty-seventh Ledyard Town Council took the oath of office at their Organizational Meeting held on December 4, 2023. S. Naomi Rodriguez was elected by the body to serve as the Chairman.

The Twenty-seventh Ledyard Town Council was comprised of:

S. Naomi Rodriguez – Chairman	
April Brunelle	Gary Paul
Jessica Buhle	Timothy Ryan
Kevin Dombrowski	Tony Saccone
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Gary St. Vil

YEAR IN REVIEW

The Ledyard Town Council and Mayor Fred Allyn, III, continued to work with Washington Attorney Perkins Coie and local Attorney Lloyd Langhammer on the following matters: (1) Tribal Recognition Issues; (2) Taxation and Assessments pertaining to the non-Indian business entities conducting business on the reservation; and (3) The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) *Fee-To-Trust (FTT) Regulations*.

During the State's 2022/2023 Legislative Session "*An Act Establishing a Property Tax Exemption for Property Located on Certain Indian Lands*" was not approved. This Act was designed to negate the Towns' ability to collect personal property tax from the non-Indian businesses operating at the Mashantucket Pequot Foxwoods Resort Casino. If the State Legislature had approved the Bill it would have legislatively negated the unanimous judicial decision handed down by the *Supreme Court* in April 2021; and Ledyard would have lost over \$600,000 annually in tax revenue, impacting the level of services the town provided to its residents.

During the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year a *Taxation of Non-Tribal Property at the Mashantucket Foxwoods Casino Working Group* comprised of both the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN) Chairman Butler, and Mohegan Sun Tribe Chairman Gessner, Jr., Montville Mayor McDaniel, Mayor Allyn, III, twelve legislators, and five tribal representatives met twice a month in Hartford for six-months to report on, and discuss taxation issues on Indian Lands with the objective to write a White Paper on how this issue should be handled for the upcoming 2024/2025 Legislative Session. Currently there is no taxation on the buildings of any kind; or on the land within the Tribal Reservation; with taxation being levied only the businesses' property that was on the Reservation, such as the Nike Outlet, California Pizza Kitchen, Dunkin Donuts, etc. The Towns of Ledyard, North Stonington, Preston expressed concern to their Legislators that they should not try to legislate something that the Judicial Branch had already unanimously passed as a Judicial Ruling. The results of the Working Group reported that more study was needed.

The *Fee-To-Trust (FTT) Regulations* stated for on-reservation, contiguous, and initial reservation acquisition, that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Secretary would presume that the acquisitions would be approved. For off-reservation acquisitions, the proposed Rule required the Secretary to presume that the acquisitions were to provide tribal community benefits, without regard to the distance of the land from the Tribe's reservation lands. The Towns of Ledyard, North Stonington, and Preston submitted comments regarding the June 30, 2022 Rule and the proposed March 1, 2023 Rule, to bring attention to key issues which included that the removal of land from the state and local tax rolls would be harmful to the local communities and would unfairly tip the scales against the interests of the state governments, local governments, and third parties. The Final Rule rejected the concerns raised by the Towns and other Non-Tribal Governmental Entities. This Rule fundamentally changed how the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) evaluated *Fee-To-Trust Applications* by making it easier and faster for Tribes to acquire Lands In-Trust and more difficult for States and Local Governments to have their concerns balanced. This Final Rule went into effect on January 15, 2024.

The Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Capital Improvement Plan included \$1,653,735. This funding, combined with state and federal grants, borrowing (bonding), and other funding sources, provided for a total CIP in the amount of \$5,285,423. The CIP continued to fund critical road repairs/maintenance, purchase of emergency radio equipment, and reserve fund allocations for emergency services equipment, future vehicle purchases, technology enhancements, renovations of High School classrooms, roof replacements for the Board of Education Central Office, Juliet W. Long School, and the Gales Ferry School, with the installation of roof mounted solar arrays, and the replacement of the Lantern Hill Bridge and culverts.

