



# TOWN OF LEDYARD

## Town Council

### Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway  
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339-1551  
(860) 464-3203  
council@ledyardct.org

Chairman Gary St. Vil

#### Regular Meeting

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Wednesday, September 10, 2024

7:00 PM

Town Hall Council Chambers

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**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/launch/edl?muid=171ceb8a-5e52-4678-a39c-61de4b99acc7>**  
**Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 812 3839 1093; Passcode: 211567**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman St. Vil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building.

Chairman St. Vil welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He 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 William Barnes  
Councilor April Brunelle  
Councilor Jessica Buhle  
Councilor Kevin Dombrowski  
Councilor Carmen Garcia-Irizarry  
Councilor Tim Ryan  
Councilor Tony Saccone  
Councilor Gary St. Vil  
Adrienne Parad

**IV. PRESENTATIONS**

**1. Proclamation Chief Emergency Communications Paula Smith**

Chairman St. Vil stated before the Town Council begins the business on tonight's Agenda that

he wanted to announce that the Town Council has been asked to be the Judges for the *Celebrate America 250 Voting Stickers*. He asked Mayor Allyn, III, to provide the background regarding this incredible Contest.

Mayor Allyn, III explained this coming July 4, 2026 will be Semiquincentennial Anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence and that Ledyard's America 250 Committee has been planning events to Celebrate this important event. He stated to lead off this effort they asked the Ledyard's elementary school students to design the stickers that are given out to Ledyard's citizens after they have voted. He stated the *Celebrate America 250 Committee* was flooded with a number of entries and they narrowed the selection down to the top twelve designs, which were on display in the back of the Council Chambers this evening. He asked that the Town Council fill out ballots before they leave this evening listing their top three selections. He stated the top three "*I Voted*" design entries would be turned into stickers; and the student who designed the sticker would be at the Polls on November 4, 2025 to hand out their stickers. He stated that he thought that involving the kids with the election process was a novel idea, noting that the Celebrate America 250 Committee had to turn this initiative around quickly to meet the printing time constraint, the start of school, and the upcoming November 4, 2025 Election.

Chairman St. Vil asked the Town Councilors who were physically present this evening to pickup a Ballot from Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher, fill-it out with their top three picks, and turn it in before they leave this evening.

Chairman St. Vil continued by stating that tonight was a very special evening because they would be recognizing a member of Ledyard's Emergency 911- Communications Center - Chief Emergency Dispatcher Paula Jean Smith who has been serving the Town for thirty-years, noting that this was not common in today's employment environment, stating that most people only stay in a job for 2-3 years before moving on to the next opportunity. He continued by recognizing Police Chief John

Rich, Gales Ferry Fire Chief Jeff Erhart, and Ledyard Fire Department Deputy Fire Chief Todd Willis who were in the audience this evening. He stated before he presented Ms. Smith with a Town of Ledyard Proclamation, he invited Police Chief John Rich to say a few words.

Police Chief John Rich thanked Ms. Smith for everything she has done for Ledyard's Emergency Services all these years. He stated there was a tremendous amount of history here noting with the development of the Dispatch Center, the Town grew, and so did its Emergency Services and its personnel. He stated that Ms. Smith has been seen it all, and has been instrumental in implementation of so many important advancements and changes to their

Emergency Communications Center. He stated that Ms. Smith's guidance and input was also critical in designing Ledyard's Emergency-911Communication Center that resides in their new Police Facility Building which was celebrating their 10th Anniversary; and he commented on how fast the time flies. He stated that Ms. Smith has been a tremendous resource for the community, and to the safety of both Ledyard and Preston residents, noting that Ledyard also provides Emergency 911- Dispatch Services for the Town of Preston. He stated that he would like to personally thank Ms. Smith for everything she has done.

Gales Ferry Fire Chief Jeff Erhart stated that he worked with Ms. Smith as a part-time Dispatcher, when Ledyard only had three full-time Dispatchers, noting that their friendship now goes back a number of years. He stated as a Dispatcher for Ledyard, Ms. Smith has operated out of three different buildings in town, noting that the Dispatch Communication Center was located in the lower level of the Town Hall, then it moved to a building on Lorenze Parkway, and was now located in the Police Facility. He stated over the years the Emergency 911- Dispatch Communications Services has grown to what they have today, noting that Ms. Smith been involved in its evolution. He stated that Ms. Smith was rich in history, rich in spirit, and rich in the town, which Chief Rich pointed out. He also noted that what was really important was Ms. Smith's longevity, noting that Chairman St. Vil pointed out that longevity was an amazing thing these day. He stated that Ms. Smith has always been a friend, noting that she has been a member and active responder of the Fire Company for a number of years. He stated as the Gales Ferry Fire Chief he wanted to thank Ms. Smith for her friendship, and for everything that she has done for the town. He stated not only has she been an active participant in her community, but that she has been involved in his kids activities as well, noting that he brought his kids this evening, and that he appreciated all that she has done.

Town Councilor Tony Saccone, former Gales Ferry Fire Chief, humorously noted that it was his understanding that Chief Rich brought Ms. Smith to tonight's Town Council meeting to talk about radios. However, he stated the real reason was not to discuss radios but to recognize her incredible service to Ledyard. He stated although he wrote a few notes, that what he was going to say this evening comes from the heart.

Councilor Saccone stated that Ms. Smith has spent over half of her life serving the Town of Ledyard through the Ledyard Ambulance, Ledyard Fire Company, Gales Ferry Fire Company and thirty-years as an Emergency 911 Dispatcher. He stated that Ms. Smith has seen stressful atrocities that come into the 911 Dispatch Center. He explained when someone calls Emergency 911 the Dispatcher visually could see the active scene. Whether it was a car accident, and some someone bleeding, or whatever it may be, the Dispatcher can visually see what was going on. He stated the Emergency 911 Dispatchers hear children playing with 911; they hear gunshots and screams that pierced every nerve in their body, they hear the voices of a crying baby that was just delivered. Councilor Saccone stated that all of us in this room cannot imagine the crying, the yelling, the fear in the voices calling out for help for someone who believed that it was the worst day of their lives, when they had to call Emergency 911. He explained that the Communication Dispatchers were First Responders, noting that every decision they make in the first few minutes to organize who has to go; the Police, Fire, Ambulance would set the tone for the entire emergency; which included protecting their First Responders who were on the scene. He stated for the Police, were they going into an active scene; for the Fire Department, was there a fire with people trapped and/or an Emergency Medical Call. He stated the Emergency 911 Dispatchers have to gain control of the Caller while there were people yelling and screaming. He stated the Dispatcher has to get the Caller's attention, they have to get the location; and get the nature of the emergency, noting that *They get control of the Scene* .

Councilor Saccone stated that he ran some numbers, noting for this year-to-date that the Emergency 911 Dispatch Communication Center has handled about 30,000 interactive calls, stating that based on the current trend the town would receive about 40,000 calls for the calendar year. He stated during the thirty-years of services that Ms. Smith has been with the town the Emergency 911 Communication Center has handled about 900,000 calls. He stated the Town of Ledyard, and its residents owe Paula Smith an immense debt of gratitude for her over three decades of service. He noted President John F. Kennedy stated: "*Let's find time to stop to thank those who made a difference of our lives*". Councilor Saccone thanked Ms. Smith for her years of service.

