



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID FORMAT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339

860 464-3203
Roxanne Maher

Chairman Kevin J. Dombrowski

MINUTES
FINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, January 4, 2023

5:00 PM

Annex Meeting Room - Video Conference

DRAFT

- I. CALL TO ORDER - The Meeting was called to order by Councilor Saums at 5:00 p.m. at the Council Chambers Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Saums welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He stated for the Town Council Finance Committee and members of the Public who were participating via video conference that the remote meeting information was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town’s Website – Granicus-Legistar Meeting Portal.

II. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location	Arrived	Departed
Andra Ingalls	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
Bill Saums	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
Fred Allyn, III	Mayor	Present	In-Person	5:02 pm	5:58 pm
Matthew Bonin	Finance Director	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
Steve Masalin	Public Works Director	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
Scott Johnson, Jr.	Parks & Recreation Director	Present	Remote	5:02 pm	5:58 pm
Robert Graham	Resident	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
Betsy Graham	Resident	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:58 pm
Roxanne Maher	Administrative Assistant	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	5:58 pm

III. RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

Mrs. Betsy Graham, 72A Long Pond Road, South, Ledyard, stated that she was present this evening to answer any questions the Finance Committee may have regarding their proposal to lease 0.8 +/- acres of land on Bush Pond to the Town for passive recreation. She provided some background explaining that she and her husband Robert Graham purchased the property last year, which due to some older depilated structures on the property, was not accessible. She stated since the structures have been removed the property was now opened up making Bush Pond accessible. She stated that she and her husband thought that it would make a great waterfront park for residents to enjoy picnicking, or canoeing; and therefore, they have offered the town an opportunity to lease a portion of the property to be used for passive recreation.

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Board of Education Year-to-Date Report dated December 5, 2022

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES –

MOTION to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2022

Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Ryan

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. No action on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Capital Non-Recurring (CNR) Fund based on the *American Rescue Act* Funding (ARPA) and the process to approve ARPA Projects and expend ARPA Funding.

RESULT: NO ACTION

Next Meeting: 01/18/2023 5:00 p.m.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consider a one-time waiver of the Housing Authoring's PILOT payment due this year to allow the Ledyard Housing Authority to use the funds to contract for snow removal services.

Background: On March 11, 2020 the Town Council approved a Resolution authorizing the Town to apply for a Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of 1,500,000 to provide major improvements at the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility, which was built in the 1980's. If the Grant Application was approved, the construction work would have begun in March/April 2021. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, funding approvals and projects were significantly delayed. During the past two years the State asked the Town Council to restate the Resolution twice (June 9, 2021 and November 9, 2022). In addition, the State increased the grant amount awarded to Ledyard from \$1,500,000 to \$1,608,827.

Councilor Saums stated the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility was currently in the process of a major improvement project that was being paid for by a Connecticut Small Cities Community Development Block Grant, which was being funded by the Federal Government. He went on to state that the Construction Company has asked that three units remain vacant to allow for temporary moves of tenants into the unleased spaces while the rehabilitation work was being done in their units. He stated keeping three units vacant would leave the Kings Corner Senior Housing Facility with a potential shortfall of about \$1,800/month, during the duration of the construction project. He stated some of this money would have been used to pay for snow removal expenses.

Therefore, he stated Housing Authority Director Colleen Lauer was looking for some assistance from either the Public Works Department by providing some additional support regarding snow removal, or from the Town by granting relief of the Housing Authority's PILOT Payment (\$7,700) to have the cashflow to pay for snow removal services.

Councilor Saums continued by explaining that currently the Public Works Department has been making one pass around the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility during substantial storms to assure emergency service access. However, he stated because the Public Works Department was understaffed that providing any additional assistance to the Kings Corner Manor was not possible. He went on to address granting relief of the PILOT Payment noting that the Town Council needed to be cautious with granting relief for PILOT Properties, stating that they did not want to set a precedent, stating that if they granted relief to one PILOT Property then others may also seek relief from their PILOT Payment. However, he stated that they understand that this was a special situation, given the Senior Housing Facility's loss of revenue during the improvement construction project.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated getting the improvement project going at the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility has been a slow process. He stated in addition to the 1,608,827 CDBG Grant that the town also received a Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) Grant in the amount of \$1 million, which has provided a total of \$2.5 million in grant funding to make the much-needed improvements to the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility. He stated not only was the approval of the grant funding delayed because of the Covid-19 Pandemic that the process relative the soliciting bids, negotiating contracts, and getting the Contractors on-site have been slow. He stated during this process that the Contractors have asked that as units became vacant that they not be filled to allow for temporary moves of tenants while work was being done in the occupied units. He stated the plan to use vacant units to house current tenants while the rehabilitation/improvement work was being done initially seemed to be a good plan, until they realized how long the entire construction project was going to take and the amount of lost rental revenue.