In addition, the Town Council continued its focus on the following infrastructure improvements to encourage economic development and to provide pedestrian and vehicular safety in Ledyard Center:

Multi-Use Pathway & Sidewalk Extension Project Local Transportation Capital Improvement Plan (LOTICIP) \$2.54 Million Grant - Western & Sampson Engineers continued its work to design a Multi-Use Pathway & Sidewalk Extension Project from the High School to Ledyard Center. This project included crosswalks in the areas of the Bill Library and the Best Way Convenience Store along with sidewalks to connect to the Village Market. In addition, a bike lane/sidewalk would be constructed on the southside of Route 117 providing safety for High School students to get to Blonders Park/Field and to Ledyard Center. The State Department of Transportation (DOT) installed “*Walk-Do - Not Walk*” signals at the Route 117 intersection. This Project also included realigning how Gallup Hill Road comes into Colonel Ledyard Highway by changing the “Y” configured intersection, to a “T” intersection. With the writing of this Annual Report the construction work was currently underway, with an estimated completion by early Fall, 2024.

American Rescue Act Plan - With the 117th United States Congress approval, President Biden signed the *American Rescue Act Plan* (ARPA) into law on March 11, 2021 which provided funding for the Public Health Emergency, investment in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure, public safety, and other areas that were impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Town of Ledyard (Town/General Government) received a total ARPA allocation of \$4.327 million; and the Board of Education received a separate allocation of \$2.8 million. The funding was released to local governments in two tranches (the 1st was received around July 1, 2021; and the 2nd tranche was received around May/June 2022). The federal guidelines required the ARPA funding to be obligated by December 31, 2024; and spent (liquidated) by the end of the 2026 calendar year. The Federal Treasury’s definition of “*Obligated Funds*” meant “*An order has been placed for property and services, or contracts, or some awards were made*”.

During the year the town made solid progress with twenty-five projects being successfully completed since we embarked on the ARPA Initiatives, with nine projects currently in-progress, and three scheduled projects that had not been started. The projects that made the ARPA List ranged from critical infrastructure projects such as the Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension project, which when completed would allow for responsible economic development, to supporting our Regional Agency Partners, to facility maintenance projects, the preservation of historical landmarks and park improvements, software upgrades and many others.

Also, the Town Council continued to work with the Mayor and his Staff to discuss the status of the ARPA Projects relative to the allocation of surplus funds from completed projects and to consider and prioritize remaining needs. Based on their assessment at their March 13, 2024 meeting the Town Council added the replacement of the dilapidated Sandy Hollow Guiderail Project to the ARPA Projects List. Although the project cost was \$335,857 only \$300,000 was allocated from the ARPA Funding with the remainder of the funds coming from the Town Aide Road Grant Funding (TAR), as well as funding from other Public Works Accounts such as road maintenance. The project replaced 1.5 miles on the west side of the road with Oxidizing Weathering Steel Guiderails; with the galvanized guiderails remaining in-place on east side of the road. Because the contractor was willing to work with our Public Works Crew the town was able to reduce costs.

The Sewer Infrastructure project in Ledyard Center was rated high on the ARPA Funding Projects List and is currently underway. Because Phase I of the sewer line extension project and the Multi-Use Pathway (pedestrian and bicycle) along Colonel Ledyard Highway, which was being paid with the \$2,540,000 Local Transportation Capital Improvement Grant Program (LoTCIP); were being done simultaneously there were some savings in engineering design costs.

School(s) Consolidation/Improvement Project(s)(Middle School and Gallup Hill School) – In working to close out these School Projects, the town contracted with Colliers Project Leaders (Bid # 2022-10) to prepare and assemble the entire body of evidence, that would meet the State’s Guidelines required to receive the State’s Grant Reimbursement. Due to staff changes in the State’s Department of Administrative Services (DAS) progress for the State release of the grant funding that was owed to the town was delayed. In June, 2024 the Town received an interim payment for school projects in the amount of \$7.8 million, with approximately \$2.2 million that would be due as the final disbursement after the State has completed its Project Audit.

In the Town Council’s role to oversee and serve as steward of the town’s finances the following is reported:

Annual Audit Report Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023 was presented to the Finance Committee and Board of Education by CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) at the Finance Committee’s February 7, 2024 meeting. Lead Auditor Nikoleta McTigue presented an unmodified or clean opinion, which was the highest form of opinion CLA could give on the financial statements. CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) provided an *Auditor’s Recommendations Document/Management Letter* which included some general comments and recommendations for improvements. Actions were taken to implement the Auditor’s recommendations.

