



TOWN OF LEDYARD

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Ledyard, Connecticut 06339-1551
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Town Council Meeting Minutes

Chairman S. Naomi
Rodriguez

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

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/83289700776?
pwd=k2o2JaaLOeExTSkdWLOV7MUNMp2aba.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83289700776?pwd=k2o2JaaLOeExTSkdWLOV7MUNMp2aba.1)**

Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 832 8970 0776; Passcode: 222245

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 7:06 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
Councilor Kevin Dombrowski
Councilor Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez
Councilor Tony Saccone
Councilor Gary St. Vil

Excused: Councilor Gary Paul
Councilor Tim Ryan

IV. PRESENTATIONS

None.

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

Mr. Michael Cherry, 5 Whippoorwill Drive, Gales Ferry, attending remotely, noted comments that have been made at multiple Commission meetings regarding housing needs in Ledyard. He stated that he forwarded to the Town Council the *Connecticut Housing Authority Needs Analysis* which was included on the Communications List for tonight's meeting. He stated the information he provided was tailored to New London County/Ledyard; noting that they could access the full Eastern Connecticut Housing Profile from the data he provided. He stated when they talk about housing that it was important that they use the same set of facts. He stated the Connecticut Housing Authority was a good and recognized source. He stated that he also asked the Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman if he would sponsor an outside speaker to present the most recent information, noting that it was important that they all understand the problems going forward.

This was ..to the Town Council due back on 11/13/2024

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS

None.

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Brunelle stated last week while she was driving by Little Learners Children's Center on Gallup Hill Road that she saw a vehicle pulled over with a woman crouched outside the vehicle with her hand on her heart; holding her cellphone. She stated that she and her husband pulled over to see if they could assist the woman. She stated that she sat next to the woman and told her who she was and that she was here to help, and that she wanted to make sure she was okay. She stated the woman reached her hand out to her, noting that she was having a panic attack. She stated that she held the woman's hand while her husband made sure the woman's dogs were okay. Councilor Brunelle stated it was sad to hear the woman say that no one would stop to help her. She stated while she sat with the woman not a single car stopped to see if the woman was okay and that no one who drove by called emergency responders to check on the woman. She stated after about 20 minutes the woman got through the panic attack and was able to drive herself home. However, Councilor Brunelle stated as a town that we need to do better to help a person in distress. She stated even if you are afraid to stop that you can call Emergency 911 so that the Police or the Fire Department could check on the person to make sure they were okay.

Councilor Saccone stated Halloween was next Thursday, noting that it was getting dark earlier and the Trick or Treaters were going to be out. He reminded both pedestrians and motorists to use caution so that all would have a safe and fun Halloween.

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Parks & Recreation Trunk or Treat was scheduled for Friday, October 25, 2024. She stated for sensory children the event would start at 5:30 p.m. and for all others the event would start at 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Rodriguez went on to announce that Early Voting has begun, and that it was being held from October 21 - November 3, 2024 in the Lower Level of the Town Hall. She stated the Presidential Election Day was November 5, 2024.

Councilor Buhle stated that she was excited for the Annual Trunk or Treat event, noting that it was one of her favorite events, with the beautiful fall foliage in New England. She stated that she grew up in Illinois where they had no trees and lots of corn fields. She stated that she was grateful that they lived in an area that has beautiful forests.

Councilor Dombrowski stated that he would add to the comments regarding the enjoyment of the beautiful fall foliage here in Ledyard. However, he stated they were having drought conditions because they have not had rain for quite some time, noting that a Fire Alert has been issued. He commented on the fire at Lamentation Mountain in Berlin, and he stated that he would like to extend his condolences to the firefighters, and especially to the family of the firefighter who lost his life yesterday battling the fire. He reminded smokers not to throw their cigarettes out the car window; and for all to be careful.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry addressed the Food Waste Compost PILOT Program that Ledyard began in July, 2024. She stated a number of residents picked up the Compost Starter Kits, and that Kits were still available at the Transfer Station for residents to pick up for free. She stated the compostable bags and extra compost pails can be purchased at the Transfer Station. She stated because the Transfer Station was only open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. that residents were having difficulty getting their food waste to the Transfer Station because they worked during the day. She suggested locating a Food Waste Collection Bin outside of the Transfer Station to allow better access for residents and to increase participation; explaining that they would be evaluating the Compost PILOT Program to determine whether the cost per ton for either Blue Earth Compost or Southeastern Regional Resource Recovery Authority (SCRRRA) to pick up the Food Waste was going to be sustainable. She stated that she would appreciate ideas to make the Program more accessible to residents. She went on to state that she did not envision Ledyard's PILOT Program, which required residents to bring their food waste to the Transfer Station, to be permanent because it was her understanding that the State would be implementing a program requiring residents to separate Food Waste from Household Trash; noting that the food waste would probably be picked up at the curbside.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Town Council Meeting Minutes of October 9, 2024.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications List - October 23, 2024