Councilor Ryan questioned: (1) Whether holding some units vacant during the construction project were factored into the original plan; and (2) The Contract Completion Date.

Ledyard Housing Authority Director Colleen Lauer addressed Councilor Ryan's questions as follows:

- (1) The Construction/Rehabilitation Plan did not include keeping three units vacant. She explained that it was more of an understanding that if they had a vacant unit that they wanted to keep it vacant to house tenants during the time the construction work was being done in the occupied units. She stated one apartment became vacant last March, 2022, and she noted that it was now January 2023; and other than taking the cabinets out, because the former tenant was a smoker, that no work has been done. She also noted that they had one tenant that passed away and one tenant moved out of the Facility,

which has left them with three vacant units. She stated the Contractor has requested the three units remain vacant, with the plan to do the improvement/rehabilitation work to the three vacant units first; and then temporally move tenants into those units as necessary to perform the work on the occupied units. She stated in speaking with the Architect today she told him that she had to rent one of the three vacant units, noting the financial hardship of keeping three units vacant. She stated in addition to the loss of the rent revenue that they had to pay expenses for the three vacant units which included \$400.00 a month in electrical costs to keep the heat on at 60 degrees to keep the pipes from freezing; and

- (2) Per the Contract the construction contractor had two-years to complete the project. Initially the project was supposed to be completed in mid-February, 2023. Ms. Lauer explained the process involved from soliciting bids, negotiating with contractors and the state to obtaining a waiver from the State Building Official to accommodate some of the handicap accessible equipment in the 420 square foot units, such as the grab bars in the bathrooms. She stated that they were now hoping the project would be completed by the end of the calendar year (2023), noting that they were still waiting for the cabinets and windows to be ordered.

Ms. Lauer continued by providing an overview of the rehabilitation/improvement project noting that because Kings Corner Manor was an older development, the heat was electric baseboard, the original windows and doors were not energy efficient, and the tubs were a safety hazard for older and disabled people. She stated the scope of the improvement work would include the replacement of windows, outside doors and installing storm doors with energy star rated products. It would also include the installation of new split heat pump systems for improved and efficient heating and air conditioning in each unit, the tubs would be removed and replaced with roll-in showers and grab bars, the toilets, sinks and flooring materials would also be replaced removing architectural barriers.

Ms. Lauer stated in accordance with “*Ordinance Establishing a Housing Authority for the Town of Ledyard*” and its Appendix A “*Agreement Between The Town of Ledyard And Ledyard Housing Authority Regarding Payment in Lieu of Taxes*” the Housing Authority has been putting money into their Short-Term Investment Fund (STIF) for capital improvements, noting that the funds were growing. She stated if they decided to handle the snow removal in-house that their maintenance man could use the lawn tractor which had a small plow on it, noting that they do not have a truck that could be used to plow snow. She stated should there be a large snowstorm that they would try to hire a private contractor for the snow removal and pay per storm. She stated last year the Seasonal Snow Removal Contract was \$5,000; and then they paid an additional \$1,250 bringing the total snow removal cost to \$6,250 for the year. However, she stated this year the same contractor has come back with Seasonal Snow Removal Contract price of \$10,000 which would include clearing the sidewalks, parking lot, and the road. She stated in working to negotiate with the snow removal contractor that they could bring the Seasonal Contract cost down to \$6,750 if the contractor did not clear the sidewalks. Ms. Lauer went on to state if we have a mild winter, and they do not have to use a private contractor for the snow removal that the Housing Authority would pay the PILOT payment.

Councilor Ingalls questioned whether the Kings Corner Senior Housing Facility was planning to pay for Seasonal Snow Removal Contract; or pay per storm this year. Ms. Lauer stated for this winter that they planned to pay per storm this year.