Chairman St. Vil asked Chief Dispatcher Ms. Smith, Police Chief Rich, Mayor Allyn, and Town Councilor Saccone to join him in front of the podium to present Ms. Smith with a *Town of Ledyard Proclamation*.

Mayor Allyn, III stated before Chairman St. Vil presented the Town of Ledyard Proclamation to Ms. Smith that he wanted to share a few words. He stated the Emergency 911 Dispatch Communication Center was a professional operation, and as the Mayor he has a radio; so he hears many of the E-911 Calls and the Dispatch Center's responses. He commented on the chaos received over the E-911 Call which Ms. Smith converts very succinctly to their professional staff in the field stating the work she does was amazing, noting the stressful situations they face every day. He stated for someone to be sitting in that chair for 30 years and making all of that happen was amazing. He stated that he wanted to thank Ms. Smith for her service, both professionally and personally.

Chairman St. Vill thanked everyone for their comments this evening. He stated although he did not know Ms. Smith personally that he and his family have benefited and appreciated the work that she does.

Chairman St. Vil proceeded by presenting Smith with the following Town of Ledyard Proclamation:

- ***Proclamation Chief Emergency Communications Paula Smith***

BE IT KNOWN THAT THE TOWN OF LEDYARD  
**Recognizes**  
**PAULA JEAN SMITH**  
**FOR HER THIRTY YEARS OF SERVICE**

**Ms. Smith** has dedicated her life to helping those in need during medical and safety emergencies, initially volunteering her time in 1980 as a member the Ledyard Volunteer Emergency Squad (LVES); and later serving as a Volunteer Member of the Ledyard Center Fire Company and Gales Ferry Fire Company, providing sound medical attention to those during critical, often dangerous, and potentially life threatening situations.

**After** joining the Ledyard Emergency Communications Staff as a Dispatcher in 1997:

Ms. Smith was appointed as the Chief Dispatcher by Mayor Susan B. Mendenhall in 2005 recognizing her exemplary knowledge, expertise, and proficient operations of the 911 Emergency Communications Center; as well as her compassion in providing skillful support and guidance to those calling for help; all while providing clear and accurate direction to her fellow emergency responders bringing a sense of calmness to stressful and crisis situations.

**Ms. Smith's** steady oversight of Ledyard's 911 and Emergency Communications has been instrumental with the town's implementation of the Computer-Aided Dispatch and Records Management Systems, Radio Equipment, Voice and Digital Recording Systems, Alarm Systems, and Cameras and Access Control Systems.

**And Ms. Smith's** ability to embrace new technology assisted the Ledyard Police Department's transition to the Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network, creating vital radio interoperability with surrounding law enforcement agencies.

**Ms. Smith's** interpersonal abilities have made her an asset as a Training Officer and in serving as Ledyard's Liaison to the Department of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications.

**Ms. Smith's** thorough understanding of the operational needs to provide outstanding emergency services and dispatch communications to Ledyard and Preston has been an asset to the community as she assists with the preparation and administration of the department's Annual Budget and in identifying and developing their Capital Improvement Plan being mindful of taxpayers' dollars, while prioritizing the safety of Ledyard's dedicated first responders and aid to her fellow citizens.

**Those of Us Who Witnessed** her quiet, but steadfast approach will attest that **Paula Jean Smith** has been motivated by the highest ideals of public service. The citizens of Ledyard have benefited and will remain grateful for her tireless years of service, commitment, integrity and perseverance during a period of growth and change; and are fortunate to have been and will continue to be served by her forethought and leadership qualities.

**The Town of Ledyard** join with Ms. Smith's friends and family to offer our congratulations and thank her for the Thirty Years of Service she has dedicated to her community; and extends its very best wishes on this memorable occasion and expresses the hope for her continued success.

*Given this Tenth day of September, in the year 2025 at Ledyard, Connecticut.*

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*Fred B. Allyn, III, Mayor*

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*Gary St. Vil, Chairman  
Ledyard Town Council*

2. Presentation by national speaker, Dr. Michael Fine, on the topic of Primary Care For All Americans and possible benefits to Ledyard, CT

Chairman St. Vil stated that Dr. Michael Fine has been invited to give a presentation this evening regarding Primary Care. He asked Councilor Parad to introduce Dr. Fine.

Councilor Parad stated that it was a privilege to introduce Dr. Michael Fine, who is physician, author, and public health trailblazer whose work has redefined what community

care can look like in America. She stated that Dr. Fine was one of the founders of the Scituate Health Alliance, a bold initiative that made Scituate, Rhode Island-population just 10,000-the first place in the United States where every resident is guaranteed access to primary care. Not just insurance coverage, but actual care: annual physicals, sick visits, screenings, and preventive services, all available for just \$10 per visit. It's a model built on trust, local leadership, and the radical belief that healthcare should be a public good. She stated that Dr. Fine's vision was rooted in decades of service. She stated that Dr. Fine served as Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health, where he championed population-based care and community health systems. He was also a prolific writer-authoring books like *Health Care Revolt* and *On Medicine as Colonialism*, which challenge us to rethink the economics and ethics of American healthcare. She stated that Dr. Fine was invited tonight because Ledyard, like many communities, was grappling with the impact of skyrocketing healthcare costs on their municipal budget. She stated that Dr. Fine's approach offers a novel, community-based solution-one that has shown success in other parts of the country, but has yet to be piloted in Connecticut. She stated that she believed that Ledyard had the opportunity to lead the way to improve health outcomes for their residents and, as a secondary benefit, to stabilize and strengthen their budget over time. She asked the Town Council to join her in welcoming Dr. Michael Fine, physician who doesn't just study systems, but builds bold alternatives to them.

Dr. Michael Fine stated that it was an honor to give the Town Council a presentation this evening and an honor to be introduced by Councilor Adrienne Parad, MD; and Dr. Andy Parad who was present this evening, noting that they have both been national leaders and pioneers to create a healthcare system that was for people, not for profit, around the country.

Dr. Fine proceeded by stating that he comes from Scituate, Rhode Island, noting that it was a town of 10,000; with a lot of different kinds of people. He stated about 25-years ago Primary Care For All Americans (PC4AA) figured out how to provide primary care to everyone in Rhode Island. He explained *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was a social movement to build a health care system for the United Stated in which everyone in America has a primary care relationship. He stated *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was the only national organization pursuing local and state level changes to recognize primary care as an affordable, essential service that has been proven to improve public health outcomes and lower costs.

Dr. Fine reviewed the attached PowerPoint presentation:

Dr. Fine stated *Primary Care For All Americans* has 1,800 people across 40 of their United States working to bring Primary Care to all Americans by:

- Building a Platform using:
- ✓ Local and State Workgroups
- ✓ National Support model (resources, playbooks, training, deployment)
- ✓ Robust social medial presence.

- Changing the Conversation
  - ✓ Primary care as an essential services and public health need
  - ✓ Practical ways to increase primary care workforce
  - ✓ New pathways to health professions for Students
  - Engage Cities and Towns through
  - ✓ Local Residents
  - ✓ Community Leaders
  - ✓ Healthcare Leaders
  - ✓ Local Government Leaders
- 
- Setting goals, measuring Progress
  - ✓ The number of primary care relationships in the Community
  - ✓ A Yearly Report on the Stats of the Primary Care in the Community.