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

X. REFERRALS

XI. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

1. Administration Committee

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Administration Committee has a number of items on tonight's agenda.

RESULT: .

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

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion met on October 16, 2024 and she noted the following: (1) Transparency and Governance Training Initiative - Councilor Brunelle stated that tomorrow the Committee would be sending a Memo to all Town Departments requesting that they prepare a presentation that would help residents understand the function of their Department and how they could access the resources their Department provides to the town. She stated the presentation could be a PowerPoint and/or Video; and they could submit their presentations electronically; or they could give their presentation in person at a meeting. She stated that the Committee was hoping to have the presentations by June 30, 2025; and (2) Informal Conversation - Pickleball Courts - Councilor Brunelle stated that the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion would be hosting an Informal Conversation at the Gales Ferry Community Center on Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. for Parks & Recreation Director Scott Johnson, Jr. to provide information regarding proposals to construct Pickleball Courts at Winthrop Park.

RESULT: .

3. Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee met on October 16, 2024 and they have a number of items on tonight's agenda.

RESULT: .

4. Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil stated the LUPPW Committee has not met since the last Town Council

meeting; however, he stated they had one item on tonight's Agenda.

RESULT:

5. Planning & Zoning Commission

Councilor St. Vil stated the Planning & Zoning Commission will continue their Public Hearing regarding the Application for the former Dow Chemical/Styrenics Site in Gales Ferry on Thursday, October 24, 2024. The Public Hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. at the Ledyard Middle School, 1860 Route 12, Gales Ferry. He noted that the Public Hearing would be in a Hybrid Format providing both in-person and remote participation via Zoom.

6. Permanent Municipal Building Committee

Councilor Brunelle stated the PMBC's next meeting was scheduled for November 4, 2024.

7. Library Commission

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Library Commission met on October 21, 2024 and discussed the following: (1) Resignation - Rebecca Nash - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated after 20 years of service on the Library Commission that Ms. Nash would not be seeking reappointment when her term ends in November, 2024. She thanked Ms. Nash for her many years of service, noting that she would be missed; (2) Toy Library - Both the Bill Library and Gales Ferry Library would be unveiling a "*Toy Library*" on October 30, 2024; (3) New Circulation Desk - Bill Library - The new American Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible desk has been installed. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the desk was purchased with funding received from the American Library Association - Libraires Transforming Communities Round II Grant Program; (4) Friends of Library provides funding for things such as: (a) Museum Passes to the Nature Center, Florence Griswold Museum, Mystic Seaport; Mashantucket Museum, Slater Museum, and the Niantic Children's Museum; (b) Constant Contact Newsletter; and (c) Hoopla Digital Services - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry explained that Hoopla was an Audio and Ebooks Service. She noted that the Friends of Library partially funds the Service (8 months \$10,000). However, she stated the remaining four months would be paid from the Library's Operating Budget. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that Ebooks cost more than the paper books; and because of the number of people using the Hoopla Services the monthly costs have continued to increase.

8. Board of Education

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated although she was not able to attend the Board of Education's October 8, 2024 meeting that she reviewed their Minutes and that she wanted to note the following: (1) Approved Board of Education Bylaw #9110 for Membership - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry explained when a vacancy occurred on the Board of Education that it would now be announced through a Special Communication from the Board, noting that in the past it was announced at a Regular Meeting. She also noted that the Board would now allow a minimum of two weeks from the Special Communication Announcement before the replacement was made; (2) Referred the Election of Officers Bylaw #9120 back to the Policy

Committee - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry explained under the former Bylaw the election of the Chairman required five votes. If the vote was 4 to 4 and if the nine-member Board could not reach a consensus that the Town Council would choose the Board of Education Chairman. She went on to note under the new Election of Officers Bylaw that if Officers were not chosen after two months because of the inability of any one Board Member to receive five affirmative votes for an office, the member of the majority party with the most consecutive seniority would assume the role until the next Organizational Meeting in December. She went on to explain that should that member choose to decline; the next senior member would assume the role until a Chairperson has been appointed; and (3) Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget Preparation - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that the Board of Education began discussing the budget preparation.