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin explained that the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility was a quasi-town agency, noting that the town does have some oversight at some level. He stated the understanding with regard to snowstorms has been that the Public Works Department would make a pass thru the Facility to keep things open for emergency vehicles. He stated over the years the Public Works Department has wandered at times, noting as an example that they were involved in a summertime project at the Senior Housing Facility. He stated there has been a *loose understanding*, and he stated that all parties would benefit long-term to have a tight understanding of what the town's (Public Works Department) direct role was at the Kings Corner Senior Housing Facility. He stated he did not think that the town's (Public Works Department) role was as extensive to the extent of what they have already extended their services to the Senior Housing Facility. He suggested this subject be taken up more thoroughly at a later time, noting that it would help both the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility and the Town (Public Works Department).

Councilor Ingalls suggested in working with Housing Authority Director Colleen Lauer that perhaps the Town Council could waive a portion of the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility's PILOT payment, using an "*up-to*" approach based on the actual costs of the snow removal costs this winter.

Councilor Ingalls stated her introduction to the Finance Committee was before Ms. Lauer was the Housing Authority Director. She stated at her first Finance Committee meeting the Committee was asked to consider the Housing Authority's request to waive their PILOT payment. However, she stated the Finance Committee's questions regarding fiscal responsibility were met with disdain by the Housing Authority. She stated at that time there was no demonstration of sound management. She stated since Ms. Lauer has been managing the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility that she has gotten their finances in order and has been able to answer financial questions and has provided information as requested. However, she stated that she still had a reluctance to waive a PILOT payment, based on Councilor Saums' comments earlier this evening about others seeking PILOT payment waivers. She stated the Town Council has a responsibility to the taxpayers, noting the importance for them to consider everyone's interests. She concluded by stating that her reluctance was not a reflection of Ms. Lauer's management; and that she thought that they could perhaps meet in the middle.

Councilor Saums suggested a Motion be drafted for the Finance Committee's next meeting.

The Finance Committee agreed with Councilor Saums' suggestion, not to act on this request this evening in an effort to draft a formal motion.

****POST MEETING NOTE****: 1/5/2023: In a conversation with Housing Authority Director Colleen Lauer, waiting until the end of the winter season (end of March/beginning of April) was discussed to see what the Housing Authority expenses would be for snow removal; and to draft a Motion at that time regarding the relief of some of the PILOT Payment. Ms. Lauer would contact the Mayor's Office should funds run low before the end of the winter.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

2. MOTION to recommend the Town Council grant a Bid Waiver to Goliath Structural Steel Maintenance, LLC of Carver Massachusetts, in the amount of \$32,500 for the Roof Cleaning and Recoating of the Ledyard Center Water Storage Tank, due to the lack of receiving the required three bids in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance for Purchasing*".

Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Councilor Saums provided some background explaining at the May 4, 2005 Referendum the townspeople approved \$5,950,000 for the design and installation of a watermain along Route 117 and various related improvements. He stated this project included the *installation of a 1.25 million gallon steel tank, with concrete foundation* on Town owned property at Ledyard Center behind Ledyard Center Elementary school. He stated the construction of the Ledyard Center Water Storage Tank was completed in 2009.

Councilor Saums went on to explain that the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) has been annually setting funds aside in their Capital Account for the maintenance of the Water Storage Tank, because they knew in about fifteen years the Tank would need to be repainted. He stated the Ledyard Center Storage Tank was now 14-years old and that both the inside and outside of the tank were inspected, noting they found that the roof needed to be cleaned and resurfaced; but that the rest of the Tank was still in good condition, and did not need to be repainted at this time.

Councilor Saums continued by noting that on behalf of the Water Pollution Control Authority that Groton Utilities solicited bids to clean and recoat the Ledyard Center Water Tank. He stated because they did not receive a good response that over the past year Groton Utilities solicited bids multiple times, however, he explained that they still only received one bid. Therefore, he stated the WPCA has requested a Bid Waiver to Goliath Structural Steel Maintenance, LLC of Carver Massachusetts, in the amount of \$32,500. He noted in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance for Purchasing*", for goods and services over the amount of \$15,000 that three bids were required. If three bids were not received a bid waiver may be granted by the Town Council.