Dr. Fine stated *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was doing this work because the use of primary care was an incredible opportunity to take care of everybody. He stated that primary care physicians were particularly useful to cities and towns, because:

- It was inexpensive, and it helps save taxpayer dollars; as it improves people's health.
- The United States spend twice as much as the average other developed countries in the world.
- Life expectancy for Americans ranks us 46th in the world
- Infant mortality rate in the United States ranks 50th in the world

Dr. Fine stated he has been a Primary Care Physician for a long time and he noted as a nation the United States spent \$5 trillion dollars in 2023 for medical treatment which was 20% of the gross domestic product. He stated in addition to spending an average of \$15,000 per-person per-year for Commercial Health Insurance that Americans were now looking at the biggest Health Insurance Cost increases in 15-years. He stated that these cost increases were not only going to affect all our pocketbooks, that it would affect the bottom line budget for cities and towns as they pay the cost of healthcare insurance for town employees. He stated Scituate, Rhode Island, with a population of 10,000 people and an Annual Budget of \$43 million, would spend about \$150 million a year to pay for the healthcare.

Dr. Fine continued by stating as a Medical Professional he has had the opportunity to sit at every health policy table at the National, State, and Local level in the United States. Therefore, he stated that he could tell them that there was not going to be any meaningful change coming out of Washington, and it was not because one party or another was in power, noting that there has not been meaningful change coming out of Washington around healthcare for as long as he has been in the healthcare profession.

Dr. Fine went on to state as they have shown in Scituate, Rhode Island; and in Ashtabula, Ohio, and a couple of other places, that communities could do this for themselves and they could do it well, if they can harness the power of Primary Care. He noted that one of his colleagues in Massachusetts calls the Primary Care "*Triple Superpower*".

Dr. Fine note the following benefits of Primary Care:

- 43% of Adult Americans have a robust primary care relationship.
- 65% of people have Primary Care Physicians, this was public health issue.
- Primary Care works by delivering effective prevention and reminding patients about routine screenings such as pap smears, mammograms, PSA Checks, and colonoscopies. Identifying chronic disease, like diabetes and heart disease early, through proper screenings that actually save lives and save money at the same time.
- Helps to reduce costs.
  - ✓ Average cost of Primary Care per person, per year, was about \$585.
  - ✓ Average cost of police and fire protection per person, per year was about 525.
  - ✓ Average cost of water and sewer per person, per year was about \$400.
  - ✓ Average cost of roads per person, per year was about \$622.
- Helps to improve the health of the population. In the United States they save about 50,000 lives a year, but they still lose 53,000 lives to treatable diseases such as colon or breast cancer.
- Primary Care provides people an option when they were sick. Instead of going to the Hospital Emergency Department, they can visit their Primary Care Physician. A Primary Care visit costs about \$100 - \$110 per visit.
- Every year there were 150 million Emergency Departments visits that typically cost between \$2,000 - \$10,000 per visit.
- Only about 12% of Emergency Department patients were admitted to the hospital. This data suggests that 88% of those people were spending \$2,500 or more per visit and probably did not need to go to the Emergency Department. These additional costs get passed on to the taxpayers and to others through the cost of insurance and through Medicaid, which covers all those costs.

Dr. Fine stated *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was an opportunity to save money. He explained that Ashtabula, Ohio, and Scituate, Rhode Island saved 15% to 20% or about \$1.5 million on what they were spending for town employee healthcare insurance including their teachers. He stated that these healthcare insurance savings enabled these communities to put money back into the schools, and to do things like keep the late buses.

Dr. Fine provided the following road map for Ledyard to evaluate *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) as follows:

- Establish a Committee to study and report on how much access there was to Primary Care in Ledyard
  - ✓ Discuss and choose a couple of options.
  - ✓ Discuss whether Ledyard had enough Primary Care Doctors and Nurses.
- Develop Programs and Local Scholarships to:
  - ✓ Help students visualize Primary Care Careers.

- ✓ Financial Support (Scholarship) to help Ledyard kids attend nursing and medical school, with an Agreement to come back and practice in Ledyard.
- Consider the purchase of other healthcare insurance for town employees.
- ✓ Make sure every town employee has access to a Primary Care Doctor. Dr. Fine noted that Ashtabula, Ohio was able to cut their cost of their Healthcare Insurance by 15% to 20%. He stated the Ashtabula, Ohio model was easy to replicate, and they had a lot of experience with getting it set-up.
- Consider purchasing Primary Care for anyone in the community that does not have healthcare insurance.
- ✓ Scituate, Rhode Island raised local funds to help its residents purchase healthcare insurance.
- ✓ Scituate, Rhode Island raised funds to buy a Federally Qualified Community Health Center to provide Primary Care Services in their community.

Dr. Fine stated that *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) now had the resources, and a local playbooks to help guide people, noting that they know that there was no *One-Size Fits All Solution*. He stated every community was different, and that every community was going to do it its own way. However, he stated the way to make *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) part of your community's future was to get started; noting that *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was available to help; stating that they can provide support and they have people that have done it; and they were all happy to help.

Dr. Fine stated that this concluded his presentation, and he would be happy to answer questions.

Councilor Buhle thanked Dr. Fine for speaking with the Town Council this evening. She stated that her husband is navy active duty, and therefore, she had access to Tricare healthcare, which a lot of people hate. However, she stated that she would argue that it was the best healthcare insurance she has ever had in her life. She questioned what would happen to people in Scituate, Rhode Island who had private insurance such as Tricare or Medicare.

Dr. Fine responded to Councilor Buhle's question explaining that most people have private healthcare insurance, and most people find and use their own Primary Care Clinician. He stated that it was a little easier in Scituate, Rhode Island than it was in some other places in Rhode Island, mainly because Scituate does not have a lot of people without insurance, which helped them get this program done. He stated in Scituate they hired a Town Nurse who keeps an eye on everybody; and she knows who was in trouble and helps them stop medical problems before they happen. He stated that she did a lot of programs around town to make sure people get the preventive services they need. He noted as an example that Scituate gives out the Tick Tubes every year because like Connecticut they have a lot of Lyme Disease. He stated at the Lions Club June Breakfast they gave out Tick Tubes, and they raised a little money to help with programs in the community. He stated these types of programs used to happen 40-50-years ago; however, they fell by the wayside, and nobody noticed. Therefore, he stated *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was trying to bring these programs

back to help community's take care of themselves instead of depending on the Big Healthcare System in the city far away.

Councilor Barnes thanked Dr. Fine for his presentation. He stated Ledyard's budget process this year (fy 25/26) was challenging; and it looked as though it was going to be increasingly challenging in years to come. He questioned whether *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was an opportunity to actually save money.

