



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Town Council

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339-1551
(860) 464-3203
council@ledyardct.org

Chairman S. Naomi
Rodriguez

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

7:00 PM

Town Hall Council Chambers

In-Person: Council Chambers Town Hall Annex

Remote: Information noted below:

Join Zoom Meeting from your Computer, Smart Phone or Tablet:

**[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82635591376?
pwd=wWMRZ6VjxqBa5ea72TJ4aSuGOkDVGW.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82635591376?pwd=wWMRZ6VjxqBa5ea72TJ4aSuGOkDVGW.1)**
Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 826 3559 1376; Passcode: 297696

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building.

Chairman Rodriguez welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. She stated for the members of the Town Council and 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. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Councilor April Brunelle
Councilor Jessica Buhle
Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez
Councilor Tim Ryan
Councilor Tony Saccone
Councilor Gary St. Vil
Excused: Councilor Kevin Dombrowski
Councilor Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

IV. PRESENTATIONS

None.

V. RESIDENT & PROPERTY OWNERS (COMMENTS LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES

Mr. Kevin Blacker, 11 Church Street, Noank. Chairman Rodriguez stated this portion of the meeting was for Residents and Property Owners of Ledyard and Gales Ferry to provide comments. Mr. Blacker stated that he rented private farmland at 483 Shewville Road “*The 97 Farm*”, and that he paid personal property taxes to Ledyard.

Mr. Blacker stated after reviewing the requested Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests that he and others filed, he believed that the former Town Planner and former Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman clearly violated some of the Developers 14th Amendment Constitutional Rights.

Mr. Blacker continued to note that he has raised concerns about the Gales Ferry District in a couple of emails that he sent to the Town Council. He stated in providing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) documentation he requested that the Town Council Chairman told him that the Town had no jurisdiction over the Gales Ferry District. He stated that the Town Council should be at least aware of what was going on in the Gales Ferry District, noting that their impact on the Cashman Project and the Town was going to be transformative; positive or negative. He stated the Gales Ferry District was violating their own Charter and Bylaws; and they do not appear to be complying with FOIA, noting that their leadership had some serious conflicts.

Mr. Blacker went on to address the Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project stating that the project should be looked at closely and considered, particularly the impacts on drinking water. He stated the Sewer Line Extension Project would increase the amount of sewage that is discharged to the Seth Williams Brook and into the Whitford Aquarium, which supplied the public drinking water for the town of Stonington. He noted that Stonington had wellfields in that area, and they were actively seeking to expand those wellfields. He stated the additional sewage was going to have major environmental impacts on the Mystic River and other towns.

Mr. Blacker concluded his comments by asking Ledyard to consider joining with other towns to protect the valley between Shewville Road and Lantern Hill Road. He stated for long-term planning that all of this farmland could serve the region as flood protection. Mr. Blacker thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to address them this evening, noting that he would continue to listen to the rest of the meeting from Zoom.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked Mr. Blacker for his comments.

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS

None.

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Chairman Rodriguez provided the following comments: (1) Councilor Gary Paul Resignation

- Chairman Rodriguez noted that last week she received Councilor Gary Paul's resignation letter from the Ledyard Town Council citing health issues. She noted that she telephoned Councilor Paul on December 31, 2024 to express her gratitude to him for his service to the Town of Ledyard, noting that he made a great impact in our community and that they were grateful. She stated that she also wished Councilor Paul well in his future, noting that he would be missed; (2) Law Enforcement Day Thursday, January 9, 2025 - Chairman Rodriguez stated Law Enforcement Day was a perfect time for our community to show their appreciation to our police officers, noting we understand that their work was dangerous and difficult. She stated that the Town of Ledyard appreciated the risk and sacrifices they make to keep our community safe; (3) 250th Anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence - Chairman Rodriguez noted that resident Mr. Milton (Dave) Schroeder provided comments at the Town Council's December 11, 2024 meeting regarding the United States Semiquincentennial that would take place on July 4, 2026. She stated that Mr. Schroeder mentioned the festivities that were held in Ledyard in 1976 to commemorate and celebrate the Bicentennial; and that he suggested the town consider planning similar events for 2026. She noted that she thought Mr. Schroeder's suggestions were a great idea; and that the Mayor mentioned planning for the Semiquincentennial in his Report, noting that in his absence, she would read his Report later this evening. Chairman Rodriguez stated that she wanted to include the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in this project.

