



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Chairman S. Naomi
Rodriguez

Special Meeting

Wednesday, August 14, 2024

5:30 PM

Town Hall Annex Building - Hybrid
Format

In -Person: Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building

Remote Participation Information Noted Below:

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

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89915097877?pwd=xCBR6RXZfRVPbcXI7ataEKxg85dqbI.1>

by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 899 1509 7877; Passcode: 706450

I CALL TO ORDER

the Special Meeting was called to order by Committee Chairman Councilor Saccone at 5:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Saccone 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

Also present were the following:

S. Naomi Rodriguez Town Council Chairman
April Brunell Town Councilor
Fred Allyn, II Mayor
Matthew Bonin Finance Director
Steve Masali Public Works Director/Town Engineer
Steve Holyfield Administrator of Emergency Services
Jason Harting School Superintendent
Brandon Graber Board of Education Member
Eric Treaster Resident
Roxanne Maher Administrative Assistant

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

Mr. Eric Treaster, 10 Huntington Way, Ledyard, stated he was present to comment on the following:

- ***Vision Government Solutions Contract*** - Mr. Treaster stated he pleased to see the Vision Government Solutions contract to conduct the Town's Revaluation on tonight's agenda; noting that they would be working to get into every house to see what improvements have been made; which would make Ledyard's assessment process as fair as possible for everyone. He stated in reading the contract he was especially pleased to see that it included a training component for the Board of Assessment Appeals.
- ***Sewer Line Installation Fairway Drive and Colby Drive*** - Mr. Treaster continued by asking whether the taxpayers would be paying for the installation of the sewer line that was being constructed/installed on Fairway Drive and Colby Drive.

Mayor Allyn responded to Mr. Treaster by stating tonight's discussion of Item #6 regarding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects List would include the engineering design work to extend the sewer line down Fairway Drive and Colby Drive. However, he explained there was no action at this point to install a sewer line on those roads.

Mr. Treaster questioned whether the taxpayers would be paying for the engineering design work. Mayor Allyn replied "Yes", noting that they would be discussing this work later this evening.

- ***Land Use Fees*** - Mr. Treaster asked about Item #8 on tonight's Agenda regarding the allocation of \$3,000 to the Land Use Department, noting that he did not recall any Citation Fines being issued. Mayor Allyn stated that he would discuss this item later this evening.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Finance Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of July 17, 2024.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

VOTE:2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

VI. Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Matthew Bonin reported on the following: (1) Bond Anticipated Notes (BAN) Schools Consolidation/Improvement Projects (Middle School & Gallup Hill School) - Mr. Bonin stated on August 13, 2024, the Town paid off the BANS for these two school projects. He noted the State has scheduled their Project Audit for November, 2024. He stated once the State's Audit was completed they would release the remainder of the Grant Funding to the Town, and the Projects would be put to rest; (2) Bond Sale - School Various Projects - Mr. Bonin stated on August 12, 2024 the Town also Bonded \$8,550,000 to facilitate the Various School Projects which included the replacement of roofs at the Board of Education Central Office, Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School; installation of solar equipment at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School; upgrades to the Building Management System at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School, and electrical and Heating and Ventilation (HVAC) upgrades at the Juliet W. Long School; (2) Electric Bills - Mr. Bonin stated as everyone was aware the Eversource Bills have been extremely high, noting that these expenses would impact their budget moving forward.

RESULT: CONTINUE

VII. Financial Reports

Finance Director Matthew Bonin stated he would provide the Year-to-Date Revenue and Expenditure Budget verses Actual Reports at the Finance Committee's September 4, 2024 meeting.

RESULT: NO ACTION

VIII. BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

1. MOTION to add Courville's Garage to the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Standing Bid Waiver List.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Administrator of Emergency Services Steve Holyfield explained that the Gales Ferry Fire Company had been using Bulldog Fire Apparatus for their fire truck repairs, because they were familiar with the town's apparatus and because they had confidence in their lead mechanic, who had been working on their equipment for well over ten-years. However, he stated the lead mechanic was now working for Courville's Garage. He stated although the Fire Department had requested Courville's Garage be added to the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Standing Bid Waiver List that it was overlooked. Therefore, he stated they were requesting this vendor be added to the Standing Bid Waiver List. He stated their labor rates were within the standard rates.