XII. REPORT OF THE MAYOR:

Mayor Allyn, III reported on the following: (1) Early Voting - Mayor Allyn stated the early voting has been very busy, noting that the line has been down the hallway and out both doors. He stated the Early Voting Location was at the Town Hall Lower Level and open from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with the exception of October 29 & 31 noting that the Early Voting would be open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on those two days; (2) School Roof Projects - Mayor Allyn stated the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) asked him to contact the Town Attorney because the roofs for the Board of Education Central Office, Juliet W. Long School, and Gales Ferry School all had a completion date of September 12, 2024. However, he stated by September 12, 2024 there was almost no activity at the Gales Ferry School. He stated only the sheathing was on the roof noting that he had concerns because they have had 17 leaks in the school, noting as mentioned earlier this evening, they have not had a lot of rain. He stated a letter was sent to the Roofing Contractor; and was copied to their Bonding Company, which has elicited a meeting on-site at the Gales Ferry School tomorrow (10/24/2024). He went on to note that incidentally the crews have now been working at the Gales Ferry School almost every day and there was a lot of steel going up on the school roof. He stated that he would provide an update to the Town Council after tomorrow's meeting; (3) Road Paving Work - Mayor Allyn stated Gonch Farm Road and North Wind Circle off Fanning Road were the last two roads that were paved for this season. He stated Ledyard's Road Surface Rating (RSR) was 86.6 noting that this was the highest road surface rating the town has had; (4) Multi-Use Pathway from the High School to Ledyard Center - Mayor Allyn stated the portions of the Pathway from Ledyard Center to the Board of Education Central Office was generally complete, noting that some concrete areas there would be cross walks still needed to be completed. He stated that work has slowed down because they were working on the realignment of Gallup Hill Road, explaining that the "Y" Intersection was being changed to a "T" Intersection; and because they were working on the retaining wall; (5) Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Legislative Committee Meeting - October 22, 2024 - Mayor Allyn stated the Committee has set the following priorities for the upcoming 2025/2026 Legislative Session: (a) Increase Special Education Funding; (b) Street Takeovers; (c) PILOT Payments to be made as Statutorily Required; (d) Increase the Mashantucket - Mohegan Pequot Fund; (e) Allow Waste to Energy Facilities to construct a second burner to increase tonnage. Mayor Allyn explained that this was a Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) process and he noted that DEEP was the slowest State Agency they have; (6) Southeastern Regional

Resource Recovery Authority (SCRRRA) Organic (Food) Waste Facility - Mayor Allyn stated once SCRRRA received their Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) Permits which were expected in late Spring, 2025; they could start to build the facility and collect food waste to process into compost; (7) Police Facility landscaping - Mayor Allyn noted in 2016 when the Police Facility was constructed invasive species were planted on the hillside between the Police Facility and Town Hall. He stated the Public Works Crew has removed the invasive species and grass would be planted in that area; (8) Navy Base Microgrid Ribbon Cutting - Mayor Allyn stated he attended the Ribbon Cutting today, noting that Governor Lamont, Senator Blumenthal, and Congressman Courtney each spoke at the event. He stated this was the first Microgrid for the Navy, explaining that the Navy Base would be able to “*Island Off*” should there be a terrorist event, major hurricane, or something that would cause substantial power outages that the Naval Base would be able to continue operations 24/7 uninterrupted; (9) Deer Strikes - Mayor Allyn stated since September 1, 2024 there have been 30 car versus deer strikes in Ledyard. He urged motorists to drive with caution noting the “*Rut*” was coming up, which was when the males start to chase the females explaining that during this time the deer do not stop for roads or cars; (10) Nip Bottle Surcharge Revenues - Mayor Allyn stated Ledyard received \$15,381.85 from the Nip Bottle Surcharge for the past six months. He stated it was stunning to learn that 307,617 nip bottle were sold in Ledyard in six months; which equated to 1,709 per day or 20 nip bottles per man, woman, and child in Ledyard. He noted that he would provide the Town Council with a breakdown of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Government (SCRRRA) Member Towns Nip Bottle Surcharge Disbursements.

