



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

HYBRID FORMAT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
 Ledyard, CT 06339
 860 464-3203
<http://www.ledyardct.org>
 Roxanne M. Maher
 Administrative Assistant

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

MINUTES
 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
 REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

5:30 PM

Town Hall Annex Building

- I. CALL TO ORDER – The Meeting was called to order by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry at 5:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers Town Hall Annex Building.

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

- II. ROLL CALL-

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location	Arrived	Departed
April Brunelle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:30 pm	5:59 pm
Kevin Dombrowski	Town Councilor	Excused			
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Committee Chairman	Present	In-Person	5:30 pm	5:59 pm
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Council Chairman	Present	In-Person	5:30 pm	5:59 pm
Milton (Dave) Schroder	Resident	Present	In-Person	5:30 pm	5:59 pm
Sally Stevenson	Resident	Present	Remote	5:30 pm	5:59 pm
Lee Ann Anderson Berry	Resident	Present	Remote	5:30 pm	5:59 pm
Deborah Edwards	Resident	Present	Remote	5:30 pm	5:59 pm
Roxanne Maher	Administrative Assistant	Present	In-Person	5:30 pm	5:59 pm

- III. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Mr. Milton (Dave) Schroder, 290 Whalehead Road, Ledyard, stated that resident Mr. Carlo Porazzi was not able to attend tonight’s meeting, however, Mr. Porazzi asked him to read the following letter:

Mr. Carlo Porazzi, 30 Chapman Lane, Gales Ferry:

“Town Council:

As a current resident and taxpayer I am writing to voice my support for the formation of a Ledyard Ethics Commission.

I find it very concerning that Ledyard is one of the few towns that does not have this oversight committee. The objection over forming this committee by at least one standing

member of the town council is also concerning. Simply having a code of ethics established with no board to administer is much like the example given of having laws but no police force. In my opinion there have been and are instances of poor judgement by town leaders in local matters and I believe the establishment of this commission will allow for complaints to be lodged, with pertinent facts supporting. I also agree this will go far in increasing trust between residents and Ledyard local government, something I believe is waning currently.

To that matter, while the draft I read is a very good start I would offer some changes if I may:

- *Sec 2 - the following sentence leaves some ambiguity as to what this could allow: "Specific portions of this Ordinance shall not be applicable if they conflict in whole or in part with any labor agreement, employment contract or state statute." It would be beneficial if some high -level examples could be provided.*
- *Sec 4, subsection J & M - I would suggest any former member of town government be prohibited from representing any party seeking business with or in the town, or seeking employment with that party for a term of three (3) years from their vacancy of their town position.*
- *Any reference or suggestion, explicit or implied, to the mayor in office at the time having any control or oversight in the dealings of the Ethics Committee except for receiving reports of current status and/or findings. Thank you for your consideration, Carlo Porazzi”.*

Mr. Schroder continued by stating that he was present this evening to also provide comments regarding an Ethics Commission. Mr. Schroder stated as a current resident of the Town of Ledyard that he wanted to voice his support for the creation of a Code of Ethics and a Ledyard Ethics Commission. He stated as the Administration Committee’s own investigation has indicated Ledyard was one of the very few towns in Connecticut that does not currently have sufficient vehicles to apply such oversight.

Mr. Schroder went on to note that he found the discussion so far in the town minutes very enlightening, though it disturbed him to learn that there would be any dissenting voice on our Town Council against establishing a vehicle for oversight, as ethical behavior in government was a cornerstone of maintaining the trust the electorate has in our Town Officials both elected, hired and appointed.

Mr. Schroder stated that he has read the Draft “*Ordinance for Establishing a Code of Ethics and an Ethics Commission*”. He stated that he largely approved of the language, but wanted to call to the Administration Committee’s attention the following points that perhaps merit discussion:

1. Section 5.5.a stipulates *"No complaint may be made under the code unless it is filed with the Commission within three (3) years after the violation alleged in the complaint has been committed."*

Mr. Schroder stated that he would pose the question of whether 3 years was too short a period, since that does not even equal the 4-year term of office for many positions outlined on the Chapter II of the Town Charter. He suggested that perhaps a 4 or even 5 year limitation for making a complaint would be better in a spirit of just accountability?