Councilor Saums concluded by noting the contractor provided two estimates, one to only resurface the top of the tank in the amount of \$32,500, which they were acting on this evening; and one cost estimate to recoat the entire exterior of the Tank which was in the amount of \$285,000. He stated thankfully, the rest of the Tank was in good condition, and therefore, they would only be cleaning and resurfacing the top of the Water Storage Tank.

Councilor Ingalls stated without receiving more than one bid that they had nothing to compare to this contractor's proposal to, noting that she did not like to vote "Yes" because her hands were tied. However, she stated because she felt that her hands were tied that she would vote "Yes".

Councilor Saums noted Councilor Ingalls made a good point. However, he stated by only having to clean and recoat the top of the Water Storage Tank that it would provide the Water Pollution Control Authority more time to seek more bidders for when it comes time to recoat/paint the entire Tank. He stated this was currently a tough time to try to get contractors, noting that part of the WPCA's discussion to wait on painting the entire Tank was to try to get better pricing with more complete bidders.

Councilor Ryan questioned the budget account that the cleaning and recoating the Tank would be paid from. Councilor Saums explained that explain that the Water Pollution Control Authority has been annually setting funds aside in their Capital Account for the maintenance of the Water Storage Tank.

VOTE: 3- 0 Approved and so declared

<p>RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0 MOVER: Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor SECONDER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor AYES: Ingalls, Ryan, Saums</p>
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3. Future of curbside collection and contracting.

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin provided some background regarding curbside collection services. He reviewed the proposals that were received in response to Bid #2019-016 as noted below. He explained that the Town was 3.5 years into a 6-year contract with Willimantic Wastepaper, noting that it has taken nearly 3-years to get adjusted and aligned with the 11,000+ carts and 50+container assignments, data and the management of them, etc. He stated in 2019 the Town only received two bids for the curbside collection services: (1) Willimantic Wastepaper, has since been bought out by Casella Waste Management; and (2) F.E. Crandall, who was recently bought out by Connecticut Waste Removal and Recycling Management (CWPM). He stated CWPM recently snapped up the following trash removal/waste management companies: Sawchuck Waste Removal of New London, Perkins & Sons Rubbish Removal of North Stonington, Sterling Superior Services, and F.W. Crandall along with a few others, noting that the area was winding up with only a few large waste management companies. He stated CWPM has been a large waste management company in the region for quite some time, noting that they have been doing commercial waste collection in Ledyard for a number of years; and that they were the Town's Bulky Waste provider. However, he stated CWPM has never submitted a bid for curbside collection services for the Town.

Mr. Masalin continued by noting that the town had 2-years remaining on their current curbside collection contract with Casella Waste Management (formerly Willimantic Waste). He addressed the time involved to solicit bids in advance of the end of the current contract and to deal with the logistics of changing contractors, noting that curbside collection services were now automated with the 11,000+ carts and 50+container assignments, and he stated that they trend was heading in a direction that curbside collection would never go back to manual. He suggested in light of the context and in-light of the nature of the services that the town consider negotiating with Casella Waste Management to come to an agreement that would be favorable beyond the terms of the current contract. He stated he heard Councilor Ingalls' concerns earlier this evening (Item #2) regarding bid waivers, noting that this would require some form of a bid waiver to extend their Curbside Collection Contract. However, he stated curbside collection and the logistics of 11,000+ carts and 50+container assignments were a complex scenario. He explained that if they were to change curbside collection contractors that he would need at least a temporary Assistant to help him manage the process/transition of collecting the existing carts/containers and distributing/assigning the new carts/containers along with the data to track all that was involved with the project. He stated by starting this process early enough that it would provide them with some certainty about things, not just from a service standpoint, but also from a budget standpoint.

Town of Ledyard RFP #2019-06: Trash & Recycling Services Bid Opening March 21, 2019								
BASE BID								
			Option	Option	Option	Option	Cart	Extra Cart
Company Name	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Replace	Svc Chg
Willimantic Waste	574,070.63	589,857.58	606,078.66	622,745.82	639,871.33	657,467.79	100.00	10.00
FE Crandall	891,000.00	891,000.00	891,000.00	891,000.00	891,000.00	891,000.00	75.00	4.50
	316,929.37	301,142.42	284,921.34	268,254.18	251,128.67	233,532.21		
BID ALTERNATIVE 1: WEEKLY RECYCLING								
			Option	Option	Option	Option	Cart	Extra Cart
Company Name	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Replace	Svc Chg
Willimantic Waste	640,000.00	657,600.00	675,684.00	694,265.31	713,357.61	732,974.94	100.00	10.00
FE Crandall	973,500.00	973,500.00	973,500.00	973,500.00	973,500.00	973,500.00	75.00	4.50
	333,500.00	315,900.00	297,816.00	279,234.69	260,142.39	240,525.06		