Questions to the Mayor

Councilor Brunelle stated that she wanted to review the following data regarding Mental Health that she obtained from Compass Health Center:

- 50 % of all lifetime illnesses begin at the age of 14 (National Alliance on Mental Illness).
- 42% of teens experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).
- 22% of teens have seriously considered attempting suicide (American Psychological Association).
- Native American Teen Suicide rates are nearly 3.5 times higher than the national average (Center for Native American Youth).
- 14% of LGBTQ teenagers attempted suicide in 2022, including 1 in 5 transgender and nonbinary youth (The Trevor Project).
- 1 in 7 teenagers will experience a mental disorder (World Health Organization).
- 3 in 5 teen girls reported feeling sadness every day for at least two weeks (New York Times).
- 31.9% of teens are estimated to have an anxiety disorder.

- 20% of teens will experience depression by the age of 17.
- In 25% of cases, the onset of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) occurs by age 14.
- 1 in 4 teenagers will have experienced a traumatic event by the age of 16.
- 83% of teens will experience at least one traumatic event in adolescence.
- Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death in teenagers ages 15-19.

Councilor Brunelle questioned based on these statistics, how the Ledyard School System could have Zero Students using the Mental Health Services that were available. She stated that it seemed as though Ledyard's Mental Health Program was set up to fail, noting that the Town has not given this resource an office in the schools. She went on to question how students were supposed to see the Mental Health Clinician when she was not at the schools; and why there were no referrals to the Clinician. She also questioned whether the students knew that the Mental Health Clinician was available. She stated based on these statistics that it seemed like someone dropped the ball, and that she was worried about their kids. She questioned who they could direct these concerns to.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated after the Town Council's September 25, 2024 discussion regarding Mental Health Services he spoke with School Superintendent Jason Hartling about communicating with the School Principals. Mayor Allyn stated that Superintendent Hartling has communicated with the School Principals; and he noted that Town Councilors could talk with Superintendent Hartling to see how that was being received. He stated the Clinician was assigned a space in the Media Center at the Middle School to meet with students, noting that she was also available to go to the schools on a needs basis. He went on to explain that it was his understanding that there needed to be clearance with parents before the Clinician could meet with a student; however, he suggested the Town Council follow up with the Board of Education, noting that this was not within his purview. He stated the Town was providing funding for the Clinician to provide Mental Health Services; and that it was up to the Board of Education to use the Clinician.

Chairman Rodriguez stated when she and Mayor Allyn met with Superintendent Hartling on September 23, 2024 that she asked about the use of the Clinician that the Town was funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding; and whether he could ask the School Principals whether there were any students that needed to be referred or seen. She noted that Superintendent Hartling said because the Town was paying for the Clinician that the person was a Town Employee; and that it was up to the Town to find the students that needed the help. Mayor Allyn stated based on what Chairman Rodriguez conveyed that the same would then be true for the Child and Family Agency Clinicians that the Town provided ARPA Funding for. He stated that the Child and Family Agency was in the schools, they were doing their job, and that the Child and Family Agency was being directed by the schools. Therefore, he stated he did not know why the Clinician would be any different.

Councilor Buhle stated the Child and Family Agency maintains a separate boundary noting that they were not school employees, they do not work with the school, etc. She also noted

that the Child and Family Agency and the School Mental Health Coordinator provided at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School do not interface with each other, noting that it would be helpful if they would talk to each other. However, she stated that the School Mental Health Coordinator does refer students to the Child and Family Agency. She suggested they look at how students were referred to the Child and Family Agency and whether the same process could be used for the Mental Health Clinician.