Councilor Saccone noted the value in using a mechanic that knows their vehicles. He stated the mechanic the Gales Ferry Fire Department has been using for many years does outstanding work. However, he stated the mechanic moved to Corvelle's Garage.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

2. MOTION to transfer additional revenues received for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 as follows:

- \$39,502 received from the ASTE Program to Account #22570101 (BOE ASTE CNR) to be used as requested in the Board of Education's email dated August 8, 2024 as follows.
- \$27,000 Ag-Classroom multimedia equipment and interactive projector replacements
- \$12,500 to Update to the lightening system in the classrooms to LED
- \$304,635 received from Impact Aid to Account #22570101 (BOE CNR Reserve Fund) to be used for the following in accordance with the Board of Education's Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):
 - \$210,000 Ledyard High School Existing Elevator Replacement
 - \$73,300 Gallup Hill School Recommissioning
 - \$21,335 Juliet W. Long School-Gales Ferry School Playground

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated at their July 17, 2024 meeting the Finance Committee discussed Superintendent Jason Hartling's July 15, 2024 letter in which he reported that the Town received more revenue for the Agri-Science Program and for the Impact Aid, than the dollar amount that had been projected/included in the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget; and that he requested the Town Council transfer the additional revenues to the Board of Education's Capital Accounts.

Councilor Buhle continued by explaining that the Finance Committee did not want to transfer the funds without seeing a Plan from the Board of Education stating how they intended to use the additional funds. She noted in response to Chairman Rodriguez's July 30, 2024 letter, Board of Education Chairman Favry forwarded the capital projects as listed in the Motion above for the use of the additional funding. She stated that she was pleased that the Board of Education submitted the list of the projects they planned to spend the funds on, noting that they could cross those items off the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Councilor Saccone asked Superintendent Jason Hartling to explain what the Gallup Hill School Recommissioning involved. Mr. Hartling explained that the Board of Education would partner with Eversource to conduct a full evaluation of the Building Management System (BMS), which they have had issues with since it was installed. He stated that Eversource would provide recommendations on how to maximize the

Building Management System (BMS) as well as some mechanical adjustments to optimize and fix the system and the comfort issues for the students and faculty. He stated that hopefully they would see a two-year payoff in energy efficiency savings.

Councilor Saccone questioned whether Eversource was providing any Grant Assistance to pay for the Recommissioning. Mr. Hartling stated that Eversource was paying for the full evaluation and 43% of the mechanical/Building Maintenance System adjustments that would be made. He stated the Board of Education's final cost for the Recommissioning for the Gallup Hill School would be \$73,000.

Councilor Buhle questioned whether the \$210,000 project to replace the High School's existing elevator would qualify for the 63% State Grant Reimbursement. Mr. Hartling explained the Board of Education received an "Efficiency Letter" from the State which they would address as part of their Grant Application. He stated that Director of Facilities and Grounds Mr. Wayne Donaldson has been working on the project, noting that the Board of Education would be working to obtain Grant Funding for the project.

Councilor Saccone addressed the Juliet W. Long School-Gales Ferry School Playground and he questioned whether the \$21,335 would be the balance to fully fund the project. Mr. Hartling stated the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) was handling the Playground Project, therefore, he stated he did not their funding position. Councilor Buhle stated with this \$21,335 they would be very close to having the Playground Project fully funded.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

3. MOTION to grant a bid waiver to Vision Government Solutions in the amount of \$257,000 for Revaluation Services. due to receiving fewer than the required three bids in response to Bid 2024-04 (Revaluation) in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "An Ordinance for Purchasing".

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained in accordance with State Statute Ledyard was required to conduct a full Revaluation this year, noting in 2029 the town would be required to conduct a Statical Revaluation in which they would not have to visit all of the houses like they would be doing this year.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain in preparation for the Revaluation they had been allocating funding to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the past few years based on a projected budget of \$187,000 to conduct this work. However, he stated in soliciting bids they thought they had three bids, but that one envelope was only a letter stating that the company was not going to submit a bid. Therefore, he stated they only had two bids

and that the numbers came in substantially higher than the amount that was budgeted. He stated Vision Government Solutions was both the better value and lower cost, noting that they were a good vendor.

Mayor Allyn stated this Revaluation work would include door to door home inspections including sheds, decks, finished basements, etc. He stated the town used a different contractor the last time they had to conduct a full Revaluation and that they were not confident that the company got inside many houses. He stated Vision Government Solutions would begin their work this fall, and the new property valuations would take effect for the October 2025 Grand List.