ADDITIONAL BID ALTERNATIVES								
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Cart Replace	Extra Cart Svc Chg
Willimantic Waste (Bid Alt #2)	568,212.77	583,838.62	599,894.18	616,391.27	633,342.03	650,758.94	100.00	10.00
FE Crandall	692,340.00	692,340.00	692,340.00	692,340.00	692,340.00	692,340.00	75.00	4.50
	124,127.23	108,501.38	92,445.82	75,948.73	58,997.97	41,581.06		
	* Willimantic had a third bid alt -- Pay as You Throw. The prices are the same as Bid Alt #2.							
	** FE Crandall's alt bid is for Zero Waste							

Present:								
CJ Crisostomo	Town of Ledyard			YEAR 1				July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020
Mary-Beth Hubbard	Town of Ledyard			YEAR 2				July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021
Fred Allyn III	Town of Ledyard			OPTION YR 1 (actual year 3)				July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022
Marcia Hancock	Town of Ledyard			OPTION YR 2 (actual year 4)				July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023
Sarah Crandall	FE Crandall			OPTION YR 3 (actual year 5)				July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024
Victoria Lindsey	Willimantic Waste Paper			OPTION YR 4 (actual year 6)				July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

The Finance Committee and Mr. Masalin discussed the following:

- Pros and cons between: (1) Negotiating “*Extension Years*” after the sixth year (June 30, 2025) of the Curbside Collection Contract that was awarded in response to Bid #2019-16; and (2) Solicit bids at the end of Option Year #2 (June 30, 2023) in preparation for implementation after Option Year #4 (June 30, 2025 - which was the sixth year of the current contract).
- Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recycling Authority (SCRRA) has again increased the Tipping Fees by \$2.00 per ton; which was a total increase of \$3.25 per ton over the last two budget years. Household trash was being disposed at the Lisbon Incinerator Plant instead of the Preston Incinerator Plant.
- The Recycling Market has turned favorable, and was once again beginning to make money. But because SCRRA had borne the recycling costs for a number of years SCRRA was not distributing the revenues to Member Towns.
- Because waste management (tipping fees for bulky waste) cost per ton to dispose of waste was constantly fluctuating that the ability to control at least 50% of the cost thru the curbside collection contract would be helpful for budgetary purposes.

- Single Stream Recycling found that the paper was being contaminated by the glass breaking during the collection process. SCRRRA credits Member Towns for the recyclables, however, the Towns were also penalized for the contaminations that occurred.
 - The cost to change from collecting recyclables from every other week to every week would cost about \$60,000 - \$80,000. Would the town be able to recover the \$80,000 by once again separating the recyclables (paper/cardboard from the glass) and picking up recyclables every week alternating between picking up paper/cardboard one week and glass the other week. This would improve the quality of the recyclables, and therefore, reduce the penalties and increase the credits, if everyone recycled correctly.
 - Cardboard, paper, certain plastics and aluminum were the most valued recyclable commodities. Additional containers would be required to separate the recyclables to provide for every week pick-up alternating between the paper and glass collection.
- For a variety of reasons, there was a limited number of Waste Management Contractors in the area that would be interested in submitting a proposal for curbside collection service, of which one was the cost to provide carts.

Mayor Allyn, III, addressed the two options being discussed this evening: (1) Negotiate “*Extension Years*” after year 6 of the Curbside Collection Contract that was awarded in response to Bid #2019-16, noting that there was \$1.1 million invested in carts that were owned by the current contractor, Casella Waste, but were managed by the town; and (2) Solicit bids at the end of Option Year #2 (June 30, 2023). He stated if the town was not able to successfully negotiate an extension with the current contract that they would then move forward with going out to bid for curbside collection services.

