



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman Gary St. Vil

MINUTES
LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026; 7:00 PM
HYBRID FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman St. Vil called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location
William Barnes	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
April Brunelle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Ty (Earl) Lamb	Town Councilor	Present	Remote
Adrienne Parad	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Excused	
Gary St. Vil	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
James Thompson	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person

- IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS – None.

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

Mr. Steve Munger, 12 Nutmeg Drive, Gales Ferry, stated during the Veterans Monthly Breakfast which was held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, that he and Councilor Parad had a nice talk, noting that they had a lot more in common than they had that was opposite. He stated it was a great experience, noting that Councilor Parad was the only member on the Town Council he had not had a full conversation with, outside of the Town Council Meetings. He stated that he appreciated Councilor Parad’s time and for being a Veteran; and that he appreciated all of Councilor’s time in serving their community, noting that he would continue to disagree on certain things.

Mr. Brandon Sabbag, 16 Nutmeg Drive, Gales Ferry, stated that he was launching a Ledyard Live Podcast, noting he recently signed a lease for the Podcast Studio for space across the street. He extended an open invitation to each member of the Town Council and the Board of Education Members to be a guest on his Podcast. He stated that he would be one of the Podcast’s Host, noting that they would also have guest hosts, etc. He stated this was a 100% non-political; non-partisan effort. He stated it was an opportunity to share initiatives and other things that were going on in Town. He stated if they had political candidates who live in Ledyard that the Podcast would be happy to share from either side of the aisle anything that they wanted to promote. He stated they launched their Facebook Page about one month ago and they already had about 700 followers, and that he projected by the end of the year they would have about 5,000 followers. He stated tomorrow he would be interviewing Mayor Fred Allyn, III, and Historic District Commissioner Doug Kelley, who oversees the Historic Nathan Lester House. He noted during their kick-off Podcast they would be talking about the history of Ledyard. He stated that he also had School Superintendent Jason Hartling lined for

a Podcast, noting that they looked forward to having a lot of people tell their story. He stated as the host of the Podcast that he would be facilitating the opportunity for people to get information out to their community. He stated that he personally invited Chairman Gary St. Vil to be a guest; and he noted everyone on the Town Council was welcome to be a guest on the Podcast to introduce themselves and to talk about things that were important to them.

Chairman St. Vil thanked the Residents for their comments.

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry addressed Ledyard High School's Production of Chicago that was held on March 26, 27, 28, 2026 Thursday, Friday and Saturday. She stated the singing and acting was fantastic, noting that all of it was fantastic. She gave the students kudos for the Friday night, March 27, 2026 performance, because that day the High School received a call that put everyone in jeopardy. She stated the High School went into lock-down; all of the busses that had not yet arrived at the school were radioed to turn around and to bring the students back to their homes; and everyone in the parking lot were turned around and had to leave; and that the High School cancelled all classes for the day. She stated after going through all that stress the students had to put on the Chicago Show Friday evening. She stated that it was impressive that after such a stressful day they were able to perform with the professionalism they did. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry thanked everyone at the High School and the Ledyard Police Department for managing the emergency very well, noting that they did everything to protect their kids. She stated that she did not think that they appreciated everything their teachers and educators do every day, noting that they had to take care of the safety of hundreds of children every single day. She went on to note that the Ledyard Police Department also sent Police Officers to the other schools in town to ensure the safety of those school campuses. She thanked everyone for their work they did that day.

Councilor Parad began her comments by stating that she was also going to talk about the experience that occurred at the High School and their Production of Chicago; and she thanked Councilor Garcia-Irizarry for her comments regarding the Chicago Show. She continued by noting that her daughter was already in the High School Cafeteria, when they heard a loud whistling noise, but the kids did not know what it meant. She stated that Math Teacher Mr. Sean Law came running from his classroom into the Cafeteria and called for all of the students to go with him to hide. She stated that Mr. Law was a hero, noting that they do not thank their teachers enough. She stated her daughter sent her a text while in hiding, stating: "*Mom we are in lock down, I'm scared!*". Councilor Parad stated this was how her Friday began, and by the time an hour passed, and she could pick-up her daughter at the High School the Police Department had the High School Campus on lock-down, stating it was executed so well, noting that there was no hype, no people making a scene, stating it was quiet and everyone waited their turn in line to sign their kids out. She stated the event was handled beautifully.