National Opioid Settlement Funding – In 2021 the National Prescription Opiate Litigation Plaintiffs’ Executive Committee confirmed that the \$26 billion global opioid settlements were finalized with the “Big Three” drug distributors - AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health, McKesson, and opioid manufacturer Johnson & Johnson for their participation of litigating local governments nationwide. As part of this settlement, Ledyard has received \$112,962 to date, with additional funding expected through 2037. At its September 27, 2023 meeting the Town Council appropriated \$36,100 to Ledge Light Health District/ Ledyard Prevention Coalition to facilitate the following programs: *Harm Reduction, Emergency Overdose Kits; and Peer Navigator*. These

initiatives included education on how to administer the Narcan medication should someone experience and overdose, support to individuals and their families who were living with substance use disorder through treatment and recovery, and support systems to help individuals get back into the community.

During the twelve month period between January, 2023 to February, 2024 there were 40 overdoses and one fatal overdose in Ledyard/Gales Ferry. Based on this data, Emergency Narcan Kits were installed at the following two locations in town: at the Town Green in Ledyard Center; and at the Community Center in Gales Ferry. The Emergency Kits included Fentanyl Test Strips; Narcan, and contact information to obtain help/support. In addition, the Fire Departments, Libraries, and other community buildings were equipped Emergency Narcan Kits. The Town Council continued their work to identify other non-profit organizations in the area to partner with as our community understands the importance of education, the need to eliminate the stigma of substance use disorder, lower the number of overdoses, and to save lives.

Beverage Surcharge Revenues – Nip Bottles- With the State Legislature’s adoption of Public Act #21-58 “*An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management*” the Town Council adopted a *Res 003-2022/June 8 “Resolution Regarding Revenues Received From Beverage Containers”* to establish a separate account for the surcharge revenues the Town would be receiving from the State. This Legislation implemented a five-cent surcharge on any beverage container holding a spirit or liquor of fifty milliliters. Since the Program began Ledyard’s Nip Bottle Revenues have averaged about \$15,729.28 every six months for an annual Revenue of \$32,458.65.

In considering the best and most effective use of the funding, as allowed under Public Act #21-58, the Finance Committee discussed a number of ideas which included the following: Incentive Roadside Clean-up Programs to benefit local non-profit organizations; Solar Powered Trash Compactors for the Lower Town Green and other Parks; and a Food Waste Composting Program. However, after much consideration the Finance Committee found that a suitable use was to enter into a Lease/Purchase Agreement for a new Pelican Street Sweeper, as annual street sweeping was a requirement of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program. Because Ledyard’s Public Works Department was providing mechanic services to Preston and maintaining their fleet; Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin solicited Preston’s interest to share in the cost/use of the Street Sweeper. As of the writing of this Annual Report, discussions with Preston were underway to consider entering into a Lease/Purchase Agreement for a Pelican Street Sweeper; and to draft a *Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)* between Ledyard and Preston.

The American Library Association - Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities Grant \$20,000 Round II- In working to continue efforts to better serve individuals with disabilities, on November 9, 2023 the Town Council authorized the Mayor to submit a Grant Application for Round II in the amount of \$20,000 to purchase a new Circulation and Reference Desk at the Bill Library, to replace the desk that was original to the 1983 Library addition/renovation project. Under the guidance of Library Director Jennifer Smith Ledyard successfully secured \$20,000 during Round I of the Grant Program the previous year, which was used to purchase books, programming, and building improvements to support those with disabilities.

Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget- The Public Hearing and Annual Budget Town Meeting for the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 were presented in a hybrid format enabling residents to attend in-person at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex, or by video conference. The Referendum regarding the Annual Budget was held in-person on May 21, 2024 at the Registrar's of Voters Office, located in the lower level of the Town Hall.

Ledyard's Voters approved a \$67,430,573 Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget comprised of a \$29,060,750 General Government budget and a \$38,369,823 Board of Education budget; with 253 voting *Yes*; and 169 voting *No*. The Town Council expressed disappointment that only 4.1% of registered voters turned out to cast their ballot.

With the 2023 property valuation, Ledyard saw an increase of 4.30% or \$54,308,514 to the Grand List, bringing the total net Grand List to \$1,317,930,660. Also, with the current interest environment, Interest Earnings on Reserve Accounts were projected to generate income of \$550,000. In the coming year, revenue from non-tax sources was projected to slightly decrease, which included a \$450,000 or 30% decrease in Impact Aid. Ledyard anticipated Education Cost Sharing (ECS) from the State would increase slightly, however, there was a continuing concern regarding the funding methodology for Special Education (SPED). In addition, Ledyard would once again continue to see the same level of funding from the State in areas such as Town Aid Road (TAR), Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), and the Pequot Funding. However, level funding from the State was not adequate or reasonable based on the impacts from inflation and for Ledyard to maintain services to its residents and support the programs and services our students require.

The Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget allocated funding for current infrastructure and capital needs for both the General Government and Board of Education to provide improvements at the High School which included classroom and science lab upgrades, technology improvements to the refuse area, air conditioning in the main office, a multi-sport scoreboard; as well as funding to replace the fire alarm system and playscape at the Juliet W. Long School.

In addition, the General Government continued their annual allocations for Capital expenses for the following: Investment in technology including the addition of software for the Land Use Department which would offer on-line construction permit application and payment; the replacement of the Dispatch Emergency Communications CAD/RMS System; Road Improvements; replacement of Public Works Heavy Equipment; replacement of Emergency Services Apparatus and Police Vehicles; upgrades to town buildings; as well as maintain and expand our community spaces such as Town Green Improvements. Pickleball Courts would be constructed using Parks & Recreation funding. Also, our Departments continued to work to seek grant funding opportunities in an effort to off-set costs where possible, saving taxpayer dollars.

On June 12, 2024 the Town Council approved to set a Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Real Estate and Personal Property Mil Rate of 35.21; and a Motor Vehicle Mil Rate of 32.46. This was the third year two separate mil rates were set in accordance with the State's Car Tax Cap. The State would offset the loss of car tax revenue for towns such as Ledyard, whose mil rate was over the State's 32.46 mils Motor Vehicle Cap.

Youth and Social Services - In mid-April, 2024 the Youth Services Office closed with the resignation of the Youth Services Coordinator and the departure of the Interns. The outstanding cases were referred/absorbed by the School Based Health Center that was being overseen by Child & Family Agency. Recent changes to area School Health Programs provided Ledyard with an all-inclusive Health Program that included licensed Mental Health Clinicians who would provide counseling support. Because the clients our Youth Services Department was servicing were all Ledyard Public School Students, the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget did not provide funding to continue the operation of our Youth Services Department providing a savings of \$103,971. Also, the \$151,500 remaining from \$190,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding the Town Council allocated for Mental Health Clinicians would be redirected to pay for the Mental Health Clinicians offered through the Board of Education's Health Program.

Solid Waste Management – At our April 10, 2024 meeting the Town Council received a presentation from Southeastern Connecticut Resource Recycling Authority (SCRRA) Executive Director Dave Aldridge about a PILOT Food Waste to Compost Program. With the closing of the East Harford MIRA Facility (Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority) and other Incinerator Plants already at capacity, the disposal of trash continued to rise in cost, with the State looking to truck 800,000 tons of Solid Waste out of Connecticut every year to landfills in Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio. By removing Food Scraps from the waste stream, we could reduce our general trash tonnage and reduce costs.

With Ledyard paying more than \$1 million every year to haul and dispose of trash, Mayor Allyn, III, Chaired both the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Solid Waste Committee as well as the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments Solid Waste Committee (SCCOG) to look for ways to reduce tonnage, because hauling Connecticut's trash out of state was not a Plan. Although the State Legislature considered a Bill titled "*Removal of Organics from the Waste Stream*" it was not approved during this year's Legislative Session.

In working to be pro-active Councilor Garcia-Irizarry obtained a quote in the amount \$3,901 from Blue Earth Composting, located in Hartford, for Ledyard to conduct a six-month Food Waste Collection PILOT Program. The Blue Earth Compost Starter Kit included 100 compost bins, compostable bags, educational materials, and collection carts that would be located at the Transfer Station. The Starter Kits would be given for free to 100 residents on a first-come-first-serve basis. The Food Waste Collection PILOT Program would be launched in the coming fiscal year, and would be paid from the Public Works Department's Sanitation Budget.