Councilor Saccone noted at some point they were going to have to fund the difference between the \$187,000 that was budgeted and the actual \$257,000 cost.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

4. MOTION to approve appropriations from the receipt of sales of vehicles through GovDeals in the total amount of \$7,250 to the following capital accounts:

- \$2,575 to Public Works Small Trucks (21040101-57313);
- \$3,610 to Pooled Vehicles (21040101-57315);
- \$1,065 to Building Upgrade Reserve (21040111-58240).
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Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated the town has significantly increased their revenues by selling their surplus equipment using the on-line action site GovDeals than what they were getting from the sealed bid process they previously used. He stated this sale included the following: Retired Parks & Recreation Truck; former Fire Chief’s Explorer that was inoperable; and Solar Panels that were removed from the Senior Citizens Center/Parks & Recreation Facility, which were removed when the roof was replaced. He explained rather than reinstall the solar panels which had less than 50% of their useful life remaining the solar panels were sold.

Councilor Saccone questioned the difference between the small vehicles and pooled vehicles accounts. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated within the Capital Reserve Account they had the following five vehicle accounts:

- Heavy Equipment
- Heavy Trucks
- Light Trucks
- Light Equipment
- Pooled Vehicles

Mr. Masalin explained when the town sold surplus assets the funding was appropriated to the various associated accounts to be used toward future purchases.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

5. Continued discussion regarding potential uses of the revenue received from Public Act No.21-58 “An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management” in accordance with “Resolution Regarding Revenues Received from Beverage Container Surcharges” (Nip Bottle Revenue) adopted on June 8, 2022.

RESULT: CONTINUE

MOTION to approve purchase of a new Elgin Pelican sweeper through the Sourcewell lease/purchase provider over a term of five (5) years at \$66,467.49 per year.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated for some time he and the Finance Committee have been discussing the need to purchase a street sweeper, the use of the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges revenue to facilitate the purchase; and the potential opportunity to share the piece of equipment and it’s cost with the Town of Preston.

Mr. Masalin noted that prior to tonight’s meeting he had a telephone conversation with Preston First Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gothier to follow-up with Preston’s interest in a shared arrangement between Ledyard and Preston. He reported that Selectwoman Allyn-Gothier stated that Preston was on-board with the shared arrangement. He stated the Five-Year Lease/Purchase Annual Payment would be \$66,000 which included about a 4.7% annual interest rate. He stated the Town of Preston would pay approximately \$22,000 toward the annual lease payment; and Ledyard would pay about \$44,000. He noted the balance in the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges Account was about \$44,000 and by the time first payment was due, which would be when the street sweeper was delivered (March, 2025) the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges Account would have an approximate balance of \$75,000; which would most likely cover their payment for first two years. He stated going forward, in addition to using the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges revenues, that some funds could be drawn from Account 21040101-57311 (Public Works Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve), which has been funded at a level of \$85,000 annually.

Mr. Masalin stated in parallel with the purchase of the Street Sweeper that he would

be working to secure a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Preston outlining the details of the shared arrangement. He stated the Street Sweeper would last about fifteen years; which would provide ten years after the piece of equipment was paid for, in which the town could accumulate funding from the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges revenue in anticipation of having to replace the piece of equipment sometime in the future.

Councilor Saccone asked the following questions:

- ***\$66,000 Annual Lease/Purchase Payment***- Councilor Saccone questioned whether the \$66,000 was Ledyard’s share. Mr. Masalin stated the \$66,000 was the full Annual Payment. He stated Ledyard would make the full \$66,000 Annual Payment and in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which would be drafted, Preston would pay Ledyard their share annual share of \$22,000; explaining that these funds would be used to reimburse the Account. He stated that Ledyard’s actual share would be \$44,000.
- ***American Rescue Plan Act Funding (ARPA)*** - Councilor Saccone questioned should all of the ARPA Funding not be spent by the ARPA December 31, 2024 deadline, whether the Lease/Purchase Contract allowed the town to pay for the Street Sweeper in-full. Mr. Masalin stated the town could pay in-full at any time with no penalty. He stated the Lease/Purchase Contract was through Sourcewell, which was the reason they could directly work with them.
- ***Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges Account*** - Councilor Saccone questioned whether the purchase of the Street Sweeper would use all the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges funds received to date. Mayor Allyn, III, stated as Mr. Masalin mentioned that the first payment would essentially utilize all the Nip Bottle Revenue. However, he stated because the State disperses the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharges Funding twice a year, that there would be time to replenish the funds. He stated the town has been receiving about \$31,000 per year from this revenue source.

Mr. Masalin went on to state in-light of this predicament, they now felt that owning a Street Sweeper would be the best, and most economical way to meet their needs. He continued by explaining that the Town of Preston was coincidentally in need of replacing its Street Sweeper, which reached the end of its service life. He stated this has offered the opportunity to purchase a shared unit that would cover the annual scope of work for each town; noting that it would also be available for spot needs throughout the year. He stated the cost share would be allocated proportionally based on the paved road mileage which would result in 2/3 for Ledyard and 1/3 for Preston.