Councilor Buhle commented on the following: (1) Safety Emergency at the High School Friday, March 27, 2026 – Councilor Buhle stated that she was also very thankful for all of the support from the Teachers, Administrators, and the Ledyard Police Department in keeping their students safe. She stated that she was so sorry about what everyone experienced that day saying it was a nightmare; (2) April is the Month of the Military Child – Councilor Buhle stated the color Purple was the designated for the Military Child because it was the blended color of all their military forces; which was the reason she was wearing the color purple this evening. She noted that she would be wearing the color purple to all her meeting this month in support of the Military Children in their community; and she invited others to join her; (3) *COPS Law Enforcement Technology and Equipment Grant* through the 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Initiative – Councilor Buhle noted at their March 25, 2026 meeting the Town Council authorized the submission of this Grant Application through Senator Blumenthal and Senator Murphy's Offices to purchase/replace the Police Department's Body

Cameras and In-Car Cameras. She stated that earlier this week she worked with Police Chief John Rich and his staff to prepare and submit the Grant Application in the amount of \$265,000. She stated if Ledyard's Grant Application was approved that it would cover all of the cost for five-years, at no cost to Ledyard taxpayers. She stated it was an amazing system with the data being stored in the cloud, it would make the Police Officers job easier in a number of ways including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests.

Councilor Lamb, attending remotely via Zoom, commented on the following: (1) Safety Emergency at the High School Friday, March 27, 2026 – Councilor Lamb noted Councilor Garcia-Irizarry and Councilor Parad's comments regarding the events of that day, noting that Ledyard's School Administrators, Teachers, and Police Department's response was awesome and he thanked them; (2) Citizens Alliance for Land Use (CALU) – Councilor Lamb stated he attended the Citizens Alliance for Land Use (CALU) meeting noting that resident Mr. M. Dave Schroeder, Jr., gave a great presentation regarding the Design District; and that they were working with the Historic District Commission. He stated this was a good example of community groups and volunteers working together.

Councilor Barnes commented on the following: (1) High School Production of Chicago – Councilor Barnes noted that he would echo the comments made this evening regarding the High School's Production of Chicago; (2) Safety Emergency at the High School Friday, March 27, 2026 – Councilor Barnes noted the Board of Education's and Police Department's response to the emergency event. He stated Friday was the type of events that they prepare for; and they see the results of that planning when events actually happen. He stated all involved did a great job; (3) Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget – Councilor Barnes expressed his appreciation to the Finance Committee and to everyone who has led to the where they currently stand on the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget. He stated while there would be some discussion regarding the proposed Budget later this evening; and in the weeks ahead, he thought that they were in a vastly different position than they were at this time last year. He stated that he hoped they would get to a point in the budget preparation process where there need not be signs around town that say, "Vote Yes" and "Vote No" on the Budget; because they would have bipartisan approval on a proposed budget; stating that he thought they were close to that. He thanked all those involved in making this happen.

Councilor Brunelle commented on the following: (1) Public Participation – Councilor Brunelle thanked everyone who was in attendance at tonight's Town Council meeting; as well as the meetings that were held earlier this evening. She stated having participation from their citizens and hearing their voices was important; (2) Caution motorist to be careful with warmer weather – Councilor Brunelle noted with the warmer weather there were more people out walking and running, as well as people riding bikes and motorcycles. She urged motorists to be careful in driving around town, not only for their residents, but also for the wildlife that has come out of hibernation.