Chairman Rodriguez noted in response to comments that were made several times that there were no students for the Mental Health Clinician that was being paid through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding; that Town Councilors have commented that it was hard to believe, because they knew that students have mental health crisis, and they need help. Therefore, she stated further discussions were needed.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she was pleased Ledyard's Road Surface Rating (RSR) was 86.6 noting that it was very high and very good. She noted her husband always comments on the roads stating that he always knows when they were in Ledyard and when they were in Preston. She thanked Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin and the Public Works Department, noting that they were proud of Ledyard's roads.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she has been seeing people use the new Multi-Use Pathway from the High School to Ledyard Center. However, she has heard the following comments:

- Residents thought the Multi-Use Pathway was going to be cement sidewalks and not black asphalt.
- Residents have commented when driving at night the pathway was the same color as the road, and they questioned whether there was going to be a fence or curbing. Mayor Allyn, III, stated that most of curbing has now been installed along the Multi- Use Pathway. He stated they were still working on the area going toward the Bill Library, Linda C. Davis Food Pantry, and the back side of the Town Green.

Councilor St. Vil noted Councilor Garcia-Irizarry comments regarding the hours of the Transfer Station for residents to drop off their Food Waste for Composting. He questioned whether the Mayor and Public Works Director have considered ways to broaden access to composting in town. Mayor Allyn stated based on Councilor Garcia-Irizarry's comments he would look at where the town could locate the Composting Bins so that they would be accessible without having to go through the Transfer Station gate, which would allow residents to drop off their organic food waste on the days the Transfer Station was not open. He stated that there were cameras on the outside of the Public Works Building.

RESULT: .

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT CALENDAR

Chairman Rodriguez presented the Consent Calendar, and she noted in light of a letter she received this afternoon from Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman J.A. (Tony) Capon that she would like to remove Item #*6 from the Consent Calendar, and move it to the first item under the Administration Committee.

- *1. MOTION to reappoint Mr. Michael Marelli (D) 4 Lee Brook Drive, Ledyard, to the Agricultural Commission, for a three (3) year term ending September 21, 2027.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

- *2. MOTION to reappoint the following members to the Historic District Commission, for a five (5) year term ending December 3, 2029:

- Ms. Kelly Lamb (U) 93 R Lambtown Road, Ledyard - Regular Member
- Mr. Vincent Godino (D) 1906 Center Groton Road, Ledyard - Alternate Member.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

- *3. MOTION to reappoint the following members to the Library Commission, for a two (2) year term ending November 7, 2026:

- Mr. Ralph Hightower (D) 1-O Lakeside Drive, Ledyard
- Mr. Rolf Racich (U) 18 Brewster Drive, Gales Ferry
- Mr. Peter Diette (U) 14 Hyde Park Drive, Gales Ferry.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

- *4. MOTION to reappoint the following members to the Ledyard Beautification Committee, for a three (3) year term ending October 26, 2027:

- Ms. Jennifer Eastbourne (U) 4 Glenwoods Court, Gales Ferry
- Ms. Kathrine Kohrs (D) 19 Winthrop Road, Gales Ferry.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

- *5. MOTION to reappoint the following members to the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission, for a two (2) year term ending October 31, 2026:

- Ms. Lynmarie R. Thompson (D) 2 Blackwell Drive, Gales Ferry
- Ms. Beth E. Ribe (U) 129 Rose Hill Road, Ledyard
- Mr. Daniel Pealer (R) 48 Highland Drive, Ledyard.

Moved by Councilor St. Vil, seconded by Councilor Buhle

VOTE: 7- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Gary St. Vil

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

****Remove Item #**6 from Consent Calendar:** and move it to the first item under "Administration Committee"**

***6.** MOTION to reappoint the following members to the Planning & Zoning Commission, for a three (3) year term ending October 31, 2027:

- Mr. Marcelle Wood (D) 11 South Glenwoods Road, Gales Ferry
- Mr. J.A. (Tony) Capon (D) 37 Silas Deane Road, Ledyard.

Administration Committee

6. MOTION to reappoint the following members to the Planning & Zoning Commission, for a three (3) year term ending October 31, 2027:

- Mr. Marcelle Wood (D) 11 South Glenwoods Road, Gales Ferry
- Mr. J.A. (Tony) Capon (D) 37 Silas Deane Road, Ledyard.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez stated Mr. Capon has declined reappointment, and therefore, his name would be removed from the Motion as a "*Friendly Amendment*" this evening.

At the request of Mr. Capon, Chairman Rodriguez read the following letter:

"October 23, 2024

Ms. Naomi Rodriguez

Chairman

Ledyard Town Council

Dear Ms. Rodriguez,

My current three-year term on the Planning and Zoning Commission ends October 31, 2024. After some reflection I have decided to step down at the end of my term and not seek reappointment. When the stress of serving in a volunteer position in the town exceeds the satisfaction derived from contributing to the town, one needs to decide whether that is the best use of time. I have appreciated the opportunity to serve on PZC, the last three years as chairman. But it is time to walk away.