2. Section 5.3 Terms of Appointment stipulates Members shall be appointed by the Town Council for a period of 3 years. Section 5.5.c requires 3-out-of-5 concurring votes to establish probable cause during an ethics investigation. Subsequently Section 5.5.e further requires a unanimous 5-out-of-5 concurring members to be able to take action upon any violations found.

Mr. Schroder stated unlike a jury in a criminal trial who are chosen at random from the general public, the Ethics Committee is appointed by the Town Council, which potentially introduces (political or other) influence/bias into its composition. Thus, he questioned whether a 5-out-of-5 concurring members was too high of a bar to expect any findings to ever result in disciplinary action. Mr. Schroder stated that he was wondering what the norm was for taking disciplinary action in other such ethics bodies (either in government or in business), or if there was perhaps another model to use. Thank you for your consideration.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS – None.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024.

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Continued discussion and possible action to create an Ethics Commission for the Town of Ledyard.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry thanked Mr. Schroder and Mr. Porazzi for their comments and suggestions regarding the proposed “ *An Ordinance Establishing a Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission*”, noting that she has been looking to obtain input from everyone.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted Mr. Schroder’s suggestion to require a simple majority to be able to take action regarding any ethical violations found. Mr. Schroder stated although he understands that a Jury Trial would require a unanimous vote, that he did not think that all five Ethic Commission Members would agree that actions should be taken. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated although she did not think a simple majority of three of the five members would be sufficient, that she would consider requiring four members to be in agreement. She asked Councilor Brunelle for her thoughts on Mr. Schroder’s suggestion for a simple majority of the members to be in agreement to take action. Councilor Brunelle stated that she was not opposed to requiring four or five Commission Members to be in agreement, noting that they have to be careful not to

allow political lines to play into a decision. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated because she would like to hear from Councilor Dombrowski regarding Mr. Schroder's suggestions. Therefore, she stated that the Administration Committee would review the residents' suggestions, and the language contained in the proposed Ordinance to consider whether any additional changes should be made.

Councilor Brunelle stated that she was happy that residents were providing comments regarding the establishment of a Code of Ethics and an Ethics Commission and that the Administration Committee was continuing their work to move a proposal forward.

The Administration Committee agreed to continue to discuss the proposed "*An Ordinance Establishing a Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission*" at their January 8, 2025 meeting to finalize the draft before sending the proposal to the Town Attorney for their legal review and recommendations.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting:01/08/2025 5:30 p.m.

2. Continued discussion and possible action to draft an Ordinance regarding the raising of Unofficial-Third-Party Flags on Town Property.

Councilor Brunelle stated that she has drafted a proposal for the *Raising of Unofficial Third-Party Flags*. She questioned how the proposal should be distributed to the members of the Administration Committee for discussion. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry asked Councilor Brunelle to forward her proposal to the Town Council Office for Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher to distribute to the Committee and to include with their January 8, 2025 Agenda packet on the meeting portal.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting:01/08/2025 5:30 p.m.

3. Any Old Business proper to come before the Committee. – None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. MOTION to recommend the Town Council reappoint the following as Regular Members of the Retirement Board for a three (3) year term ending January 20, 2025:

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

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that both of these residents have been serving on the Retirement Board for many years. She stated that they were interested in continuing to serve and that the Board and their respective parties have endorsed their reappointments.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: 2– 0 APPROVED TO RECOMMEND
MOVER: April Brunelle, Committee Member
SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Committee Member
AYES: April Brunelle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
EXCUSED: Dombrowski

2. MOTION to recommend the Town Council appoint Ms. Carol Schneider, (D) 101 Inchliffe Drive, Gales Ferry, to the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission as a Regular Member to complete a three (3) term ending June 28, 2026 to fill a vacancy left by Ms. Sokolski.