Committee to Review the Budget Process held their Organizational Meeting on July 25, 2023 and diligently worked over the summer months to review the role of local government relative to operational costs and services. At our January 10, 2024 Town Council Meeting, Committee Chairman Tim Ryan presented the *Committee to Review the Budget Process* Final Report dated October 31, 2023; which was built upon the previous 2016 Report. The Committee provided some new recommendations pertaining to Contract Negotiations, Budget Format, Communication; Increases in Control Practices, and the Consolidation and Sharing of Functions and Services where practical. Because the Committee found from a financial perspective that Ledyard was doing a great job ensuring the town's operations and services were run in a lean and efficient manner; they looked for ways to save money without cutting the budget. This work led to a recommendation for the town to begin setting aside funding each year for large capital

improvement projects similar to what they have been doing for many years to support the replacement schedule for large equipment such as fire trucks and public works trucks. By setting aside funding annually the town would have some funding in place for projects such as roof replacements and other needed facility improvements, when needed. This proposal would reduce costs for Debt Service/Interest Paid each year relative to bonding (borrowing) money to pay for Capital Improvement Projects such as School Projects and other construction projects. Absent any significant changes to revenue or to the tax base, the Committee recommended that the town should continue to be pragmatic and prudent in its financial decision making, especially given the current and expected continuing economic climate. Tough decisions have and would continue to need to be made to ensure that critical services were maintained, and for Ledyard residents to continue to receive good value for taxes paid.

Early Voting – On June 5, 2023 the State Legislature approved House Bill #5004 “*An Act Implementing Early Voting*” to be implemented beginning in early 2024 for certain primaries, special elections and referenda. The new law requires 14-days of Early Voting for Regular Elections; 4-days of Early Voting for Referendums, and for Special Elections. The State agreed to provide funding to Municipalities for the added costs for two-years. Thereafter, Ledyard would be required to include funding in our local budget to support the Early Voting such as poll worker salaries, meals and other related expenses. Based on the size of Ledyard, our community would be required to have one Early Voting location. In accordance with Public Act 23-5 Ledyard received \$10,500 for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 which was used for renovations to the lower level of the Town Hall to accommodate the Early Voting at the Registrar of Voters Office and to purchase required equipment. On March 26, 2024 Ledyard conducted its first Early Voting for the Republican Presidential Primary. During the four days of the Early Voting 92 voters participated.

Board of Education Capital Fund – On February 28, 2024 the Town Council approved to set up a new stand-alone Account for the Board of Education’s Capital Fund for Non-Bonded Board of Education Capital Items. The Board of Education had five non-bonded capital lines that were nested within the Town’s CNR Fund 210. This action took the Board of Education’s Capital Lines for non-bonded expenses out of the General Government’s Capital Nonrecurring Fund (CNR) and moved them into the Board of Education’s side of the ledger, providing the Board of Education with more flexibility. The General Government’s Finance Director would continue to have visibility of these Board of Education Capital Accounts.

Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan Update, 2023-2028 – At its August 23, 2023 meeting the Town Council adopted a “*Resolution Adopting The Hazard Mitigation And Climate Adaptation Plan Update, 2023-2028*”. Ledyard has relied on the *Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan* as a guide to identify potential flood areas and other areas for improvements such as the replacement of the Lantern Hill Road Bridge over the Whitford Brook and the culverts; and has sought and received grant funding to help support these important projects.

In other business the Town Council reports the following:

Ledyard Farmers Market – This year the Farmers’ Market kicked off its sixteenth Season on June 5, 2024. The Market was held each Wednesday afternoon from 4- 7 p.m. thru September 11, 2024; and Ms. Pamela Ball was the Market Manager. The Summer Market Season included

live music, children's crafts, and family-fun entertainment. The Market continued to offer fresh and local fruits, vegetables, meats, cheese, bread, coffee, pickles, eggs, and much more. In addition, there were lots of sweets that included donuts, cupcakes, cookies, cannoli, ice cream, and more. Ledyard's Farmers' Market has become one of the largest and most successful Markets in Southeastern Connecticut drawing crowds of over 1,200 visitors each week. The *Connecticut Magazine* once again listed Ledyard's Farmers Market as one of the *Top Three Farmers Market's in the State*.

Yale-Harvard Regatta:- The 157th Yale/Harvard Regatta, was once again held on the Thames River in Gales Ferry on June 8, 2024. The Economic Development Commission, worked with the Parks & Recreation Commission along with many organizations including the Lions Club, Rotary Club, the Gales Ferry and Ledyard Center Fire Departments, Ledyard Police Department, a number of community businesses, and with local Food Trucks that participated in the *Regatta Day Festival* bringing crowds to cheer on this oldest intercollegiate sporting competition in the country, and to enjoy all that our community had to offer. Town Councilor Jessica Buhle was instrumental in organizing the Regatta Day Festival and Councilor Gary Paul set-up a large screen inside the Pavilion for folks who could not get down to the Thames River to see the Race. We thank all those who made the Second Regatta Day Festival a great success!