Sincerely,

Tony Capon

Chairman, PZC"

VOTE: 7- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: Kevin Dombrowski

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

7. MOTION to appoint Mr. Michael Marelli (D) 4 Lee Brook Drive, Ledyard, to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, as an Alternate Member, to complete a two (2) year term ending October 31, 2026 to fill a vacancy left by Mr. Graebner.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez stated that Mr. Marelli has been serving on the Agricultural Commission since it was established in 2017; and he has also served on the Conservation Commission and as its Chairman for many years. She stated that Mr. Marelli brings a lot to the table with his background as a Certified Horticulturalist, Supervisory Pesticide Applicator; Licensed Arborist, and Maritime Academy Tree Steward.

Councilor Buhle stated that she served on the Conservation Commission with Mr. Marelli, and she stated he was a great fit for the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, noting that he was passionate about their town.

Councilor Dombrowski stated although he has not served on a Committee with Mr. Marelli that he has worked with him for a number of years in his capacity on the Town Council, noting that Mr. Marelli was an asset to the town.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that she also worked with Mr. Marelli when she served on the Conservation Commission. She stated under Mr. Marelli's Chairmanship that the Conservation Commission worked well together; and that he has done a great job for the town.

VOTE: 7- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: April Brunelle

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

8. MOTION to appoint Mr. James Thompson (D) 6 Pennywise Lane, Ledyard, to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, as an Alternate Member, to complete a two (2) year term ending October 31, 2026 to fill a vacancy left by Mr. Watford.

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Dombrowski stated that he knew Mr. Thompson and that he was a good choice to serve on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission.

Chairman Rodriguez noted Mr. Thompson's resume' stating he has a background in environmental policy and that he was interested in serving the town on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission.

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Kevin Dombrowski

SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

9. MOTION to appoint Mr. James Harwood (D) 10 Eska Drive, Ledyard, to Planning & Zoning Commission as an Alternate Member, to complete a three (3) year term ending December 31, 2025 filling a vacancy left by Ms. Baudro.

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that Mr. Harwood was currently serving on the Conservation Commission. She noted during her time on the Conservation Commission that Mr. Harwood was a good contributor to the Commission.

~~VOTE~~ Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Kevin Dombrowski

SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

Finance Committee

10. MOTION to grant a bid waiver to Goman & York Property Advisors, LLC in the amount of \$72,500 to conduct the Route 12 Corridor Study, due to receiving fewer than the required three bids in response to RFQ/RFP #2025-01 (Corridor Study along Route 12) in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev. 1) "An Ordinance for Purchasing".

In addition, transfer and appropriate \$22,500 to the Route 12 Corridor Study for a total amount of \$72,500. Source of funding transfer to be determined.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez noted that currently the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects spreadsheet was showing a deficit of \$66,000 and with the requested \$22,000 they would have an ARPA deficit of \$88,000. Therefore, she questioned where the additional \$22,500 of ARPA Funding would come from.

Mayor Allyn, III, noted the “*Source of ARPA funding transfer to be determined*” was worded the same as Item #11 (Phase III Sewer Line Extension Project) on tonight’s Agenda. He noted for Item #11 that the bids came in at \$750,000; however, \$950,000 of ARPA Funding was budgeted for Phase III of the Sewer Line Extension Project, therefore, he stated that there would be \$200,000 of ARPA Funding that could be redirected to other projects such as the Route 12 Corridor Study. Chairman Rodriguez expressed concern that should they have some expected expenses such as ledge with the Sewer Line Extension Project that the projected \$200,000 surplus may be used up. Mayor Allyn stated that unanticipated costs were considered, and he noted at the October 16, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting that Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin provided a spreadsheet which showed zeroing out the \$66,000 deficit and still having enough ARPA Funding remaining.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain on July 8, 2024 the Economic Development Commission solicited a Request for Qualifications/Request for Proposals (RFQ/RFP #2025-01) to seek qualified consulting firms to conduct a comprehensive Corridor Study along Route 12 in Gales Ferry. However, he stated the Town only received the following two bids: (1) Goman & York Property Advisors, LLC \$ 76,150; and (2) Colliers Engineering & Design \$119,940; noting that the low bid came in higher than the \$50,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding that was allocated for the project. He addressed the importance of proceeding with the Route 12 Corridor Study, explaining that it would allow the town to prepare shovel ready projects putting the town in a better position for when Small Town Economic Assistance Grant (STEAP) Funding or other Funding opportunities becomes available.