Dr. Fine responded to Councilor Barne's question stating that *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA) was an opportunity to save money depending on the piece they chose to do. He noted that Ashtabula, Ohio saved 15% to 20% on what they were spending for town employee healthcare insurance including teachers. He stated for Scituate, Rhode Island the savings was about \$1.5 million per year, noting this was real money that they were able to put back into the schools, to do things such as keep the late buses, and not have to make budget cuts that everyone really does not want to make. He stated often cities and towns get pushed into the corner because of rising healthcare costs; and he noted that healthcare costs were going to go up big time this coming year.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated 15% of the Ledyard's Healthcare Insurance Cost was \$1.80 million of their total budget. He stated Ledyard's Healthcare Insurance Costs were more than 10% of their total Budget, noting that it was a huge number and that it grows every year. Dr. Fine stated if the Town assigned every person they were giving insurance to a Primary Care Clinician, that it would cut the costs of the whole business, because it would give people a place to go instead of going to the Emergency Room at the Hospital; or from getting very high priced Magnetic Resonance Imaging Scan (MRI) and Computed Tomography Scans (CT) by talking to somebody who listened to them.

Chairman St. Vil thanked Dr. Fine for his interesting presentation this evening. He stated Dr. Fine's presentation was attached to the Town Council's agenda for anyone who was looking for more information, noting that there was also a website listed and QR Code for folks to scan to learn more about the *Primary Care For All Americans* (PC4AA). He stated that they also have Councilor Parad, M.D., who introduced Dr. Fine this evening, noting that she was a huge resource.

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

**Dr. Andy Parad**, Family Medicine Physician, 5 Birch Street, Ledyard, stated that it was a great treat to have Dr. Fine present this evening, noting that Dr. Fine had loads of experiences, as you learned. Dr. Parad stated that he would also like to mention that there were many complicated issues with the budget as Dr. Fine described. Dr. Parad stated that it really comes down to healthcare, which was going up every year, noting that so much money was wasted. He pointed out that although all of this may seem overwhelming at the moment; that usually a small group of people could make the biggest difference even in healthcare. He noted as an example, that he was part of a dedicated small group within the *American Academy of Family Physicians* which a physician group that represented about a 100,000

physicians. However, he stated that essentially there were 6 Core Members that push the National Academy's Policy and have advocated in Washington. He stated Policy that up until a few years ago supported the current pluralistic, fragmented system they currently have today. He stated a lot of the changes that the American Academy of Family Physicians have made would seem like common sense, noting that the Academy had to fight tooth and nail noting that *Healthdare is a Human Right* which the American Academy of Family Physicians now puts that on t-shirts and promotes. However, he stated that he along with Dr. Michael Fine, and Dr. Michael Capwell actually pushed for that, stating that healthcare should be equitable and should be funded appropriately to provide not only coverage, but actual access to healthcare, noting that healthcare should not be tethered to employment, which was a problem here in Ledyard and in other communities. He stated economic systems and economics of healthcare should be important lecture topics and have provided opportunities for Dr. Fine and himself to give lectures across the country on this important and often misunderstood topic.

Dr. Parad continued by explaining that providing education on healthcare has turned some of the American Academy of Family Physicians staunchest opponents into their biggest advocates, noting that former Executive Vice President of the Academy, who for years had been against the Academy wanting to phase-out Medicare Advantage; came out in support of their initiative last week. He stated any change may seem daunting; however, he stated that it all starts with education and with small groups. He stated with receiving this type of information that he would urge the Town Council to continue the discussion about how Ledyard could do things better locally and perhaps become a model for other communities in our State, and even on a national level.

Chairman St. Vil opened the floor for questions from the Town Council. Hearing none, he thanked Dr. Andy Parad for his comments.

## VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS

None.

## VII. APPOINTMENTS TO STANDING COMMITTEES AND LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Chairman St. Vil stated with the departure of former Chairman Rodriguez and the addition of Councilor Adrienne Parad, that he would like to announce the following changes to the Town Council's Standing Committees and Liaison Assignments:

### ***Town Council Standing Committees***

- ***Community Relations Committee For Diversity, Equity & Inclusion***
- ✓ Councilor Parad has been assigned to fill a vacancy left by himself

- ***Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee:***

- ✓ Councilor Garcia-Irizarry has been assigned as the Committee Chairman
- ✓ Councilor Parad has been assigned to fill a vacancy left by himself.

## ***Town Council Liaison Assignments***

- Inland Wetland & Water Courses Commission: Councilor Parad
  - Ledyard Farmers Market Councilor Buhle
  - Planning & Zoning Commission Councilor Parad
  - Retirement Board Chairman St. Vil

## VIII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Barnes stated they were a few hours away from the tragic events that took place on September 11, 2001. He stated that he did not want to leave this evening's meeting without saying a few words in remembrance of those who lost their lives that day. He stated that he was filled with a sense of sadness for those who suffered from the tragedy that shocked the world. He stated in today's news Charlie Kirk was assassinated while speaking at a public demonstration in Utha, noting that the first observation was that it looked like the assentation was politically motivated, stating that it was horrific. He stated in a small town like Ledyard that they had the opportunity to reflect on the many special things in their lives. He stated that he hoped each of them and their families, and their guests tonight, would take a moment tomorrow to be thankful for everything they have, stating there was no guarantee of tomorrow; and he asked that they all please treasure every moment.

Councilor Brunelle asked that motorists slow down, noting a recent accident in the Highlands area involving a car and bicyclist. She stated that fortunately no one was seriously injured.

Councilor Brunelle continued by noting that next week would be the last Farmers Market of the 2025 Summer Season, and she encouraged everyone to visit the Market.

Councilor Buhle thanked Chief Dispatcher Paula Smith for her service to the town. She stated this was her first term serving on the Town Council, noting that although she did not grow-up in Ledyard, she has made it her home. Councilor Buhle stated that one day she stopped by the Police Department and while she was there Ms. Smith offered to show her the Dispatch Center and how it all worked. She stated that this was not something that special that Ms. Smith did for her, noting that this was something that Ms. Smith would do for anyone. She stated that she loved to know the care and diligence that Ledyard and Preston residents were getting when they were potentially in the worst day of their life. She stated she was grateful for Ms. Smith and she was pleased that the Town Council took the opportunity to honor her this evening.

Councilor Ryan stated that he would echo Councilor Buhle's comments regarding Chief Dispatcher Paula Smith, noting that it was amazing that she has been in this field of work for so many years, and that he appreciated her service to the Town, noting the amount of stress they undergo as Emergency Dispatchers.

Councilor Ryan continued by noting that he would also like to echo Councilor Barnes' comments, stating that it was amazing that it was almost a quarter of a century that the horrific events of September 11, 2001 occurred. He stated that it was still very fresh, noting that many people remember where they were that day when the airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York, in Arlington, Virginia; and in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. He stated the lessons learned from that day were still not fully digested in our society, which was unfortunate. However, he stated that he believed that they had the opportunity to continue to learn from those events and from the events that took place today in Utah. He stated as Councilor Barnes' mentioned it was an advertent act; noting that he did not have the words to describe it. He stated the videos and pictures on-line were difficult to look at, noting that there was also a shooting at a school in Dever today. He stated the overall state of affairs were very worrying; commenting that he would like to think that this should not be a political issue, but unfortunately the media frames it that way, and we have to do our best to rise above that. He stated there was a lot of things to reflect on today and to digest.