The Finance Committee asked Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin to start a conversation to extend the contract with the current Curbside Collection Contractor – Casella Waste Management.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

4. MOTION to recommend the Town Council approve a revised Appendix A- *Qualifying Income Schedule* in accordance with Ordinance #200-005 (rev. 1) “*An Ordinance to Provide Property Tax Relief for Certain Homeowners Age Sixty-Five or Over or Permanently and Totally Disabled (rev.1)*” for the filing period of February 1, 2023 – May 15, 2023.

Ordinance # 200-005 (rev.1)

DRAFT: 12/19/2022

Appendix A

Qualifying Income Schedule

Qualifying Income		Tax Reduction As Percentage Of Property Tax	Tax Reduction For Any Year	
Over	Not Exceeding			
Married Homeowners			Maximum	Minimum

Qualifying Income		Tax Reduction As Percentage Of Property Tax	Tax Reduction For Any Year	
Over	Not Exceeding			
Married Homeowners			Maximum	Minimum
\$ 0	\$19,100 \$20,200	50%	\$1,250	\$400
\$19,100 \$20,200 -	\$25,600 \$27,100	40 %	\$1,000	\$350
\$25,600 \$27,100	\$31,900 \$33,800	30 %	\$750	\$250
\$31,900 \$33,800	\$38,100 \$40,300	20%	\$500	\$150
\$37,600 \$40,300	\$45,800 \$49,100	10%	\$250	\$150
\$49,100		None		
Unmarried Homeowners				
\$ 0	\$19,100 \$20,200	40%	\$1,000	\$350
\$19,100 \$20,200 -	\$25,600 \$27,100	30%	\$750	\$250
\$25,600 \$27,100	\$31,900 \$33,800	20%	\$500	\$150
\$31,900 \$33,800	\$38,100 \$40,300	10%	\$250	\$150
\$37,600 \$40,300	\$45,800 \$49,100	None	-0-	-0-
\$49,100		None		

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on: _____

Kevin J. Dombrowski, Chairman

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums provided some background, stating that in addition to the State, that the town provided tax relief to qualifying homeowners thru the adoption of Ordinance #200-005 (rev. 1) “An Ordinance to Provide Property Tax Relief for Certain Homeowners Age Sixty-Five or Over or Permanently and Totally Disabled (rev.1).

Councilor Saums went on to state that the provisions of the Ordinance required the town to annually update the “Qualifying Income Schedule” to be consistent with the State’s Qualifying Income, which was based on the United States Social Security Administration Program.

Councilor Saums noted in accordance with Ordinance #200-005 (rev.1) Paragraph 3 “Qualifications”; paragraph (e) “Persons qualified for tax credit or deferment benefits under this Ordinance are those whose maximum income during the calendar year preceding the year in which application is made for the tax credit does not exceed the Qualifying Income Schedule, as hereby incorporated in the ordinance as though fully set forth herein. A copy of the approved Qualifying Income Schedule shall be filed with the Town Clerk when established and when amended. **The income guidelines provided in the Qualifying Income Schedule (Appendix A) shall be adjusted to reflect a cost of living increase issued by the United States Social Security Administration, pending the approval of the Town Council prior to the first of January of the year of application.**”

Councilor Saums noted that the State also offered relief for renters. Mayor Allyn, III, stated that Municipal Agent Karen Goetchuis administers a *Renters Rebate Program*.

It was noted that because the “Qualifying Income Schedule” was an Appendix to the Ordinance, and because they were not changing the Ordinance itself, a public hearing was not required. Annually updating the “Qualifying Income Schedule” for the town’s Tax Relief program was an administrative action.

VOTE: 3- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0

MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

SECONDER: Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor

AYES: Ingalls, Ryan, Saums

5. MOTION to recommend the Town Council adopt proposed revisions to the “Resolution Establishing Administrator/Department Head Benefits” as contained in the draft dated December 6, 2022.

Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained that proposed revisions to the “Resolution Establishing Administrator/Department Head Benefits” were drafted to update the language to include the addition of a new “Wages and Compensation” Section and other editorials as noted below.

“WAGES AND COMPENSATION

Employees shall be paid at the rate as designated by the Mayor or contractually negotiated. Increases in wages shall be effective on the first day of July and may not be less than the percentage of the highest union contracted increase for that fiscal year.

Employees required to be available via cell phone outside of regular work hours who are not issued a Town cell phone, shall receive a monthly stipend for usage of their personal cell phone at a rate equivalent to the highest stipend paid to any of the Town’s bargaining units.