Councilor Saccone noted the number of car accidents on Route 12, and he explained that the Corridor Study may propose things such as a center turning lane to help prevent cars from being hit from behind when trying to turn off of Route 12. He stated although Route 12 was a State Road, that the Town could provide the Engineering work from the Study to the State to support some important improvements. He also noted the Route 12 Corridor Study would provide: Traffic Studies including Pedestrian Flow; Traffic Management, Economic and Employment Impact, Engage the Stakeholders (businesses on Route 12), Engineering Work, and Analysis of Route 12. He stated by having this Study completed that perhaps the town could afford to fund some projects or apply for grant funding to implement some needed improvements. He concluded by noting the Town would be required to obtain the State Department of Transportation (DOT) permission to make any changes to Route 12.

Councilor Buhle stated the Town previously received Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) Grant Funding that paid for the improvements in Ledyard Center, which included the decorative streetlights, stonewalls, sidewalks, etc. She stated in looking at neighboring towns such as East Lyme/Niantic they received upwards of \$1.5 million in STEAP Grant Funding for their Main Street Redevelopment to make the town more welcoming, etc. She stated that STEAP Grants now have a maximum ceiling of \$1 million; and she stated by having the Route 12 Corridor Study completed that the Town would be in a better position to apply for and receive grants funding through opportunities such as the STEAP Program and the LOTCIP Program. She stated although STEAP Grant Funding could be used for shovel ready projects that they could not be used for studies, which was the reason it was important for the town to

have the Route 12 Corridor Study done.

Councilor Dombrowski noted when Ledyard was receiving the grant funding for the improvements to Ledyard Center that the Gales Ferry residents questioned why similar improvements were not being done in Gales Ferry. He went on to explain the reason the town was not able to receive grant funding for Gales Ferry was because they did not have an up-to-date Route 12 Corridor Study. He stated by having a new Route 12 Corridor Study it would allow them to apply for STEAP Grants to do the things they would like to do in Gales Ferry.

~~VOTE~~ **Approved and so declared**

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

- 11. MOTION to authorize Construction Services and Bid Waiver for Phase III Sewer Line Installation per Gerber Construction, Inc. proposal in the amount of \$750,000; and authorize associated Resident inspection and Construction Engineering Services per Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. Bid No. 2021-03 amendment proposal in the amount of \$71,000.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained that Phase III of the Sewer Line Extension Project would install a new larger sewer line from the High School to Pennywise Lane.

Mayor Allyn, III, reviewed the path of the Phase III Sewer Line, explaining the existing sewer line terminates to the side of High School by the Music Facility. He noted the sewer line that goes behind the High School cuts diagonally across the lower practice field through the inside edge of the outfield fence of the baseball field, across the parking lot at the back of the High School before it ultimately entered into Gallup Hill Road past Greystone Court. He stated the installation of the larger sewer line would follow the same path of the exiting sewer line and that the construction work would impact the school property. He stated because the new sewer line was following the existing undersize sewer line that they do not anticipate running into ledge and that other unknowns were less likely. He stated this work would take place during the winter months; and therefore, should not impact the High School sports programs.

Councilor Saccone stated this work was being done using the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding not town taxpayer funding.

~~VOTE~~ **Approved and so declared**

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

12. MOTION to authorize overspending account 10110205-53615 Town Attorney through June 30, 2025.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained between the expended and encumbered amounts that the Legal Fees Account had a current balance of about \$5.00. He stated this was primarily due to the lead hazard issue at the Historic Nathan Lester House, explaining that there was a lot of legal work involved in this matter. He stated that they were working with the Department of Public Health noting that a conference was scheduled for tomorrow (10/24/2024) to come to a resolution. He stated the Caretakers were not occupying the space.

