

Administration Committee
Ledyard Town Council
Colonel Ledyard Hwy
Ledyard, CT 06339

Deborah Edwards
30 Bluff Road West
Gales Ferry, CT 06335

Sept. 24, 2025

Dear Council and Committee Members,

I will try to be brief as I have spoken on the topic of an Ethics Commission previously. This has been a long process and not the first time our Town has been requested to create a Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission. There are many people who have come forward to roll up their sleeves and put in the work to help get this established, so that our Town has very clear guidance on our values of both ethical conduct and transparency. I am in full support of getting this across the finish line and moving forward with confidence in Town operations. With that said, I don't believe the draft put before you tonight accomplishes that goal. I don't think it is far off, and with a few thoughtful modifications can be achieved. An example is a review submitted by Mr. Schroeder that illuminates some of the potential loopholes that exist in the current draft, and also offers suggestions on how to close those gaps. We need a strong and clear Code, as well as an impartial Commission that can support it. I don't believe leaving Ethics issues to be addressed by the Council is in our best interest or in the best interest of our Council members. You do a wonderful job and at your personal expense of time, but the Council is a political body and shows itself in discussions on serious matters. Further, Councilors interact with employees and other committee members frequently as part of their duties. I think it's unfair to put them in the difficult position of handling sensitive ethics issues regarding "co-workers" and I'm not sure the results would satisfy the impartiality required to instill confidence in the outcome. For that reason, I am here today to urge you to forgo a vote tonight, to take in all information presented, make modifications where suggested, and then present and vote upon a document that closer achieves the stated goal of forming guidance that is explicit in its' intentions to help prevent questionable actions, as well as to receive, investigate and advise on questions of ethics when they arise.

In closing, I am in full support of a clear Code of Ethics and creation of a strong Ethics Commission, when you have one before you. Councilor Buhle stated she doesn't want to see "perfect" getting in the way of "good", but we can do better. Thank you.

Deborah Edwards