Councilor Buhle questioned the following:

- ***Annual Maintenance Costs***. Mr. Masalin stated there would be operational costs such as the replacing the brooms which wear out, and routine maintenance service costs. He stated during the first few years of its lifecycle that they would not have much maintenance costs unless they had an operational failure, because the warrantee would probably cover at least the first year or so.

- **Annual Street Sweeping** - Councilor Buhle asked whether they would only sweep the streets once a year. Mr. Masalin stated they would plan to sweep once a year, unless they had a need off season, such as event, or something were to happen. However, he stated because they would own the Street Sweeper that it would be available in case there was a need.

Mayor Allyn stated the last Street Sweeper lasted 22-years, noting during that time the town was using sand on the roads for winter operations, which put a lot more wear on the equipment than the amount of wear the new winter operations product they use today would put on the equipment.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

6. Continued discussion regarding the status and possible changes to 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: CONTINUE

MOTION to authorize the town to proceed with the engineering design of sewer mains along Fairway/Colby Drives (\$108,000) and Route 117 (\$137,500), respectively, per Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. Bid No. 2021-03 Amendments 3 and 4.

In addition, transfer and appropriate ARPA and/or other funding in the total amount of \$245,500 for said purpose. Source of ARPA funding transfer and other funding to be determined.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mr. Masalin provided an overview of the Sewer Extension Project as follows:

- ✓ **Phase I - Sewer Extension Project - \$1.11 million-** Would run from Ledyard Center to the High School (currently under way). - Mr. Masalin stated because this Phase was being done simultaneously with the Multi-Use Pathway that there was some savings in the costs for the engineering design work.

Mr. Masalin explained that during the construction of the Multi-Use Pathway they discovered that additional geotechnical validation was needed in the area of the large retaining wall at the intersection of Gallup Hill Road and Colonel Ledyard Highway. Therefore, he stated the construction work in this location has been halted pending the results of the geotechnical work and the associated

design. He stated Weston & Sampson submitted a proposal for the geotechnical validation services for a lump sum fee of \$15,300 and a proposal in the amount of an additional \$15,000 to cover the balance of the construction effort. However, he stated the additional funds needed for the Multi-Use Pathway would be discussed later this evening.

- ✓ **Phase II - Sewer Extension Project** - Ledyard Center Commercial District - Mr. Masalin explained ARPA Funding has been earmarked for Phase I (\$1.11 million) and Phase III (\$950,000) of the Sewer Extension Project. He stated to meet the ultimate goal of the sewer main extension to Ledyard Center, that pricing for engineering services for Phase II has been sought and acquired for consideration.

Mr. Masalin went on to note that Weston & Sampson Engineers provided a proposal to extend their services to design a bifurcated phase down Fairway Drive, and Colby Drive and up Route 117 to cover the existing and perspective commercial properties. He stated the cost for this design work was \$245,500 and he noted the proposal was attached to the Agenda on the meeting portal.

Mr. Masalin stated because of favorable construction bid pricing, that some ARPA funding allotted to Phase I was available for reallocation. The final costs for Phase I (in process) and Phase III (presently under design) were unknown. He stated that based on his analysis of the ARPA Funding for the Sewer Extension Project that he would not recommend the use of ARPA Funding be used for Phase II. He deferred to Mayor Allyn, III to speak on the interest in getting the sewer line (Phase II) to the commercial area on Route 117 (Colonel Ledyard Highway).

Mayor Allyn, III, noted the following interests and potential projects:

- 2019 Proposed development behind the former Ledyard Center School.
- Village Market Grocery Store - Mayor Allyn stated the Market frequently has their septic system pumped because the soils were not very good; and therefore, they have expressed an interest in the sewer line extension project and would like to be able connect.
- Former Lou's Garage across the street from Holdridges Garden Center - Mayor Allyn stated with both public water and sewer system this property could be redeveloped.
- Commercial Development - Mayor Allyn stated a Commercial Developer was interested in the property located behind the Town Hall and the Village Market, which was currently owned by the Holdridge Family. This Developer has also expressed an interest in paying for the installation of the sewer line to run from where it currently ended at the north driveway of the Congregational Church up to this location (-Village Market-Town Hall); explaining that the sewer line would need to go under Route 117 and then up Route 117. He also noted Councilor Garcia-Irrizarry's August 2, 2024 email asking that the design and engineering work be done (shovel ready) for Phase II to enable the town to apply for grant funding for the sewer main extension.