VOTE:7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

13. MOTION to accept the Community Speaks Out proposal dated October 16, 2024 in the amount of \$10,000 for the use of the National Opioid Settlement Funding received by the Town of Ledyard with the following changes:

- Remove \$1,000 for the School Presentations - Fee for Guest Speakers.
- Remove \$1,000 for the Awareness Events in Community for community education and resources including Naloxone and drug test distribution.
- Add \$2,000 to the \$8,000 for Financial Recovery Assistance to include Sober Living, Basic Needs, Recovery Activities and Recovery Coach Services (Total: \$10,000).

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez stated at the Finance Committee's October 16, 2024 meeting that Community Speaks Out stated although the funding for the School Presentations was removed from the Proposal that they would still try to get into the schools to give presentations. She stated when she and Mayor Allyn, III, met with School Superintendent Jason Hartling on September 23, 2024 that Mr. Hartling told them that any presentations at the schools had to go through him. Therefore, she stated that Community Speaks Out would need to email Superintendent Hartling and not email the School Principals to schedule presentations at the schools.

Mayor Allyn stated after the October 16, 2024 Finance Committee he spoke with School Superintendent Jason Hartling about the Community Speaks Out Proposal. He noted that he hoped Mr. and Mrs. de la Cruz could get some time with Superintendent Hartling and get into

the schools.

Councilor Saccone stated that Community Speaks Out was a Non-Profit Organization that was based in Groton, Connecticut. He stated the Town of Groton allocated all of their Opioid Settlement Funding to Community Speaks Out to provide services within the Town of Groton. He stated he thought this was a great opportunity for Community Speaks Out to work in Ledyard as well.

Councilor Buhle stated Community Speaks Out was already providing services to people within the Ledyard community, even without the town providing funding to their Organization. She stated that Community Speaks Out was working to better track who they were helping, so that they could provide better data to the Municipalities. However, she stated that doing so was challenging because many with an addiction disease were guarded. She stated that she was grateful that Community Speaks Out was already providing services in their community.

VOTE: 7- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

14. MOTION to approve a Budget Letter of Directive to the Mayor and Board of Education for the preparation of the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget, as presented in the draft dated October 16, 2024.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez stated to begin the Annual Budget Process the Town Council issues a “*Budget Letter of Directive*” to the Mayor and Board of Education, which outlines the budget preparation process provided in the Town Charter; and also provides some direction relative to budget increases for the coming year, noting that it was a standard letter.

VOTE Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

15. MOTION to extend Archery Hunting on Certain Town Owned Lands and Certain Open Space Properties for one-year in accordance with provisions in Ordinance#100-018 (rev. 1) "An

Ordinance Providing Archery Hunting on Certain Town Owned Lands and Certain Open Space Properties".

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor St. Vil

Discussion: Councilor Dombrowski provided some background explaining in 2018 the Town Council adopted Ordinance #100-018 "*An Ordinance Providing for Archery Hunting on Certain Town Owned Lands*". He stated the two properties that would be used for archery hunting were: (1) Clark Farm located on Route 117 on the north end of town; and (2) Founders Preserve (Paint Mill) Property located between Colonel Ledyard Highway and Pumpkin Hill Road on the south end of town (both properties were about 100 acres).

Councilor Dombrowski went on to explain at a Special Town Meeting held on October 28, 2020 the townspeople approved to transfer the Founders Preserve (also formerly known as: Quakertown Preserve/Paint Mill) to Avalonia Land Conservancy. He noted one of the terms for the land transfer was that Avalonia Land Conservancy would continue to allow archery hunting on the Founders Preserve property. He stated because the Founders Preserve would no longer be town-owned property that on April 25, 2021 Ordinance #100-108 (rev. 1) and its accompanying Appendix was amended to include provisions for "*non-town owned properties/certain open space properties*".

Councilor Dombrowski continued to explain that the archery hunting program was a Lottery System in which six people would win a lottery for each property to bow hunt, for a total of twelve people. He stated that tonight's action to extend the Program for one year was an Administrative Action, noting in accordance with Section 4. "*Annual Expiration*" the Ordinance would sunset annually at the end of the calendar year, unless a vote of the Town Council was taken to approve to extend it for one year.

Councilor St. Vil stated anyone who entered the Lottery was required to take a Safety Course and prove their archery skills.

VOTE: 7- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: April Brunelle

SECONDER: Gary St. Vil

AYE: 7 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 2 Paul, and Ryan

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor St. Vil

VOTE Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 8:04 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 October 23, 2024.

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.