



Gales Ferry District
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April 9, 2025

Ledyard Town Council

Ledyard, CT

Cc: Administrative Committee, Economic Development, Mayor Allyn

Dear Councilors,

I am writing on behalf of the residents of Gales Ferry to express our concerns regarding representation and ethical governance in our town. Perhaps the most important issue pending, some would say languishing, before the Council is that relating to the establishment of a Code of Ethics that expands on Chapter IX, Section 6, *Conflicts of Interest*, of the Town Charter (revised November 2018, effective December 3, 2018). Not only does the Town Charter not address ethics, provide a code of ethics, or process for addressing potential ethical lapses by town officials, commissioners, and councilors, there is no separate ordinance that does. It is most important that this gap in our governance structure be remedied as soon as practicable.

Concerns have been raised by constituents of the Gales Ferry District that reinforce the need for a clear and enforceable ethical framework for our town. Some of these actions included the firing of a town official without any rationale provided. If this was the result of a potential ethics concern, having a written Code of Ethics would have allowed the violation to be made clear. Further, the existence of an Ethics Commission would have permitted an objective investigation ensuring the appropriate level of transparency and accountability in such a critical personnel action.

Other concerns have also been raised. For example, the appointment of persons who receive compensation from companies or organizations that would be perceived to have clear interests in the decisions before various town commissions to which they are appointed. Another is the perception that municipal infrastructure investments have been prioritized to benefit only a specific few individuals or families. Discussion of such issues require transparency, accountability, and authenticity. Otherwise, they create ethical dilemmas that happen all too often.

It has now been over ten months since the council was approached regarding the creation of a town ethics code and commission. In that time, many issues have surfaced. This topic has been on the Town Council and Administrative Committee agendas for months and there has been no shortage of discussion in the community. Below we share several strong examples of ethics codes and commission structures from other towns.