Mayor Allyn continued by noting that the engineering design work to extend

the sewer line to Fairway Drive and Colby Drive was also part of Phase II. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated a preliminary road has been laid out with completed drainage structures down Fairway Drive down to Colby Drive. He stated Habitat for Humanity has been given the Conover property which was located on Colby Drive, past the restaurant. He stated there were detailed plans ready for the construction of multi-family condominiums at that location. He stated the Developer contacted the Land Use Director-Town Planner today to schedule a meeting with their engineers to look at the sewer options. He stated the Phase II for Fairway Drive and Colby Drive already had perspective commercial interests that were far along. He stated he talked with an owner/developer who had properties on Colby Drive that they would like to expand and build out that would use the sewer line, if they had access to it. He stated as people were becoming more aware of the sewer extension project that they were getting in line to have access to it.

Chairman Rodriguez questioned the cost to bring the sewer line to the location needed to support the Development of the property currently owned by the Holdridge Family. Mayor Allyn explained that the design engineering work was needed to calculate the cost, and the encroachments needed on Route 117. He also explained the State Department of Transportation (DOT) frowned upon digging up the road because they were not planning to resurface it in the near future, therefore, they would have to boar under Route 117. Chairman Rodriguez stated that the cost of this work would be a savings for the town. Mayor Allyn stated that was correct, because the Developer has expressed a real interest and has put a number on the table, of as much as \$1 million, to make this happen. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated the Route 117 costs were uncertain because of the State Department of Transportation's (DOT) involvement and the standards they required.

Chairman Rodriguez addressed the Habitat for Humanity development on Colby Drive, and she questioned whether Habitat for Humanity could help with the design engineering work for the sewer line. Mayor Allyn stated that Habitat for Humanity was positioned to apply for a Grant around April/May 2025. He stated although Habitat for Humanity had their plans ready to go for the site, that they did not have their money in place yet. He stated that he expected to have more information on what they were expecting to pay for once the town meets with Habitat for Humanity Engineers next week. He stated that Habitat for Humanity still needed to finish building Colby Drive, that would come out by the restaurant on Colonel Ledyard Highway; but at this time he did not know what other infrastructure costs Habitat for Humanity was planning for. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated the preliminary estimate for the extension of the sewer line of Fairway Drive-Colby Drive was \$700,000.

Chairman Rodriguez questioned if the Town allocated the funding for the design engineering work to extend the sewer line onto Fairway Drive and Colby Drive, and then Habitat for Humanity were to obtain financing, would that money come back to the Town. Mayor Allyn stated if Habitat for Humanity was willing to reimburse the Town for the design and engineering work that the money would come back to the Town.

Councilor Buhle stated during the Finance Committee’s on-going review of the ARPA Funding and the status of the Projects this past year, it was anticipated that both Phase I and Phase III of the Sewer Line Extension Projects would come in below the ARPA Funding allocations. Therefore, she questioned whether this was still going to be the case. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin explained that it was possible that Phase I would come in under the \$1.1 million allocation. However, he stated that this might not be the case for \$950,000 that was earmarked for Phase III, noting the following: Design Engineering cost \$122,100; Engineering for Construction and Construction cost was estimated at \$1.1 million for a total cost of \$1.22 million. Mr. Masalin continued by presenting an analysis of the Multi-Use Pathway, and Phase I and Phase III of the Sewer Extension Project, noting that there would be a balance of \$30,000 left.

<u>Project</u>	<u>ARPA Allocation</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Sewer Extension Projects	\$2.15 Million	\$90,000.
<u>Other ARPA Projects</u>		<u>(\$55,000)</u>
Total ARPA Balance:		\$30,000

Therefore, Mr. Masalin stated that there would not be sufficient ARPA Funding left to pay for the \$245,500 engineering design work for Phase III (sewer mains along Fairway/Colby Drives (\$108,000) and Route 117 (\$137,500)).

Councilor Buhle questioned where they would get the money for Phase III. Mayor Allyn stated because Phase III was a substantial Capital Project that it might make sense to use the CNR Undesignated Account to provide the \$245,000 needed for the engineering design of sewer mains along Fairway/Colby Drives (\$108,000) and Route 117 (\$137,500).