With the implementation of this Resolutions, retroactive reimbursement for personal cell phone use shall be paid to employees who were on-staff during the period beginning with the Covid 19 pandemic of March, 2020; as outlined in the above paragraph.”

Mayor Allyn continued to explain that the highest union contracted increase for this fiscal year was 3%. He presented a spreadsheet that was prepared by Administrator of Human Resources Don Steinhoff which showed the difference in the hourly rate of the Department Heads covered under this Resolution, noting the difference in the hourly rate ranged from 0.07 to 0.29 per hour; for a total cost of \$4,813.02 for Fiscal Year 2022/2023.

Mayor Allyn went on to note the other change in the Resolution was to provide a stipend to the Department Heads who use of their personal cell phones to conduct town business. He stated it was more cost effective for the town to provide a stipend to these Department Heads for using their personal cell phones for town business than it would be for the town to purchase additional cell phones and additional monthly contracts for phone. He stated the cost of the cell phone stipend was \$4,320 per year. He stated the wage adjustment and cell phone stipends would be retroactive to July 1, 2022.

Councilor Saums addressed the language in the new Wage and Compensation Section as follows: *“Employees shall be paid at the rate as designated by the Mayor or contractually negotiated. Increases in wages shall be effective on the first day of July and **may not be less than the percentage of the highest union contracted increase for that fiscal year.**”* He stated the town has been very careful with raises for Department Heads; noting that the Department Heads have not received many raises; and the raises they received have not been much. Therefore, he stated that he was in-favor with keeping the Department Head’s wage increases at par or upping them a little based on the past cycle. However, he stated if this clause was included in the Resolution; and for some reason one union asked for a 5% wage increase, and the town said *“No”*; but the union then won their case through Arbitration; that the fourteen Department Heads covered by the Resolution would also receive a 5% wage increase. Therefore, he stated he had concerns, because the town did not have total control over what they give their union employees. He stated he did not have a solution this evening with regard to what they could replace this language with.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated historically the town has been aggressive with keeping the wage increases for bargaining units low. Councilor Saums agreed with Mayor Allyn’s comment, and he added that the town has actually fallen behind in some areas, noting in some cases Ledyard’s wages were lower than other towns. Mayor Allyn stated keeping wages lower than other towns has been an issue for Ledyard with respect to trying to keep staff and in trying to fill vacancies for certain roles/positions. He stated that this has become a problem for the Town.

Councilor Saums stated in certain instances some union employees did receive a 5% wage increase because they were correcting past inequalities. He stated that he believed he believed Ledyard would be negotiating differently, noting that employees read our labor contracts/agreements and the contracts/agreements of neighboring communities He concluded by expressing concern that with the proposed wage language, as written, in the *“Resolution Establishing Administrator/Department Head Benefits”* that they could end up giving some big raises unintentionally. He questioned whether they could write the wage language in a way that would prevent them from unintentionally giving big raises to Department Heads.

Councilor Ryan suggested basing the Department Head wage increases on an average of wage increases of the bargaining units.

The Finance Committee agreed to withdraw the motion to obtain additional information.

RESULT: WITHDRAWN

Remove from Agenda

6. MOTION to recommend the Town Council approve a proposed *“Lease Agreement between Robert and Mary Graham and the Town of Ledyard”* for the lease of approximately 0.8-acre +/- parcel on Bush Pond.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums provided some background stating that Mr. and Mrs. Graham purchased a piece of land on the twenty-three-acre Bush Pond which was parallel to Long Pond. He explained that initially Mr. and Mrs. Graham wanted to give/gift about 550 linear feet of the pond frontage to the Town, which was the middle section of the pond. However, he stated Ledge Light Health District required a certain amount of reserve area for the remaining cottages on the parcel (one cottage on the south side and three cottages on the north side) that the property could not be divided to give a portion of the parcel to the Town. Therefore; he stated that Mr. and Mrs. Graham have decided to offer the Town an opportunity to enter into a 99-year Lease to provide a waterfront park for the Town.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated that Mr. and Mrs. Graham removed a number of the dilapidated cottages and cleaned up the property taking on a lot of the expense to open up the property making it accessible. He stated at the Town Council’s July 27, 2022 he was authorized to have a survey conducted and to draft a legal description of the three-quarter acre parcel. He also noted that the Town Attorney and the Graham’s Attorney worked together to draft the proposed lease presented this evening. He thanked Mr. and Mrs. Graham for their generous offer, noting that it was an incredible gift to the town and he thanked them for attending tonight’s meeting.