Councilor Thompson commented on the following: (1) April – Month of the Military Child – Councilor Thompson thanked Councilor Buhle for announcing that April was the Month for the Military Child and that he would also wear the color purple in support of the military children in their community during the next few weeks; (2) Safety Emergency and Lock Down at the High School Friday, March 27, 2026 – Councilor Thompson stated that he would echo the comments that have already been made this evening. He stated as he has previously mentioned, he was an Elementary and Middle School Teacher for six and a half years when he lived in Florida. He stated during that time he was involved in three lock-downs, noting that two of the lock-downs were false alarms and one was not. He stated going into a lock-down protocol was scary for the students, parents, teachers, and resource officers at the schools. He explained that Teachers follow an unwritten; and often times unspoken rule "*That in the event of an emergency the children's safety comes first*". He stated Teachers were responsible for the care and wellbeing of their kids for 7 – 8 hours a day. He commended Teachers, Resource Officers, Police Department, and First Responders for their calm guidance and for doing what they do for 180 days; and for what they do when they were off the clock. He stated having been in a lockdown was a terrifying thing especially when you do not have access to your telephone, and you cannot contact your loved ones to

tell them what was going on and knowing that they were going to have to see it on the News; (3) 19th Walk to End Homelessness - Sunday, April 26, 2026 – Councilor Thompson stated that he currently was employed at the New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC), and he announced that they would be hosting the Walk. He stated they currently had 23 Teams, and 158 people have registered to participate in the Event; and they have received 251 donations. He stated to date the New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC) has raised \$38,743; noting that their Goal as \$60,000. He stated the New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC) does accommodate all of Southeastern Connecticut, noting that he has come to know several folks from Ledyard who have been through their facility. He stated last year the Shelter hosted about 600 folks explaining that some were short term; while others were for a longer period of time. He stated that some individuals had mental health issues, some were homeless veterans; some have lost their homes through no fault of their own such as losing family members which resulted in being evicted. He stated about 90% of the people he has seen were terrified about the future; and that their job at the Hospitality Center was to ease that transition and help them see a brighter path. He stated it has been a privilege for him to work there. He urged those interested in participating in the *Walk to End Homelessness* to visit their website at: www.NLHC.org noting that Registration was open for the next two-weeks.

Chairman St. Vil addressed the Safety Emergency and Lock Down at the High School on Friday, March 27, 2026. He noted that he wanted to echo the sentiments of his fellow Councilors, and express his appreciation to the Police Department, their Educators, and the Superintendent’s Office for the way they prioritized the safety and wellbeing of their most precious residents, those being their students, young folks, and teachers. He thanked all involved for their work.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following:

Public Hearing Minutes of March 25, 2026

Regular Minutes of March 25, 2026

Moved by Councilor Barnes, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

VOTE: 7 – 0 - 1 Approved and so declared (Lamb abstained)

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

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

X. FISCAL YEAR 2026/2027 BUDGET UPDATE

Chairman St. Vil stated in keeping the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget Process at the forefront the Town Council would continue to include this Item on the Agenda to provide regular updates. He noted that the Town Council would discuss the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 later this evening.

XI. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening and she noted they approved to forward a number of items that would be on the Town Council’s April 22, 2026 Agenda.

Community Relations Committee for Diversity Equity & Inclusion

Councilor Brunelle stated the Committee has not met since the last Town Council meeting. However, she noted that the Committee has been deliberating over the nominations for the Linda C. Davis Woman of the Year Award.

Finance Committee

Councilor Buhle stated the Finance Committee met on April 1, 2026; and they also held a Special Meeting earlier this evening. She noted the Committee had a number of items on tonight's Agenda which included the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to present at the April 21, 2026 Public Hearing.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor Thompson stated the LUPPW Committee had a short meeting on Monday, April 6, 2026; noting that the Committee approved to forward the following items to the Town Council: (1) Draft Clark Farm Lease to be used for agricultural purposes; and (2) Fair Housing Resolution. These LUPPW Committee items would be included on the Town Council's April 22, 2026 meeting. Councilor Thompson went on to note the LUPPW Committee briefly discussed a property on Mill Cove Road that may be a blighted property, noting that there were two boats on the property that appeared to be in various states of disrepair. He stated this was something that they would be examining in the future.