Councilor Brunelle stated that her heart goes out to anyone who knows family or friends who live up in Los Angeles, California, where they were having the horrific fires. She stated that this was something that she could not get out of her mind, noting that the wind was just carrying the fires.

Councilor Buhle stated that she also wanted to thank Councilor Gary Paul for his service to the town. She stated that she and Councilor Paul may not have always agreed on everything, but that he was great to work with. She stated during conversations with Councilor Paul that his desire to give back to his community inspired her to consider running to serve on the Town Council. She stated that she appreciated his service to the town.

Councilor St. Vil stated tonight was the Town Council's 1st meeting of the New Year; and that he would like to begin by stating *Happy New Year!* to both the residents of Ledyard and his fellow Town Councilors. He stated like most Americans, that he would like to reflect upon last year, 2024, noting that he thought this Town Council has done a great job with pushing things forward, and making a difference for the town. He stated Chairman Rodriguez did a good job of enumerating the work they have done in her letter to the residents that was included in the Fall, 2024 Events Magazine, that was mailed to every household in town. He stated that he looked forward to working with everyone on doing more great things in 2025.

Councilor Ryan, attending remotely via Zoom, stated *Happy New Year!* and that he hoped everyone had a good holiday break. He stated that he would like to echo the comments that were made regarding Councilor Paul. He stated that he met Councilor Paul through the time they served together on the Town Council and through their involvement in serving the

town. He stated their work has all been

positive, and that he considered him as a friend. He stated Councilor Paul would be missed, noting that he looked forward to their continued conversations and in seeking his advice outside of the Town Council in the future. He thanked Councilor Paul for his service to the town.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2024

MOTION to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2024

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: April Brunelle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Rodriguez stated a Communications List has been provided on the meeting portal for tonight's meeting, and she noted referrals were listed.

Communications List January 8, 2025

X. REFERALS

XI. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

1. Administration Committee

Chairman Rodriguez noted tonight's Administration Committee meeting was cancelled due to illness.

RESULT: .

2. Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee's for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, January 15, 2025.

RESULT: .

3. Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee's next meeting was scheduled for January 15, 2025. He went on to note that the Budget Season was coming up; and he encouraged residents to be engaged and involved in the process. He stated the Board of Education has been meeting at least once a week, and that the Town Council would be conducting Budget Work Sessions on March 6, 10, & 13, 2025 to meet with Department Heads to discuss their projected expenses for the coming year. He stated that these meetings were a good opportunity for residents to hear about the services the town provides, and the justification for the Department's budget requests. He stated attending the Budget Work Sessions would help residents understand why taxes go up; good or bad.

Councilor Buhle provided an update for the residents who have been following the use of \$4.43 million of American Rescue Plan Act Funding (ARPA) that the Town (General Government) received in response to; and to aid with the recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency. She stated at the Finance Committee's December 4, 2024 meeting the Committee worked to make sure all of the funding Ledyard received was allocated responsibly; and to provide provisions for the use of any ARPA Funding that was remaining from projects that were coming in under budget so that they could accomplish as much as possible for the town. She noted the ARPA Guidelines required that the town have signed contracts in-place by December 31, 2024; and that all the funding be fully expended by December 31, 2026.

Councilor Buhle went on to explain at the Town Council's December 11, 2024 meeting they allocated \$50,000 of Town's American Rescue Plan Act Funding to install a Solid Surface Playground at the Juliet W. Long School. She stated despite the challenges, questions and roadblocks, they were able to get a contract signed by December 31, 2024 for the Solid Surface Playground. She stated with the Town Council allocating this \$50,000 from ARPA that they would now have all the funding needed to install a new Inclusive Playgond for the Juliet W. Long School. She stated that they would be working to get final quotes to order the playground equipment within the next couple of months.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that they were working to schedule a meeting between the Town Council Finance Committee and the Board of Education Finance Committee for later this month.