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that Mrs. Schneider served on the Senior Citizens Commission for many years. She went on to note that when the Parks, Recreation, & Senior Citizens Commission was combined that Mrs. Schneider continued to serve as an Alternate Member. She stated with resignation of Ms. Sokolski that Commission Chairman Kenneth DiRicco requested that Ms. Schneider be appointed as a Regular Member.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: 2– 0 APPROVED TO RECOMMEND
MOVER: April Brunelle, Committee Member
SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Committee Member
AYES: April Brunelle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
EXCUSED: Dombrowski

3. MOTION to revisit and revise the Administration Committee’s action of November 13, 2024 and approve the Motion as follows:

MOTION to recommend the Town Council appoint Ms. Stephaine Bacon (D) 6 Patricia Court, Gales Ferry, to the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission as a ~~Regular Member~~ *Alternate Member* to complete a three (3) term ending June 28, 2025 to fill a vacancy left by ~~Ms. Sokolski~~ Ms. Schneider.

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry explained at the Administration Committee's November 13, 2024 meeting the Committee had recommended that the Town Council appoint Ms. Bacon to the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission as a Regular Member. However, she explained that because Mrs. Schneider has been on the Commission for many years that Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission Chairman Kenneth DiRicco requested that Mrs. Schneider be appointed as a Regular Member and that Ms. Bacon be appointed as an Alternate Member.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: 2– 0 APPROVED TO RECOMMEND
MOVER: April Brunelle, Committee Member
SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Committee Member
AYES: April Brunelle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
EXCUSED: Dombrowski

4. MOTION to recommend the Town Council appoint Ms. Rhonda Spaziani (D) 9 Sunset Road, Gales Ferry, as an Alternate Member of the Planning & Zoning Commission to complete a three (3) term ending December 31, 2026 to fill a vacancy left by Ms. Ribe. Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Brunelle
Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that she reviewed Ms. Spaziani's Appointment Application, noting that it was quite detailed. She stated that she believed that Ms. Spaziani was a good candidate to serve on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: 2– 0 APPROVED TO RECOMMEND
MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Committee Member
SECONDER: April Brunelle, Committee Member
AYES: April Brunelle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
EXCUSED: Dombrowski

5. MOTION to recommend the Town Council reappoint Mr. Roger Coddling (R) 13 Hemlock Circle, Gales Ferry, as a Regular Member to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a four (4) year term ending December 4, 2028. Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that Mr. Coddling has been serving on the Board of Assessment Appeals for many years. She stated that Mr. Coddling was interested in continuing to serve and that the Board and his respective party has endorsed his reappointment.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: 2– 0 APPROVED TO RECOMMEND
MOVER: April Brunelle, Committee Member
SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Committee Member
AYES: April Brunelle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
EXCUSED: Dombrowski

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

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Brunelle noted in reviewing the SCRRA Minutes that Mr. Lozier only attended one meeting last year.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher noted that Mr. Lozier had some health issues this past year, and that he was now feeling better, and was interested in continuing to serve the town on this Regional Board. She went on to explain that SCRRA was a Regional Board on which each Member Municipality was allowed two Representatives, one Regular Member and one Alternate Member. She also explained that SCRRA has asked that one of the Municipalities' Members be their Public Works Director. She continued to note that last year Mr. Lozier stepped down from Ledyard's Regular Member to serve as the Town's Alternate Member because of health reasons, and that Public Works Director Steve Masalin, who had been serving as Ledyard's Alternate Member was currently serving as the town's Regular Member. She noted that Mr. Lozier has served on SCRRA for many, many years; and that his reappointment has been endorsed by his respective party.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that she was in-favor of reappointing Mr. Lozier, noting that she could understand his absence due to health issues.

Councilor Brunelle stated if what was said was true, that Mr. Lozier had health issues last year, that she would be fine with reappointing him to the Board. However, she stated if his absence was for any other reason, that she would not be okay with it, because she believed that someone else could be appointed and serve as a true Alternate Member.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: 2– 0 APPROVED TO RECOMMEND
MOVER: April Brunelle, Committee Member
SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Committee Member
AYES: April Brunelle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
EXCUSED: Dombrowski

7. Any other Business proper to come before the Committee. – None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

VOTE: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Brunelle.
2 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
Committee Chairman
Administration Committee