Liaison Reports

Ledyard Center Fire Company

Councilor Barnes stated the Fire Company discussed the following: (1) Replacement of R-13 - Councilor Barnes noted that the Town Council would be acting on the Fire Company's request for authorization to proceed with the purchase a new piece of Fire Apparatus to replace their Pumper Truck R-13 in accordance with the Apparatus Replacement Schedule; (2) Gear Dryer – Councilor Barnes stated at their March 11, 2026 Meeting the Town Council approved a bid waiver for the purchase of a Gear Dryer. He noted that the Fire Company was excited about the new Gear Dryer, which they expected to be delivered soon.

Ledyard Farmers Market Committee

Councilor Brunelle stated the Farmers Market met on April 1, 2026 and discussed the following: (1) Continued their work and preparation of the Market Kick-Off scheduled for Wednesday, June 3, 2026; (2) Market Vendor Map – Councilor Brunelle stated the Market was working to try to accommodate ten additional Vendors this year; (3) Laptop and Associated Equipment and Supplies – Councilor Brunelle noted the Committee would be purchasing a laptop computer.

Inland Wetland and Water Courses Commission

Councilor Thompson stated the IWWC met on April 7, 2026; however, he stated he was not able to attend the meeting. He stated he would review their minutes and report at their next Town Council meeting.

Library Commission

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Library Commission met on March 16, 2026 and discussed the following: (1) Homebound Patrons – Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated Library Director Jessica Franco, and her Staff were working to revitalize a Program to Deliver Books to Homebound Patrons; (2) Pokémon Cards – Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated kids can go to the Gales Ferry Library to Trade their Pokémon Cards with the cards they have in the Library's Binder. However, she stated that the Library's Rules included that no one could trade their valueless Energy Cards for a Holographic Bear.

Economic Development Commission

Councilor Buhle stated the EDC met on April 7, 2026; however, she stated she was not able to attend the meeting. She stated he would review their minutes and report at their next Town Council meeting.

Conservation Commission

Councilor Lamb stated the Conservation Commission met on March 10, 2026 and discussed the following: (1) Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD); (2) Trails and Town-wide Connectivity; (3) Protecting Water Resources; (4) Raising the Profile for Open Space. Councilor Lamb stated the Conservation Commission was active and they were looking forward to Spring. He stated the Commission's next meeting was scheduled for April 14, 2026.

Ledyard Historic District Commission

Councilor Lamb stated the Commission met on March 16, 2026 and they discussed the following: (1) Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD); (2) Preservation and Research – Councilor Lamb noted that Historic District Commission Member Dr. Ammie Chittim, Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA); was getting more involved and was planning events at the Historic Up-Down Sawmill and the Nathan Lester House; (3) Planning & Zoning Application to reestablish a Historic Design District - Councilor Lamb stated the Historic District Commission approved a motion to be the Applicant to reestablish a Historic Design District, noting that the Citizens Alliance for Land Use (CALU) would be joining up with the Historic District Commission to develop a recommendation and plan to present to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Councilor Lamb noted the Commission’s next meeting was scheduled for April 20, 2026.

Agricultural Commission

Councilor Lamb stated the Agricultural Commission met on March 17, 2026 and discussed their Quarterly Land Use Meeting which was scheduled for April 21 2026. He noted the Agricultural Commission has been proactively working to get the Town’s Land Use Commissions together to discuss how they could help each other.

XII. MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III was not present.

XIII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

Administration Committee

(Withdrawn – See discussion below)

1. MOTION to adopt a proposed “*Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission*”.

DRAFT: 3/11/2026

Ordinance # xxx-xxx

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A
TOWN OF LEDYARD CODE OF ETHICS AND ETHICS COMMISSION

Be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Ledyard:

Section 1. Authority.

In accordance with Chapter III of the Town Charter, there is hereby established a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission.

Section 2. Declaration of Policy and Purpose.