Councilor Buhle noted in April, 2024 the town was able to apply for the *COPS Law Enforcement Technology and Equipment Grant* in the amount of up-to \$240,000 through the Congressionally Directed Spending initiative, to replace the Ledyard Dispatch Emergency Communications CAD/RMS System because the project was ready to go. Therefore, she addressed the importance to have these types of projects *shovel ready* for when grant opportunities become available the town would be ready to submit their projects. She stated by having this engineering design work done, it would open-up opportunities to seek grant

funding to finish the Sewer Extension Project(s). She stated the design engineering work was an absolute need; and she questioned the balance of the CNR Undesignated Account. Finance Director Matthew Bonin stated that he would provide the CNR Undesignated Account balance at the next Finance Committee meeting.

Councilor Saccone questioned whether appropriating the requested 245,500 to pay for engineering design of sewer mains along Fairway/Colby Drives (\$108,000) and Route 117 (\$137,500), this was urgent; or whether it could wait to the Finance Committee's September 4, 2024 meeting. Mr. Masalin stated although it was an urgent need that this item could wait to the next Finance Committee meeting. However, he stated the \$30,300 needed for the additional geotechnical services (\$15,300) and additional construction design services (\$15,000) related the Multi-Use Pathway/Phase I Sewer Extension Project was urgent and he would provide more information regarding this request later this evening.

- ✓ **Phase III- Sewer Extension Project -\$950,000** - High School to Pennywise Lane to the Wastewater Treatment Facility - Mr. Masalin noted Phase III would replace the inadequate sewer line from the High School to Pennywise Lane that would tie into the service lines that go the Wastewater Sewer Treatment Facility. He stated the engineering design work has been funded; and the drawings were ready to go to the Contractor within the next couple of weeks for them to prepare the construction cost estimates. He stated this would allow the town to hopefully keep the Contractor on-board with a favorable contract to meet the December 31, 2024 ARPA deadline, and weather permitting they would be able to work through the winter. He stated that Phase III was critical because the other two Phases (Phase I & Phase II) would tie into this line to go down to the Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- MOTION to Table the MOTION to recommend the Town Council authorize the town to proceed with the engineering design of sewer mains along Fairway/Colby Drives (\$108,000) and Route 117 (\$137,500), respectively, per Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. Bid No. 2021-03 Amendments 3 and 4.

In addition, transfer and appropriate ARPA and/or other funding in the total amount of \$245,500 for said purpose. Source of ARPA funding transfer and other funding to be determined.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved to Table

RESULT: TABLED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

MOTION to authorize the town to proceed with the supplemental engineering services for the Colonel Ledyard Multi-Use Pathway for additional geotechnical services (\$15,300) and additional construction design services (\$15,000) per the August 12, 2024 Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. amendment to Bid No. 2021-03.

In addition, transfer and appropriate ARPA funding in the total amount of \$30,300 for said purpose. Source of ARPA funding transfer to be determined.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mr. Masalin noted as explained earlier (see above) the balance for the original construction design engineering for the Multi-Use Pathway has been exhausted, due to various construction issues. He stated because the Multi-Use Pathway (LoTCIP Funding) and Phase I of the Sewer Extension Project (ARPA Funding) were running along the same path and were being done simultaneously, that there was some savings in the engineering design work that could be used to pay for the additional \$30,300 needed for the geotechnical validation and to cover the balance of the construction effort.

Mr. Masalin continued by explaining that during the construction of the Multi-Use Pathway they discovered that additional geotechnical validation was needed in the area of the large retaining wall at the intersection of Gallup Hill Road and Colonel Ledyard Highway. Therefore, he stated the construction work in this location has been halted pending the results of the geotechnical work and the associated design. He stated Weston & Sampson submitted a proposal for the geotechnical validation services for a lump sum fee of \$15,300 and a proposal in the amount of an additional \$15,000 to cover the balance of the construction effort.

Councilor Buhle questioned whether a separate motion was needed to transfer the ARPA Funding from the Sewer Extension Phase I to the Multi-Use Pathway. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated that the ARPA Funds would come from the surplus funding remaining from \$1.11 million that was earmarked for Phase I of the Sewer Extension Project. Finance Director Matthew Bonin noted that a separate motion was not needed.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

MOTION to appropriate \$90,888 to the Child and Family Agency to provide Clinicians at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School for one year, from the American Rescue

Plan Act (ARPA) Funding designated for Youth Mental Health Clinicians.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects status review the Finance Committee has been discussing the \$190,000 that had been earmarked to provide mental health services to the youth in our community. However, she stated because the funding was not being used at rate that it would be fully committed by the December 31, 2024 ARPA deadline, they questioned the reasons this was happening because there was a need for mental health services, noting the Clinicians at the elementary schools had full caseloads of ten students, and there were kids on a waiting list for services.