Mayor Allyn went on to note the terms of the proposed 99-year lease would allow the town to use the 0.8 +/- acre piece of the property as a waterfront park for passive (non-motorized) recreation such as canoeing, kayaking, fishing, etc., for a leased amount of \$10.00 per year. He explained that the Town could not construct a building on the parcel but that they could put in a gazebo for picnicking, and that the Graham’s would allow the town to put a port-a-john on the property seasonally. He noted that the parcel would be under the Administrative Control of the Parks & Recreation Department, and he stated that he worked with Parks & Recreation Director Scott Johnson, Jr. to provide some cost estimates this evening that would make the property ready for use by town residents and for the annual maintenance.

Parks and Recreation Director Scott Johnson, Jr. addressed the costs to make the property ready for use by town residents and for the annual maintenance. He noted that he expected to receive a cost estimate tomorrow for the grass cutting. He reviewed the cost estimates as follows:

Lantern Hill Valley Park (Bush Pond)

	Quantity	Unit Price	Total	Recurring	Notes
Rectangular picnic table	1	\$1,300	\$1,300	N	8' Vinyl coated HD rectangular picnic table
ADA picnic table	1	\$1,500	\$1,500	N	8' Vinyl coated HD ADA rect. picnic table
Seasonal Port-a-John	1	\$62	\$558	Y	Contract price for P&R- Full Year cost
Picnic Pavilion	1	\$18,400	\$18,400	N	14x20 hip roof, Carefree Small Bldgs.
Concrete floor	1	\$5,300	\$5,300	N	16x22 poured floor
Protective bollards Mow/maintain	2	\$295.00	\$590.00	N	Protect front pavilion posts, plus install/ concrete
trash removal	1	\$41.67	\$500	Y	Annual cost
TOTAL Up-Start (Estimated)			\$28,148		
TOTAL ANNUAL MAINTENANCE (Estimated)			\$1,648		

Councilor Saums explained the reason these cost estimates were provided this evening was because the Finance Committee needed to ask what the long-term costs to the town would be by leasing the waterfront property. He stated there would be some one-time capital improvement costs estimated to cost \$28,148; and an annual maintenance cost of about \$1,648.

Councilor Ryan questioned the funding source to support the Lantern Hill Valley Park (Bush Pond). Director Mr. Johnson explained that Parks and Recreation would use funding from their Capital Account for the initial capital expenses such as the Picnic Pavilion, Concrete Floor, Picnic Tables, etc. He explained that under Ordinance #200-009 “An Ordinance Providing For The Transfer of Certain Revenue From the Real Estate Conveyance Tax To Specific Town of Ledyard Funds” a percentage of the conveyance tax that the town received was allocated the Parks and Recreation Capital Account to be used for park improvements and capital other expenses. He also noted that the Parks and Recreation had some boat docks that were previously used at the Highlands Lake which he thought could be installed at Bush Pond to be used for a boat launch, explaining that the Capital Account could be used for the ramps and pylons to secure the boat docks/launch. He stated the annual maintenance, such as mowing, trash pick-up and port-a-john would be paid from the Department’s maintenance operating accounts.

Mr. Johnson noted that he was preparing his budget submittal for next year and he stated that he would be including the one-time start-up costs for Bush Pond in the Parks and Recreation’s Fiscal Year 2023/2023 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Councilor Rodriguez questioned when the waterfront park would be available for public use. Mayor Allyn replied stating that although they may not have the picnic pavilion and concrete floor poured, that the property could be ready for public use by Spring, 2023, noting that Mr. and Mrs. Graham have already done a tremendous amount of work on property.

Also discussed was installing some safety barriers along Lantern Hill Road to prevent vehicles from going off the road into the water.

The Finance Committee thanked Mr. and Mrs. Graham for their very generous offer to lease a portion of Bush Pond to the Town for \$10.00 per year for 99-years to be used for a waterfront park for residents to enjoy.

VOTE: 3- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0
MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
AYES: Ingalls, Ryan, Saums

7. Any Old Business proper to come before the Committee.- None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Ingalls moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Ryan.

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William D. Saums
Committee Chairman
Finance Committee