The trust of the public is essential for government to function effectively. The proper operation of the Town government requires that Town and Board of Education officials, employees and consultants be independent, impartial and responsible to the people; that governmental decision and policies be made in the proper channels of governmental structure; that public office and employment not be used for beneficial and/or financial interest; and that the public has confidence in the integrity of its government.

Section 3. Definitions

As used in this ordinance, the following words or phrases shall have the meanings indicated below:

“Agency” is any board, commission, authority or committee of the Town, including the Town Council and Board of Education.

“Beneficial interest” means any nonfinancial interest or special treatment that is not common to other citizens of the Town.

“Business day” means a day other than a Saturday, Sunday or other day in which the office of the Ledyard Town Clerk is closed to the public for business.

“Complainant” means a person who files a complaint under penalties of false statement against an official, employee or consultant containing an allegation of prohibited activities under the Code of Ethics.

“Confidential Information” means information acquired by a Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant in the course of and by reason of performing an individual’s official duties and which is not a matter of public record or public knowledge.

“Consultant” means (i) an attorney hired by the Town or the Board of Education to provide legal services; (ii) any engineer, architect or construction manager hired by the Town or the Board of Education to provide professional services related to construction projects; or (iii) any professional who is hired by the Town to provide professional advice or services related to land use matters. In addition, the definition of what constitutes a consultant shall be limited to an officer or an employee of any Town or Board of Education contractor who has managerial or discretionary responsibilities with respect to a Town or Board of Education contract.

“Employee” is any person receiving a salary, wages or a stipend from the Town or Board of Education for services rendered, whether full-time or part-time.

“Family” means the spouse, domestic partner, fiancé, fiancée, parents, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandparents, great-grandparents, children, stepchildren, foster children, siblings and their children, stepsiblings and their children, and foster siblings and their children, of an official, employee, or consultant, or his/her spouse or domestic partner.

“Financial Interest” means any interest that has a: (i) monetary value of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) or more or generates a financial gain or loss of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) or more in a calendar year; (ii) and is not common to the other citizens of the Town.

“Gift” is a gift of more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in value. A gift includes, but is not limited to, entertainment, food, beverage, travel and lodging to the extent that the gift value exceeds one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in any one (1) year from the same person.

Gifts do not include:

- a. A political contribution that is otherwise reported in accordance with the law.
- b. A loan made on terms that are commercially reasonable and not more favorable than loans made in the ordinary course of business.
- c. Certificates, plaques or other ceremonial awards costing less than fifty dollars (\$50.00).
- d. A rebate or discount on the price of anything of value made in the ordinary course of business, without regard to that person’s status.
- e. Honorary degrees.
- f. Costs associated with attending a conference or business meeting and/or registration or entrance fee to attend such conference or business meeting in which the Town or Board of Education official or Town Board of Education employee participates in his/her official capacity.

- g. Any gift provided to a Town or Board of Education official or Town or Board of Education Employee or to a family member of a Town or Board of Education official or Town or Board of Education Employee for the celebration of a major life event provided any such gift provided to an individual does not exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) in value. A major life event shall include, but not be limited to, a ceremony commemorating an individual's induction into religious adulthood such as a confirmation or bar mitzvah; a wedding; a funeral; the birth or adoption of a child; and retirement from public service or Town employment.

"Inquiry" means a complaint or allegation of a possible violation of the Code.

"Managerial or discretionary responsibilities with respect to a Town or Board of Education contract" means having direct, extensive, and substantive responsibilities with respect to the negotiation of the contract and not peripheral, clerical, or ministerial responsibilities.

"Official" is any person holding elective or appointive office in the government of the town and shall include, but not be limited to, the Town Council, Board of Education or any other agency as defined herein.

"Respondent" means a person who is the subject of a complaint.

Section 4. Confidential information and Withholding of Information.

Town and Board of Education officials, employees or consultants may not disclose or use any information or records that are not available to the public except in the performance of official duties or as required by law or court order. No Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant may withhold information or make a dishonest or fraudulent statement with the intent to deceive or to misrepresent material facts in the performance of his or her official duties.