Councilor Buhle went on to state in speaking with School Superintendent Jason Hartling, at the Finance Committee's July 17, 2024 meeting they learned that Clinician Pat Frost, who took over from Kate Sikorski-Maynard, was providing services for both the High School and Middle School students, but that she was not comfortable with administering services to younger age children. She stated they also learned that although the State of Connecticut Child and Family Agency provided funding to support the School Based Health Program, which included Mental Health Services, for the upcoming school year (2024/2025) at the High School, Middle School, and Gallup Hill School, that funding was not provided to continue the same level of mental health services at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School, noting that this was an inequity.

Councilor Buhle stated based on their discussion that Mr. Hartling contacted the Child and Family Agency to find out how much it would cost to provide a Clinician at the Juliet W. Long School and Gales Ferry School. She stated the cost for the salaries including fringe benefits was \$90,885. She stated the Board of Education also discussed the need to provide mental health services at the Juliet W. Long School and Gallup Hill School, and in his August 13, 2024 email Board of Education Chairman Anthony Favry encouraged the Town Council to consider providing funding for these services.

Councilor Buhle addressed the importance to provide equitable services at all the schools in the District. She also noted for full disclosure that her son received services from the Child and Family Agency at the Juliet W. Long School, noting that he was just one of the children impacted by this disparity, but that he was certainly not the only child. She stated that she that directing these ARPA Funds to provide services for the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 was worthwhile use of the funds, as Ledyard continued to work to secure funding going forward to ensure all the schools have a School Based Health Program, which included Mental Health Services, though the Child and Family Agency in the years to come.

Councilor Dombrowski stated a formal request from the Board of Education would be required to allocate ARPA Funding the town received to pay for Child and Family Services for the School System.

Councilor Buhle noted the following email thread from the Board of Education and Child & Family Services as follows:

From: Anthony Favry <afavry@ledyard.net>
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 9:44 PM
To: Jay Hartling <jhartling@ledyard.net>
Cc: BoE Members <boemembers@ledyard.net>; Naomi Rodriguez <NaomiR@ledyardct.org>; Town Council Group <TownCouncil@ledyardct.org>
Subject: Re: GFS/JWL mental health counselor

Good Evening Jay,

Thank you for your email and for the information provided. I appreciate you investing the time looking into options because this has been an area of interest for the Board, and it is unfortunate the State has not allocated additional funds to continue this valuable program.

I am copying the Board on this thread for their awareness, as well as Town Council given that the review and decision would be in their purview.

Chairman Rodriguez & Town Councilor's: *On behalf of the Board, I would encourage you to please review and consider approving the appropriation of the ARPA monies that were allocated for mental health services in our community. There is incredible value and impact here for our students and our community. We appreciate your support and collaboration in advance. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please let us know.*

*Thank You,
Anthony Favry
Chairman, Board of Education*

On Thu, Jul 18, 2024 at 2:28 PM Jay Hartling <jhartling@ledyard.net> <<mailto:jhartling@ledyard.net>>> wrote:
Anthony,

Last evening, the town Council Finance Committee Was discussing ARPA funding. There was some confusion about the funds they put aside for mental health support. I think I was able to clarify and provide some additional information to support their discussion.

Right now, the town has a contractor who is willing to work with secondary students, but is not able to support elementary students. Contractor is not utilizing the full level of funding that they've set aside for mental health. Hearing the concerns raised by TC I Spent some time last night brainstorming some potential ideas.

In a conversation this morning with Mayor Fred, I laid out a potential plan for TC. The mayor seemed very supportive of this approach, but ultimately, I believe it is a decision to be made by TC. Fred asked me to follow up with the provider. As you can see from the email thread below, they were very enthusiastic about this potential opportunity. As I briefed, the board prior, CFA did not receive funding

for GFS/JWL, mental health, so this would fill in that gap that was left open by the lapse in State funding.

To be clear, this would not be Board funds, but TC ARPA monies that were allocated for mental health in our community, but have not been spent and do not have a plan for being spent.

I want Board to be fully aware of the suggestion I made as it could benefit the children we serve.

Jason S. Hartling
Superintendent
Ledyard Public Schools

“Believing in the unlimited potential of every student”

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Erin Saylor** <SaylorE@childandfamilyagency.org
<<mailto:SaylorE@childandfamilyagency.org>>>

Date: Thu, Jul 18, 2024 at 11:15 AM

Subject: Re: GFS/JWL mental health counselor

To: Jay Hartling <jhartling@ledyard.net <<mailto:jhartling@ledyard.net>>>

This is very exciting news! Yes, we can absolutely contract with the town. The cost for salary, fringe and benefits of a licensed clinician is \$90,885. I'm so excited there's a possibility that we'll be able to fully serve the GFS/JWL community!