Yale won three of the four races at the 157th Yale-Harvard Regatta.

Economic Development - The Economic Development Commission completed their work on a Marketing Video that was launched on the town's website in January, 2024. The video featured Ledyard's commercial business, scenic parks, historic properties, and Ledyard's hometown characteristics, making our community a great place to live and do business. Initially \$7,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding was set-a-side to create the marketing video. However, the EDC was able to get the video completed at no cost with the help from town businesses who purchased advertising space on the video. We thank Economic Development Commissioner Pete Hary who was instrumental in the organization and development of the Marketing Video.

Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – At its March 27, 2024 the Town Council approved an Addendum – 2024 to the “*Resolution Establishing the Rules of Procedure for the Twenty-seventh Town Council*” to revise the name of the Community Relations Committee to the “*Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*” to be in-keeping with their Mission Statement.

Councilor St. Vil worked with the Schools and other town organizations to facilitate the Third Black History Month Activity Contest. The program once again included an Essay Contest for the High School and Middle School students and a Poster Contest for our Elementary School students. The Contest was open to Ledyard Students, Magnet School Students, and Homeschooled Students. The winners of the Poster Contest were recognized among their peers at their schools, and the winners of the Essay Contest were recognized at the March 27, 2024 Town Council meeting.

At its April 10, 2024 meeting the Town Council recognized our many military families by presenting a Proclamation to the Commander of the New London-Groton Subbase Captain Kenneth M. Curtin in celebrating the month of the Military Child; which was accepted by Chief Petty Officer Eric Buhle.

During National Volunteer Appreciation Month, the Town Council recognized and thanked the over 200 volunteers who serve on Ledyard's many Committees, Commissions, and Boards in April, 2024 by attending meetings and providing each member with a *Thank You* flyer, and other small gestures, such as cookies to express our appreciation for the work that they do for the town.

In other actions the Town Council held the following Town Meetings and Public Hearings:

Town Meetings

- September 13, 2023 – Approved to convey 334 and 538 Colonel Ledyard Highway to Avalonia Land Conservancy.
 - September 27, 2023 – Approved to sell 332 Colonel Ledyard Highway to Leonard D. Sherman for Two Hundred and Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$280,000)
 - October 10, 2023 – Appropriated up to \$16,082 from CNR Account #20360101-53335 (Parks and Recreation Capital Non-Recurring Fund – Site Improvement) for the Pfizer Field Improvement Project.
 - October 10, 2023 – Approved to Increase Funding for the School(s) Various Projects Replacement of Roofs at Central Office, Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School; installation of solar equipment at Gales Ferry School and Juliete W. Long School, Upgrades to Building Management System at Gales Ferry School and electrical and HVAC upgrades at Juliet W. Long School – Increase Bond Authorization from \$6,725,00 to \$8,550,000.
- October 17, 2023- Referendum Approved to increase Bond Authorization from \$6,725,00 to \$8,550,000.
- May 8, 2024 - Accepted the conveyance/transfer of the following parcel and easement areas for no compensation, as depicted on plan entitled "*Proposed Boundary Line Adjustments In the Area of Route 12 and Thamesview Pentway, Gales Ferry Connecticut*" prepared by CLA Engineers, and approved by the Director of Planning in the Boundary Line Adjustment Application No. ZP#5946:
 - (1) The 0.04 acres shown as "Parcel C" on above-referenced map, a portion of Thamesview Pentway to be conveyed to the Town from Mr. Noah Cardinal.
 - (2) The 259.08 square feet area shown as "Easement Area D" to be conveyed from Daniel W. Stanavage (1764 Route 12) to the Town for the purpose of snow removal/snow stacking.
 - (3) The 685.67 square feet area shown as "Easement Area E" on above-referenced map, to be conveyed to the Town from Mr. Noah Cardinal (2 Thamesview Pentway) for the purpose of snow removal/snow stacking.?"
 - May 20, 2024 - Annual Town Meeting presented the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget in a hybrid format enabling residents to attend in-person or by video conference, and Adjourned to a Referendum.
- May 21, 2024 Referendum – Adopted a Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget in the amount of \$67,430,573 .