Councilor Parad stated that since this was her first Town Council Meeting that she would like to begin by expressing her sincere gratitude to Mayor Allyn, III, Chairman St. Vil and the entire Town Council for welcoming her, and for giving her the opportunity to speak tonight. She stated that it was an honor to join this dedicated body and serve our community. She stated for those that she has not met yet that her name is Adrienne Parad, and that she has come to this role with deep compassion and empathy. These qualities have guided her throughout her career as a family physician; and in her most cherished roles as a wife, mother of three school age children, and a proud navy veteran. She stated that her commitment to Ledyard runs deep noting that she previously served as the Chair of the Ledyard Nursing Board, and she was now serving as the President of the Ledyard Education Advancement Foundation (LEAF), where she has had the privilege to work alongside many of you to celebrate and support our educators, students, and families. She stated that she wished that she could be with the Town Council in person tonight to mark this special moment. However, she stated in true 2020 fashion she tested positive for COVID-19 this morning. Therefore, she stated instead of shaking hands, that she would be waving from behind a screen, which was not quite the debut she imagined, but that she was grateful for the chance to connect, nonetheless.

Councilor Parad continued by stating that tonight marks a new chapter, not just for her personally, but for what she hoped they could accomplish together. She stated that she believed in collaboration and listening, and lifting each other up. She stated that her focus was to work with all of you to make their town the best it can be, not just for today, but for generations to come. She stated the initiative she was introducing tonight was bold; and that it may push them beyond their comfort zones, but she believed that was where growth happens;

that was where innovation lives; and that was how they achieve better outcomes for their residents. Councilor Parad concluded her comments by thanking the Town Council for this for this opportunity to serve with them. She stated that she looked forward to the work ahead with humility, determination, and a deep love for this town that we all call home.

Chairman St. Vil stated that he would like to piggyback on Councilor Barnes's and Councilor Ryan's comments this evening regarding the tragic event that happened in Utah today, where a Thought Leader was assassinated and the media was crafting it out to be political in nature, and he commented that was unfortunate. He stated it was unfortunate because throughout his 25+ year career he was very accustomed to debating ideas and thoughts passionately, noting that he never felt that his safety was in jeopardy; and/or the passion of a debate by himself or someone else meant that they did not appreciate each other as people and as individuals. He stated that he felt the same way about the time he has spent both on committees and commissions in Ledyard as well as on the Town Council with his fellow Town Councilors, whether they were a Democrat or a Republican; noting that he admired and respected his peer Counselors, and that he hoped that their community sees the example that they were setting in which they could disagree and at the same time appreciate and respect the ideas that differ from our own. He stated as Councilor Barnes' said, tomorrow's promise is to no one; and that they all appreciate the moments that they do have. He asked that they all think about this young Thought Leader's Family, stating that his two young children were not going to have a Dad; and his wife that was not going to have a Husband. He asked that they all keep them in their collective prayers.

#### IX. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following Town Council Minutes:

- Special Meeting of August 6, 2025 (Executive Session)
- Special Meeting of August 6, 2025

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Buhle

**VOTE: 8 - 0 -1 Approved and so declared** (Parad abstained)

**RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED**

**MOVER:** Kevin Dombrowski

**SECONDER:** Jessica Buhle

#### X. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications List – September 10, 2025

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

#### XI. REFERALS

#### XII. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

##### 1. Administration Committee Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Buhle stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening and in addition to forwarding several appointments and Job Description updates to the Town

Council that the Committee also approved to forward a draft “*An Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission*” and a recommendation to set a Public Hearing date to receive comments on the proposed Ordinance for September 24, 2025. She stated the Administration Committee received a lot of public comments regarding the proposed Ordinance.

**RESULT:**

2. Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – Report- Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion next meeting would be held on September 17, 2025.

**RESULT:**

3. Finance Committee Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee met on September 3, 2025 and have a number of items on tonight’s agenda.

**RESULT:**

4. LUPPW Committee Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Chairman St. Vil stated the LUPPW Committee met on August 4, 2025 and addressed the following standing agenda items: (1) Evaluate the need for a Noise Ordinance based on a resident’s feedback. Chairman St. Vil stated after some consultation and utilizing/leveraging town resources with Police Chief John Rich, Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick, and Public Works Director Steve Masalin, they seem to have corrected the issue; and therefore, there does not appear to be a need for any additional ordinances to mitigate noise issues. Therefore, the LUPPW Committee retired this agenda item; (2) Spicer Homestead Ruins Historic Designation - Chairman St. Vil explained that the Historic District Commission was overseeing the initiative to seek a historic designation of the Spicer Homestead Ruins. He stated the LUPPW Committee issued a letter dated August 21, 2025 to the Historic District Commission to outline the next steps should the Historic District Commission decide to formally seek a historic designation of the area. He stated the LUPPW Committee looked forward to receiving the Historic District Commission’s feedback. He stated the LUPPW Committee also retired this standing agenda item, until they hear back from the Historic District Commission.

**RESULT:**

**Liaison Reports**

Conservation Commission Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Barnes stated the Conservation Commission identified that there has been a series of some type of litter including human waste at the Kettle Hole Trail at Glacier Park. He noted that

Conservation Commission Chairman Michael Marreili was present this evening and he questioned whether there was something they could do outside of this meeting to engage the Ledyard Police Department to provide some type of observation/surveillance of the environment. He stated this has been a problem in the past and that it has gotten worse in recent months.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated that they could address the matter outside of tonight's meeting, noting that another proposal for the Glacier Park Property would be coming forward in the not too distance future.

#### Permanent Municipal Building Committee Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Brunelle stated the PMBC met on September 8, 2025. However, she stated she was not able to attend because she was attending another meeting, and she has not had a chance to look at the meeting video.

#### Social Services Board Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Brunelle stated the Social Services Board has not met.

#### Public Safety Commission Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Saccone stated recognizing Chief of Dispatch Paula Smith earlier this evening was a great honor. He stated the public does not realize what Emergency 911 Dispatcher go through in managing emergency calls for help. He stated many Emergency 911 Dispatcher suffer from Post Traumatic Brain Injury Disorder (PSTD) because of the things they hear over the telephone and radio calls. He stated that it was amazing that Ms. Smith has lasted for thirty-years, noting that studies indicate most Emergency 911 Dispatcher only stay in the job for about ten-years because of the stress of what they deal with every day. He congratulated Ms. Smith for her thirty-years of service at the Ledyard Emergency 911 Communications Center; and thanked her for her service.

#### Library Commission Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Library Commission met on August 18, 2025 and she reported on the following: (1) Hoopla was reinstated - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry explained that Hoopla was a digital service provided by public libraries that allows patrons to borrow and stream a wide variety of content, including eBooks, audiobooks, movies, music, and comics, for free using their library card. She stated due to limited funding for the program that the Library had discontinued offering Hoopla to its patrons. However, she stated that the *Friends of the Library* would be providing more funding to support Hoopla, which has enabled the Library to reinstate the program. However, she noted to make the funding last longer the Library would be limiting patrons to 3 Hoopla borrows per month instead of the previous 4 borrows; and (2) Library Consortium Study Group was Disbanded - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Study Group was set-up to evaluate whether Ledyard should stay with Libraries On Line (LION) or change to another Consortium. She explained that LION was a consortium of public and academic libraries in Connecticut that share technology, digital collections, and IT support which was designed to enhanced services to the Consortium members and to the Libraires patrons. She stated because LION's cost has been increasing, while services were decreasing that Library Consortium Study Group was formed to consider other options. However, she

stated because the new Library Director was not familiar with all that has been going on the Study Group was disbanded with the plan to allow the new Director to come up-to-speed and get acquainted with everything; and then reestablish the Library Consortium Study Group at a later time.