RESULT:

4. Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil noted the LUPPW Committee met on January 6, 2025 and discussed the following: (1) Historic Designation of the Spicer Homestead Ruins - Chairman Rodriguez noted that the site survey should be completed in about 10 days; and (2) Illegal Dumping - Councilor St. Vil noted that the LUPPW Committee has been reviewing residents' concerns regarding a neighbor that was dumping debris on their property. He stated the LUPPW Committee researched the town's ability to address illegal dumping, and they engaged Police Chief John Rich as well as the Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick. He stated based on their findings that Connecticut General State Statute 22a-250 addresses Illegal

Dumping, included provisions for the reporting of illegal dumping; and provided the ability to impose fines, the LUPPW Committee has concluded their work on the subject of Illegal Dumping. He stated that letters would be sent to the residents tomorrow suggesting a recommended path forward.

RESULT:

5. Permanent Municipal Building Committee

Councilor Brunelle noted that the PMBC met on January 6, 2025 and voted to elect the following Officers: Chairman Mr. Josphah Gush; Vice Chairman Mr. Gary Schneider, and Recording Secretary Mr. Jerry Tyminski.

RESULT:

6. Gales Ferry Fire Department

Councilor Saccone reported the following: (1) Fires - Councilor Saccone stated that unfortunately there were a couple of fires over the past several weeks. He asked that residents be cautious with the use of alternative fuels; (2) Emergency Generator - Councilor Saccone stated the Gales Ferry Fire Department has been paying \$1,400 per month, out of their pocket, to rent a generator, while waiting to receive the Grant Funding that they were approved to receive. He stated all the paperwork was now in place and that the Fire Department was moving forward to purchase a new Emergency Generator.

7. Ledyard Farmers' Committee

Chairman Rodriguez noted that the Farmers Market Committee met earlier this evening and discussed preparations for the 2025 Summer Market, which included ideas for the weekly Market themes.

8. Retirement Board

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Retirement Board's next meeting was scheduled for January 21, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

9. Inland Wetland and Water Courses Commission

Councilor St. Vil stated that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission met on January 7, 2025 and continued discussions on some proposed amendments.

11. Planning & Zoning Commission

Councilor St. Vil stated the Planning and Zoning Commission concluded their Public Hearing on the Application regarding a proposed development at the former Dow Chemical/Styrenics Site on Route 12, Gales Ferry. He explained with the Public Hearing closed, the Commission would continue their discussion and a decision would be provided by the end of January, 2025, noting that the Planning & Zoning Commission would be

holding their Regular Meeting tomorrow evening (1/9/2025) in the Council Chambers.

12. Economic Development Commission

Councilor Buhle stated that the EDC met on January 7, 2025 and addressed the following: (1) Route 12 Corridor Study - Councilor Buhle noted that the EDC received a presentation from a Representative from Gorman + York regarding the Route 12 Corridor Study. She noted that the Group discussed what the Study would entail; and she found the presentation and discussion interesting; (2) Business Directory Update; and (3) Addressed some housekeeping items.

XIII REPORT OF THE MAYOR:

Chairman Rodriguez noted that Mayor Allyn, III, was feeling ill this afternoon; therefore, in his absence that she would read the report he provided for tonight's meeting as follows: (1) *Wished All a Happy New Year 2025!*; (2) Surprise Snow Day - On Monday, January 6, 2025 Ledyard had five motor vehicle accidents due to a surprise Snow Day. The forecast called for a 1% chance of flurries, but they received enough snow to make for slippery conditions; (3) Spicer Homestead Ruins - Dieter & Gardner have prepared a draft Survey Plan for the area of Spicer Homestead Ruins Property being considered for historic preservation; (4) 250th Anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence - Mayor Allyn, III, has established an Ad Hoc Committee to plan town events to celebrate the Semiquincentennial. The Ad Hoc Committee would be comprised of 7 members to include Library Staff, Historic District Commission, Town Clerk, Parks & Recreation Staff, and others. The Ad Hoc Committee would be planning events for Ledyard to take place on July 3, 4, & 5, 2026 and that more information would be provided as the Ad Hoc Committee's work gets underway; (5) Ledyard High School Civics Class - Mayor Allyn, III, had the opportunity to engage with the students on January 7, 2025 to discuss their projects; which included Animal Care/Cruelty; Affordable Housing, and other topics; (6) Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) Legislative Agenda - Mayor Allyn, III, met with State Representatives Greg Howard and Brian Lanoue to hear their plans for the upcoming Legislative Session, which was scheduled to begin on January 9, 2025; (7) Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project - Phase III of the Project involved upgrading the existing sewer line to a larger pipe from the High School to Pennywise Lane where it tied into the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The larger sewer line would provide adequate capacity to handle the sewer services in the center of town. The sewer line has been installed across the High School Baseball Field and was to now up to the median. The pipe would then be installed along Gallup Hill Road. The **green line** in the attached map represented the installation of the sewer pipe that has been installed/completed since December 26, 2024; and the **red line** showed the upcoming work to complete the tie-in at Pennywise Lane.