Best,
Erin

Erin Saylor, LCSW (she/her/hers)

Chief Operating Officer

Child & Family Agency of Southeastern Connecticut, Inc.

[7 Vauxhall St, New London, CT 06320](https://www.google.com/maps/search/7+Vauxhall+St,+New+London,+CT+06320)

[7 Vauxhall St, New London, CT 06320](https://www.google.com/maps/search/7+Vauxhall+St,+New+London,+CT+06320?entry=gmail&source=g)

Ph: (860) 437-4550

saylore@childandfamilyagency.org

<mailto:saylore@childandfamilyagency.org>

Chairman Rodriguez noted the email thread Councilor Buhle read into the record was the formal request that was required for the Town Council to act on the use of the Town's ARPA Funding to pay for Child and Family Mental Health Services at the Juliet W. Long School and Gallup Hill School.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

7. MOTION to approve the following Salary Adjustments effective July 1, 2024:

- \$80,217 Account #1010101-51602 (Administrative Assistant)
- \$56,952 Account #1010201-51607 (Executive Assistant)

In addition, authorize retroactive payments in the total amount of \$2,692; and appropriate \$20,000 from #Account 10110107-56100 (Undesignated) to the respective accounts.

In addition, authorize retroactive payments in the total amount of \$2,692; and appropriate \$20,000 from #Account 10110107-56100 (Undesignated) to the respective accounts.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained about two years ago he and the Finance Committee began a conversation to bring Department Head salaries closer to being in-line with the Market, noting that the town had a number of Department Heads whose salaries were behind where they should be. He stated these two positions warranted attention right-a-way; those being the Town Council Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher; and the Mayor's Executive Assistant Kristen Chapman. He stated this Motion was the first step in working to adjust the Department Head Salaries, noting that he has obtained two Salary Surveys, one from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM); and one that was done by ten area towns. He stated providing the Department of Heads with fair wages for the work that they do would cost about \$80,000 - \$90,000 per year, which was not a lot in their overall budget for what these employees do to hold the operation together. He stated that they would be adjusting salaries either during the course of the year and/or during the upcoming budget preparation. He stated he valued all their Department Heads, noting that these two positions were two that certainly help to hold the operations together and worthy of these salary adjustments. He stated that he would appreciate the Finance Committee's - Town Council's support.

Councilor Saccone noted that the funds were coming from the General Fund Undesignated Account; and he questioned the reason it was not coming from the Salary Benefit Adjustment Account. Mayor Allyn explained the Salary Benefit Adjustment Account was used to pay out employees for their unused sick and vacation time when leaving employment. Councilor Saccone suggested they include more funding in the Salary Benefit Adjustment Account in the upcoming budget to provide for additional salary adjustments for Department Heads.

Councilor Saccone stated these salary adjustments was an outstanding idea, noting that the employment market was tough in getting and retaining excellent employees. He stated that the Town had several excellent employees, including Ms. Maher and Ms.

Chapman.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

- 8. MOTION to appropriate \$3,000 to Account #10114301-51610 (Land Use Supervisors) in connection with \$3,000 received from fines assessed in accordance with Ordinance #300-012 (rev.2) “An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard”.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated the Blight Enforcement Officer had been working to address a blighted property on Crestview Drive, Gales Ferry. He stated the goal of Ordinance #300-012 (rev.2) “*An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard*” was not to fine property owners, but for residents to have a reasonable home that did not adversely impact their neighbors and the neighborhood. However, he stated this particular issue went as far as the Town Attorney, who negotiated a settlement with the property owner for \$3,000, noting that the fine was substantially more than the dollar amount that was settled on, explaining that the property owner eventually came around and through the Town Attorney, they worked to find a solution that both the property owner and the town could work with, noting that this was the source of where this \$3,000 came from.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain that these fines would typically go into the General Fund. However, he stated these additional funds would be useful to the Land Use Department.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 2 Saccone and Buhle

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

- 9. Discussion regarding potential uses for the funding received from the National Opioid Settlement Payments.

RESULT: NO ACTION

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Saccone announced in light of the Town Council’s August 28, 2024 meeting being

canceled, that that the Finance Committee’s August 21, 2024 meeting would be cancelled. He stated the next Finance Committee was scheduled for September 4, 2024.

Councilor Buhle moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Saccone.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anthony Saccone, Sr.
Committee Chairman

Committee

Finance

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