### Board of Education Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Board of Education met on September 9, 2025 and she reported on the following: (1) Enrollment was very close to Assistant Superintendent Hogeston's projection for the 2025/2026 School year. The Middle School had about 14 more students than expected; (2) Next Generation Science Standards Test (NGSS) - Students were tested in Grades 5, 8, 11 for *At or Above Proficient*. Grade 5 Students improved from 55% to 63%; Grade 8 Students improved from 56% to 63%; and Grade 11 improved from 57% to 71%. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the Grade 11 Students were in Grade 5 in 2022 which was coming out of the Covid Pandemic noting that the improvement was outstanding; (3) Standardized College Admissions Test (SAT) - 78% of Ledyard's Juniors who took the SAT met or exceeded the college and career readiness benchmarks. Ledyard's students outperformed the 58% State Average. The benchmark scores were as follows: Reading and Writing 480-800; and for Math 530-800; (4) Standardized Tests - The following results and comparisons were provided: English Language Arts (ELA) for the 2023-2024 School Year 18.5% of the students did not meet the benchmark; and for 2024/2026 that number was reduced to only 6.86% of the students did not meet the benchmark. The number of students that exceed the ELA benchmark for 2023-2024 was 12.14; and in 2024-2025 the number of students that exceed the benchmark was 21.14%. For Math the number of students that did not meet the benchmark in 2023-2024 was 26.59%; and in 2024-2025 it was 19.43%. The students that met or exceed the Math benchmark in 2023-2024 was 38% which exceed the 31% State Average. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that Ledyard students test scores have improved, however, the Board of Education knows they still had work to do; (5) Board of Education Projected Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget Surplus \$213,446 - The Board of Education voted to move the \$213,466 surplus funds into their Capital Non-Recurring Fund to be used for Capital Projects; (6) Per Pupil Expenditure Calculation - The following expenses were included in Ledyard's \$17,000 Per Pupil Expenditure Calculation: a portion of the Director of Finance's Salary; a portion of the Treasurer's Salary; Nursing Director Salary, Nurses Salaries, Nurses Aid Salaries, and many other things; (7) Adult Education \$52,000 - The State mandates that every town offer Adult Education for people to obtain their General Education Development (GED). Because Ledyard does not have an Adult Education Program they contract with Norwich for a costs of \$52,000 per year, whether one Ledyard student was enrolled or 20 students were enrolled; (8) Board of Education Meeting Time - The Board of Education agreed to change their meeting time to 6:00 p.m. and also made changes to their subcommittee meeting times.

### Economic Development Commission Report Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Councilor Buhle stated she was not able to attend the EDC's September 2, 2025 meeting noting that she would provide a report at the Town Council's September 24, 2025 meeting.

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### XIII. REPORT OF THE MAYOR

#### Mayor Report Fiscal Year 2025/2025

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Connecticut Main Street August 25, 2025 Meeting was held in Norwich - Mayor Allyn stated the Connecticut Main Street Group was commissioned by the State through Eversource Funding and tasked to visit all 169 Connecticut Towns to help them with some type of Main Street Development. He stated the proposal for Ledyard was “*Nature Place Making*” to emphasize the Thames River, Trail Connections and how to connect Trails to Town Centers to spur economic development; (2) Founders Preserve Property Conveyance to Avalonia Land Conservancy - Mayor Allyn stated at a Special Town Meeting that was held on October 28, 2020 the townspeople approved to transfer approximately 96.52 +/- acres (Founders Preserve) *located at 332* (which was now 334) Colonel Ledyard Highway, to the Avalonia Land Conservancy to remain open to the public for passive recreation and to be protected in perpetuity under the Conservancy’s care. He stated because there were some boundary line issues that involved subdivision and resubdivision that it has taken years to get all that straightened out and clarified. The paperwork has been filed, and the property transfer was finalized; (3) Habitat for Humanity and Department of Housing Meeting - Mayor Allyn stated work continues on the proposal for 30-Housing Units on Colby Drive (see Town Council Minutes 5/19/2025; 6/4/2025 & Public Hearing Minutes 6/4/2025). He explained the driveway off Colonel Ledyard Highway to access the Salty Hefer Restaurant would become the continuation of Colby Drive, noting that it would break to the left and connect to the rest of Fairway Drive and Colby Drive. He stated Habitat for Humanity had \$7 million of capital funding in-place to construct the infrastructure, noting that this was an 8-30g Subdivision; and expected to take five-years to complete the project; (4) Nuclear Safety Drill - September 4, 2025 - Mayor Allyn apologized to Chairman St. Vil for wasting his time in attending the Drill. Mayor Allyn stated that it was probably the one of worst and poorly executed Drills Ledyard had experienced. He explained during the 4-hour Drill Ledyard only had one “inject” which was a partial lane closure on Route 12, Gales Ferry, which the Public Works department quickly resolved. He stated that he appreciated Chairman St. Vil attending the Nuclear Safety Drill and having an opportunity to see the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located in the High School basement; (5) Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region ( seCTer) Economic Development September 7, 2025 Meeting - Mayor Allyn stated he Chaired the meeting noting that CBIA Vice President (Connecticut Business Industry Association) Chris Davis presented the 2025 Connecticut Business Survey noting the following: 91% of responding business stated the cost of doing business in Connecticut was rising; 76% were having difficulty hiring; 27% cited the lack of skilled applicants hindered growth; followed by uncertainty of Legislative Action in the State; as well as high business taxes. Mayor Allyn stated that it was a lengthy Report and that he would email the document to anyone interested in reviewing the Report; (6) Emergency Planning & Preparedness Initiative (EPPI) Drill September 9, 2025 - Mayor Allyn the EPPI Drill ran much better than the September 4, 2025 Nuclear Safety Drill. He apologized to the residents living in the Highlands, noting that was the target involving a severe drought followed by a wild fire that conveyed from house to house to house and was followed by flooding from 5-10 inches of rain; (7) Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Legislative Committee Meeting - Mayor Allyn stated the Legislative Committee has started their work for the 2026 Legislative Session. He

explained 2026 would be a Short Session in Hartford because it was not a State Budget year; however, he stated that they would be working on a lot of Bills; (8) Southeastern Connecticut Council of Government (SCCOG) Legislative Committee Meeting - Mayor Allyn stated he Chaired the SCCOG Legislative Committee Meeting, noting that they were trying to partner with COST and CCM to get on the same page with the number of requests; (9) Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OWSA) Grant - 154 Stoddards Wharf Road - Mayor Allyn stated the OWAS Grant was approved for Avalonia Land Conservancy to move forward with the acquisition of 154 Stoddards Wharf Road, which was a 36-acre parcel that was adjacent to other Avalonia Land Conservancy open space properties and potential to access the Tri-Town Trail. He noted at their November 13, 2024 meeting the Town Council authorized an allocation of \$80,000 from Account #210-101210-12101-58920 (Open Space Fund) to provide financial support to Avalonia Land Conservancy with the acquisition of 154 Stoddard's Wharf Road. He noted Account #210-101210-12101-58920 (Open Space Fund) had a balance in the amount of \$535,000 minus the \$80,000, which would be released to Avalonia Land Conservancy at the time of closing on the property; (10) Trailer at 8 Rosemary Court- Mayor Allyn stated due to unsafe conditions the town removed the Trailer that was damaged from a fire that occurred in the middle of the night. He stated the Town has placed a Demolition Lien on the property, stating that the town would be made whole and the property was now a clean, safe condition; (11) Foreclosed on Blight Lien Colonel Ledyard Highway - Mayor Allyn stated the Town foreclosed on a Blight Lien for a property on Colonel Ledyard Highway. He provided some background explaining this process started in May, 2022, and the town provided the property owner many opportunities to address the heavy blight. He stated the property owner did not seem to address the matter; therefore, the town was waiting for the Court to approve the Sale that occurred on September 6, 2025.