Public Hearings

- September 13, 2023 – Received comments to convey 334 and 538 Colonel Ledyard Highway to Avalonia Land Conservancy.
- September 27, 2023 – Received comments on the following:
 - (1) Sell 332 Colonel Ledyard Highway to Leonard D. Sherman for Two Hundred and Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$280,000);
 - (2) Proposed “*An Ordinance Concerning Liability Pertaining To First Responders Providing Emergency Assistance*”;
 - (3) Proposed “*An Ordinance Establishing Tax Relief for Certain Modified Handicap Accessible Vehicles in the Town of Ledyard*”;
 - (4) Ordinance #500-005 (rev. 1) “*An Ordinance Rescinding “An Ordinance Establishing a Nursing Service Board*”;
 - (5) Proposed Amendments to Ordinance #300-012 (rev. 2) “*An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard*” as presented in the draft dated August 14, 2023.
- December 13, 2023 – Received comments on the Fiscal Year 2020 Community Development Block Grant program for the Kings Corner Manor Improvements which was funded under the Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program.
- March 13, 2024 - Received comments on proposed “*An Ordinance Establishing a Farmers Market for the Town of Ledyard*”.
- April 15, 2024 - Received comments on the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2024 Budget.
- May 8, 2024 – Received comments on the conveyance/transfer of the *following parcel and easement areas for no compensation, as depicted on plan entitled “Proposed Boundary Line Adjustments In the Area of Route 12 and Thamesview Pentway, Gales Ferry Connecticut”* prepared by CLA Engineers, and approved by the Director of Planning in the Boundary Line Adjustment Application No. ZP#5946:
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 - (3) The 685.67 square feet area shown as “Easement Area E” on above-referenced map, to be conveyed to the Town from Mr. Noah Cardinal (2 Thamesview Pentway) for the purpose of snow removal/snow stacking.?”

Ordinances

- Ordinance #500-007 “*An Ordinance Concerning Liability Pertaining To First Responders Providing Emergency Assistance*”; Adopted: 10/11/2023
- Ordinance #200—016 “*An Ordinance Establishing Tax Relief for Certain Modified Handicap Accessible Vehicles in the Town of Ledyard*”; Adopted: 10/11/2023
- Ordinance #500-005 (rev. 1) “*An Ordinance Rescinding “An Ordinance Establishing a Nursing Service Board”*”; Adopted: 10/11/2023
- Amended Ordinance #300-012 (rev. 2) “*An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard*” Adopted: 10/11/2023
- Ordinance #100-020 “*An Ordinance Establishing a Farmers Market for the Town of Ledyard*”. Adopted: 3/13/2024.

Resolutions

- ✓ **Res #001-2023/Aug 23** “*Resolution Adopting the Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adoption Plan Update; 2023-2028 Certificate of Adoption – Town of Ledyard*”. Adopted August 23, 2023.
- ✓ **Res #001-2023/Sept 13(a)** “*Resolution Amending the Resolution Entitled Resolution Appropriating \$6,725,000 for Various School Improvement Projects and Authorizing the Issue of Bonds and Noted in eh Same Amount to Finance Said Appropriation*” to Increase the Appropriation and Borrowing Authorization to \$8,550,000”. Adopted September 13, 2023
- ✓ **Res #001-2023/Sept 13(b)** “*Town Council Resolutions Approving and Calling Town Meeting.*”
- ✓ **Res #001-2023/Dec 4** “*Resolution Establishing the Rules of Procedure for the Twenty-seventh Town Council*” Adopted: December 4, 2023.
- ✓ **Res #001-2023/Dec 4**
Addendum: 20224/Mar 27 *Resolution Establishing the Rules of Procedure for the Twenty-seventh Town Council*” to rename the Community Relations Committee to the “*Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*”

The Town Council continued to televise their bimonthly meetings on the Public Access Channel (Channel 12 on Comcast Cable) on the following Friday at 8:00 p.m. and on Sunday at 5:00 p.m. Their meetings were available live and on-demand on the town’s web page. Residents could access the Town Council’s agendas, minutes, and videos by visiting the town’s Media Portal at www.ledyardct.org and clicking on the “*Agendas and Minutes*” tab; or by visiting: <https://ledyardct.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

For the Ledyard Town Council,



S. Naomi Rodriguez
Chairman