Questions to the Mayor None.

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT CALENDAR

*1. MOTION to reappoint the following as Regular Members of the Retirement Board for a three (3) year term ending January 20, 2028:

- Mr. John Rodolico (R) 40 Long Pond Road, Ledyard
- Mr. Roger Codding (R) 13 Hemlock Circle, Gales Ferry.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: April Brunelle

*2. MOTION to reappoint Mr. Roger Codding (R) 13 Hemlock Circle, Gales Ferry, as a Regular Member to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a four (4) year term ending December 4, 2028.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: April Brunelle

*3. MOTION to reappoint Mr. Joseph Lozier (R) 198 Gallup Hill Road, Ledyard, as an Alternate Member to the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recovery Authority (SCRRRA) for a three (3) year term ending January 31, 2028.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: April Brunelle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Dombrowski, and Garcia-Irizarry

Administration Committee

4. MOTION to appoint Ms. Rhonda Spaziani (D) 9 Sunset Road, Gales Ferry, as an Alternate Member of the Planning & Zoning Commission to complete a three (3) year term ending December 31, 2026 to fill a vacancy left by Ms. Ribe.

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor St. Vil

Discussion: None.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: April Brunelle

SECONDER: Gary St. Vil

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Dombrowski, and Garcia-Irizarry

General Business

5. MOTION to approve an “Authorizing Resolution of the Ledyard Town Council; State Of Connecticut Department of Energy And Environmental Protection for the Tri-Town Trail Greenway Project - Phase 2” as presented in the draft dated December 30, 2024.

DRAFT 12/30/2024

Res: 004-2025/Jan 08

AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION
OF THE LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL
STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
FOR THE TRI-TOWN TRAIL GREENWAY PROJECT - PHASE 2

CERTIFICATION

I, Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk of the Town of Ledyard, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Ledyard Town Council at its duly called and

held meeting on January 8, 2025, at which a quorum was present and acting throughout, and that the resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked, and is at present in full force and effect:

RESOLVED: that the Town of Ledyard may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate for a grant in the amount of up-to \$112,000 for the Tri-Town Trail Greenway Project - Phase 2; and

FURTHER RESOLVED: that Fred B. Allyn, III, as Mayor of the Town of Ledyard, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Ledyard and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents.

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on: January 8, 2025

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

The undersigned further certifies that Fred B. Allyn, III, now holds the office of Mayor and that he has held that office since December 7, 2017.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF: The undersigned has executed this certification this _____ day of _____, 2025 year.

(Seal)

Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk

Moved by Chairman Rodriguez, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez noted that two members of the Tri-Town Trail Association were present this evening and she asked if they would like to make any comments. The Tri-Town Trail Members, Karen Parkinson and Barbara Kil, noted that they were present to answer questions that the Town Council may have.

Chairman Rodriguez recognized that the members of the Town Council did not have any questions, and she noted that they loved the Tri-Town Trail; and thanked them for the work they do.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: S. Naomi Rodriguez

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Dombrowski, and Garcia-Irizarry

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Transcribed by Roxanne M. Maher
Administrative Assistant to the Town Council

I, S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman of the Ledyard Town Council,
hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and
correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Town Council
Meeting held on January 8, 2025.

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

DISCLAIMER:

Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.

The Town Council's Official Agenda and final Minutes will be on file in the Town Clerk's Office.