### **Questions to the Mayor**

Councilor Garica-Irizarry questioned whether anyone was living in the Blighted Property on Colonel Ledyard Highway. Mayor Allyn stated the owner does not occupy the property.

### **RESULT: .**

### **XIV. OLD BUSINESS**

### **XV. NEW BUSINESS**

- MOTION to Amend the Agenda to add

MOTION to set a Public Hearing (Hybrid Format - Video Conference and In-Person) Public Hearing date to be held on October 22, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. to be held in Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard, Connecticut, to receive comments and recommendations regarding a proposed "An Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code Of Ethics And Ethics Commission" ..

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

**VOTE: 6 - 3 Approved and so declared** (Barnes, Dombrowski, Ryan not in favor)

**RESULT:** APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

**AYE:** 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Saccone, St. Vil, and Parad

**NAY:** 3 Barnes, Dombrowski, and Ryan

Chairman St. Vil announced that this item will be added as Item #6 on tonight's Agenda

Finance Committee

1. MOTION to appropriate \$3,635 to Account #21020301-57300-G0015 (Fire Marshall - New Equipment - State Grant).

In addition, authorize the expenditure of up to \$3,635 to purchase the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Server Rack as part of the upgrades to Emergency Operations Center (EOC) .

The funding source for this project is the Town of Ledyard's FY 2026 Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Funding Allocation.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Administrator of Emergency Management/Fire Marshal Jim Mann explained that over the past few years Ledyard has been using the Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Funding (NESP) to upgrade the equipment at the Emergency Operations Center that was located in the lower level of the High School, which included the purchase of a new server. He stated about eight months ago a sewer line broke at the High School; noting they were lucky that it missed the new server by about two-feet. He stated that MIS Director Justin Dube strongly recommended that the EOC purchase a Server Cabinet to prevent the servers from getting damaged in the future. He stated that the Town would need to purchase the Server Cabinet and submit the paid invoice to the State to receive the grant funding reimbursement. He stated to date they have spent about \$10,000 from the Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Funding (NESP).

Mayor Allyn, III, stated for the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year that Ledyard was awarded \$22,500 from the Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Funding (NESP).

**VOTE:** 9 - 0 Approved and so declared

**RESULT:** APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

**MOVER:** Jessica Buhle

**SECONDER:** Tim Ryan

**AYE:** 9 Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil, and Parad

2. MOTION to appropriate and transfer \$250,636 from Account #10188210-59300 (Transferred Funds) to Account #2250101-49002 (BOE CNR Transfers In)

In addition, appropriate \$250,636 to Account #22570101-58261 (BOE CNR Ag-Science)..end.

Moved by Councilor Saccone seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Councilor Saccone noted the Board of Education's letter dated July 29, 2025 and received on August 6, 2025 included a list of capital items that the ASTE Grant Funding would be used to purchase.

Councilor Barnes questioned whether there was anything in the budget that the town provided in the Agri-Science (Vo-Ag) Program that they would not have provided for if they had been aware of these additional funds coming in.

Councilor Buhle stated during the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget year the State changed the funding stream for Agri- Science (Vo-Ag) Program explaining the Vo-Ag Program had been primarily funded by the tuition collected from other towns sending students to Ledyard's Vo-Ag Program. However, she went on to explain that the State removed them from a Tuition-Based system to relying on State Grant funding. Therefore, she stated the Agri-Science (Vo-

Ag) Grant funding for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 was well above the amount that was budgeted, and the Tuition was below the amount that was budgeted; however, there was still a delta of \$250,636. Therefore, she stated the Board of Education has requested the additional Agri-Science (Vo-Ag) Grant Funding be allocated to their Capital Non-Recurring Account to make purchases for the Agri-Science Program. She went on to note in the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget that Agri-Science Grant Revenue and Tuition should be more in-line with what the town would be receiving. Therefore, she stated now that they town has made the adjustment from the Agri-Science being Tuition based to State Funding going forward that she did not think they would see a \$250,000 surplus in Agri-Science Grant Funding again, unless the State makes additional changes to the funding stream for the Agri-Science Program.

Councilor Dombrowski stated the Board of Education's request to use the additional Agri-Science Grant Funding for Capital Items for Program was not unusual. He explained that rather than use the additional funding toward on-going recurring operating expenses for the Agri-Science Program, that each year the Board of Education submits a list of the capital items that they would purchase using the additional grant funding to support the Agri-Science Program.

Councilor Buhle noted that the Board of Education's July 29, 2025 letter included a secondary request for the use of additional Impact Aid funding. However, she stated the Finance Committee has not moved that request forward yet.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that the Board of Education provides conservative revenues projections for grants from the State and Federal Government in preparing the annual budget, because if the grant funding comes in lower than projected they have to figure out where they were going to get the money to fund those things. She stated a lot of the stuff the Board of Education was using the ASTE Funding for were things that they need; and that those items would not be in the next year's budget.

Councilor Ryan stated during their September 3, 2025 meeting the Finance Committee discussed the need for more accurate budgeting. He stated had they known that the Agricultural Science Technology Education (ASTE) Grant was going to come in \$250,636 higher that it could have been used to lessen the tax burden. He stated he was not implying that there was anything nefarious about this; and that they would always take additional money from the State, stating additional funding from the State was a good thing.

Councilor Ryan continued by noting that the Finance Committee also discussed the need to look at the trends from the last few budget cycles with regard to the Budgeted Revenues versus the Actual Revenues Received. He stated in most cases they have seen that they were within a few percentage points, maybe less than 10%. However, he stated that this amount may be more than that. He stated that the data may point to a formula to try to more accurately project their revenues. However, he stated more importantly, the Finance Committee also talked about engaging more with their State Legislators to make them understand that when these formulas were changing, or when the structure of the guidelines were changing for how the revenue was being divided up for municipalities; that the town needed to be kept *in the know*, so that they could have the most accurate budget numbers as possible. He stated that he understands that the State's structural change for the ASTE Program funding was not approved until after Ledyard's budget cycle was completed. However, he stated that their State Legislators could have at least filled them in, noting that they knew the change was coming. He stated although the change had not been approved at the State level, that their State Legislators probably had a good idea that it was going to be approved. He stated that it would help their taxpayers if the town had more accurate revenue numbers. He stated that he looked forward to continuing this discussion in at the Finance Committee meetings.

Councilor Dombrowski stated to Councilor Ryan's point, although the town would have an estimate of the State Revenues to the town; that they do not really know what they would be receiving from the State. He stated because of the timing for the budget approval process that there were years when the town had to pass a budget without knowing what State funding they would be receiving, because the State Legislature had not finished their work at time of the Town's Annual Budget Referendum.

**VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared**

**RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED**

**MOVER: Tony Saccone**

**SECONDER: Jessica Buhle**

**AYE: 9 Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Ryan, Sacccone, St. Vil, and Parad**

- 3. MOTION** to authorize the expenditure of up to \$25,000 from account #21090305-58915 CNR Undesignated to hire a consultant to assist with cost segregation analysis and form 990-T filings in order to secure investment tax credits (direct pay) available under IRC section 6417. In addition, upon receipt of said tax credit, restore funding in the same amount to the Undesignated line in CNR.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Councilor Sacccone explained that Federal Form 999 was for tax exempt organizations such as the Town, Volunteer Fire Companies, etc. He stated in 2022 the law was changed to allow

tax exempt organization to apply for and receive tax credits, known as a “*Direct Payment*” on things that they did not pay taxes on at the time they purchase the items, such as the Solar Array Panels that were being installed on the School Roofs.

Mayor Allyn provided additional background stating the town’s Auditor CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP., recommended that Ledyard conduct a *Cost Segregation Analysis for the Solar Arrays* on the School Buildings to receive tax credits which would cover the 38% of the non-reimbursable portion from the State Grant funding for the cost of the Solar Array Panels. He stated the town would receive about \$500,000 from the tax credits “*Direct Payment*”, which they would use to lower the amount of money the town would need to borrow in their final financing for the School Projects.

Councilor Saccone stated that some of these tax programs were sunsetting and that the town believed that they could make the timeframe to apply and receive the Direct Payment. Mayor Allyn explained that one of the most recent Federal Laws included a requirement that the Solar Panels had to be made in the United States. He stated work was completed and would meet the requirements for one of the Schools. However, he stated the Gales Ferry School has had on-going issues with the roof installation and related work. Therefore, he stated it remained to be seen if they could even source the Solar Array Pannels in the United States to get that project done. He stated even with only having one of the Schools qualify that they would receive \$250,000 in the Direct Payment, which they would use to lower the amount of money the town would need to borrow in their final long-term financing for the School Projects, which would help to lessen the town’s 20-year bond burden.

**VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared**

**RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED**

**MOVER:** Tim Ryan

**SECONDER:** Jessica Buhle

**AYE:** 9 Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil, and Parad

4. MOTION to grant a Bid Waiver to Wastewater Services Inc. DBA Skips Wastewater Service due to receiving fewer than the required three bids in response to Bid #2026-01 Thickened Sludge Solids Removal in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) “An Ordinance for Purchasing” ..end

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained the process for the Rotary Drum Thickener at the Wastewater Facility on Town Farm Road. He stated that periodically the Thickened Sludge Solids have to be removed from the Rotary Drum to continue to operate the facility . He stated the Water Pollution Control Authority solicited bids for this work; however, only two bids were received, noting that Wastewater Services Inc., DBA Skips Wastewater Service was the low bid.

Councilor Barnes questioned the amount of the contract. Mayor Allyn, III, explained that the cost was on a per ton basis. Chairman St. Vil noted that Wastewater Services Inc., bid came in as follows: Year 1- \$800.00 per ton; Year 2- \$880.00 per ton; and Year 3- \$968.00 per ton.

**VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared**

**RESULT:** APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

**MOVER:** Jessica Buhle

**SECONDER:** Tony Saccone

**AYE:** 9 Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil, and Parad

5. MOTION to appropriate up-to to \$1,500 from Account #21090305-58920 CNR Acquisition of Open Space; and authorize the Mayor to hire a professional firm to appraise 480R Shewville Road.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained in 1994 the town purchased an 11-acre parcel and constructed the Loftus Well Field on Shewville Road when the town created its own public water system to supply water to the Highlands area, when their wells dried up. He stated in 2017 after the town connected to Groton Utilities Water Supply the Loftus Wellfield was abandoned, the 1,500 square foot steel building they built on the property was cleaned out, and the wells were filled in.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain when the town purchased the property in 1994 from the Loftus Family it included deed restrictions, noting that the property could only be used for a water supply, storage tank, and related infrastructure. Therefore, he stated because the town cannot use the surplus property for any other purpose, that he would like to obtain a professional appraisal of the property to understand the value of the parcel, should the Town Council authorize him to offer the property for sale.

Councilor Saccone questioned whether there has been any conversations with Groton Utilities about maintaining the Loftus Wellfield as a backup water supply. Mayor Allyn stated because the wells have been filled in they no longer exist. However, he stated that Groton Utilities had more than a trillion gallons of water supply in the reservoir; and they have never had an issue. He also noted that Groton Utilities has been continuing to expand the reservoir off of Buddington Road to grow their surface supply.

Councilor Dombrowski stated in 2011 the Water Pollution Control Authority identified that the Loftus Wells were in danger of collapsing, which was when they began to negotiate with Groton Utilities to consider options for a long-term water supply for the Highlands area. He stated in 2017 when the Water Pollution Control Authority tied into the Groton Utilities system they discussed the other uses such as using the Loftus property for a water bottling plant, however, he stated because of the deed limitations they were unable to do anything they could think of to use the property. He stated the property served its purpose during the 1990's; however, he stated because of the deed limitations; and because the parcel was landlocked, that the property no longer served to benefit to the town, and therefore, he stated the town should get rid of the property.

Councilor Buhle stated during the Finance Committee's September 3, 2025 meeting they discussed that the way the property was divided, it would not be a permitted subdivision at this point for zoning purposes. Therefore, she questioned whether it was fair to say that the only party that would be interested in buying the 11-acre parcel was the original owner; and whether that would restrict the town's ability to sell the property at market value.

Mayor Allyn responded to Councilor Buhle's question, stating that it could. However, he stated that they had an obligation to determine the market value of the property, per the appraiser, and that hopefully they could negotiate from there.

Chairman St. Vil questioned how the town acquired the Loftus Well Field property. Mayor Allyn stated that it was a direct purchase in which the town bought the 11-acre parcel for \$275,000 and then built the steel building. He stated the total investment was about \$500,000 - \$600,000 in the property.

**VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared**

**RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED**

**MOVER: Tony Saccone**

**SECONDER: Jessica Buhle**

**AYE: 9 Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil, and Parad**

- 6. MOTION to set a Public Hearing (Hybrid Format - Video Conference and In-Person) Public Hearing date to be held on October 22, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. to be held in Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard, Connecticut, to receive comments and recommendations regarding a proposed "An Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code Of Ethics And Ethics Commission" ..**

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry  
Discussion: In accordance with the Town Charter; Section 5

**Section 5. Public Hearing On, Publication Of, And Passage Of Ordinances**

*Unless otherwise required by State statutes, at least one public hearing, notice of which shall be given at least five (5) days in advance by publication on the Town Website and by posting a notice in a public place, shall be held by the Town Council before any ordinance shall be passed.*

**VOTE: 6 - 3 Approved and so declared (Barnes, Dombrowski, Ryan not in favor)**

**XVI. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Buhle, moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Brunelle.

**VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared.** The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

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Transcribed by Roxanne M. Maher  
Administrative Assistant to the Town Council

I, Gary St. Vil , 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 September 10, 2025.

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Gary St. Vil, 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.