Section 5. Conflict of Interest Provisions and Other Prohibited Activities

- A. A Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant has a conflict of interest when that individual engages in or participates in any contract, transaction, decision, employment or rendering of service in which the Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant or any member of his family has a financial or beneficial interest. Notwithstanding anything contained in this ordinance to the contrary, a Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant may enter into a contract with the Town or the Board of Education if the contract is (i) publicly quoted or bid; or (ii) the Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant is not involved in the awarding of the contract. In addition, the provisions of this section shall not apply to any employment or consultant contracts in which a Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant is hired by the Town or the Board of Education to perform necessary services, including, but not limited to recreational services.
- B. A financial interest or beneficial interest presents a conflict of interest that is incompatible with the proper discharge of official responsibilities in the public interest if the Town or Board of Education official or employee has reason to believe or expect that he/she or any member of his family will obtain, secure, or advance such interest by reason of his/her actions in performance or nonperformance of his/her official responsibilities.
- C. A Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant does not have a financial interest or beneficial interest that is incompatible with the proper discharge of his/her official responsibilities in the public interest if the interest accrues to such individual or his/her family members as a member of a profession, occupation, or group to no greater extent that it accrues to any other member of the profession, occupation, or group with which he/she is affiliated as set forth in Section 7-148h(b) of the General Statutes.
- D. No Town or Board of Education official or employee may directly hire or supervise a member of his/her family except for temporary emergency situations, including, but not limited to, inclement weather and labor shortages.

- E. Town officials and employees shall not use Town owned or leased vehicles, equipment, facilities, materials or property for personal convenience or profit. This section does not apply to Town-owned vehicles issued to emergency responders who are authorized by the Mayor, Fire Chief or Police Chief to take their Town-owned vehicles home, or vehicles issued to employees who are permitted to bring their Town-owned vehicles homes as part of an employment agreement or contract.
- F. No Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant shall solicit or accept any gift from any person or entity who or which is interested directly or indirectly in any business transaction or pending matter that is within the purview of such official, employee or consultant. No Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant shall accept, or knowingly seek or cause to be given to any member of his/her family, any valuable favor, treatment, consideration, or advantage beyond that which is generally available to the citizens of the Town from any person who, to the knowledge of the official, employee or consultant, is interested directly or indirectly in any business transaction or pending matter that is within the responsibilities of the official, employee or consultant. For purposes of this section, a pending matter includes, but is not limited to, any application to any agency, a bid for work to be performed, an application for employment, and any bid for the furnishing of supplies, equipment or services.

Section 6. Disclosure and disqualification.

- A. Any Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant who has a conflict of interest, financial interest, or beneficial interest, direct or indirect, in any contract, transaction or decision within the purview of his/her official responsibilities shall disclose that conflict of interest in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance. Such disclosure shall disqualify the official, employee or consultant from participation in the matter, transaction or decision.
- B. No Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant shall appear on behalf of any private person or party before any agency in connection with any cause, proceeding, application or other matter in which he/she has financial interest or beneficial interest without first disclosing such interest to the agency, which shall record such disclosure in the record of the agency's proceeding. This Code shall not prohibit any current or former Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant from appearing before any agency on his/her own behalf.
- C. If there is an uncertainty whether a Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant has a conflict of interest, financial interest, or beneficial interest that could disqualify that individual from participation in a matter, such individual may request an advisory opinion from the Ethics Commission pursuant to this ordinance.
- D. Nothing in the Code shall be interpreted to authorize conduct restricted or prohibited by any provision of the Connecticut General Statutes including, but not limited to, Sections 8-11, 821 and 22a-42(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes that restrict conduct of members of municipal zoning and planning authorities and members of Inland, Wetlands and Watercourses commissions.

Section 7. Required Filings for Certain Town and Board of Education Officials.

The Mayor and the members of the Town Council and the Board of Education shall, on or before January 1st each year, file with the Town Clerk, on a form to be prepared by the Town Attorney, a statement, under oath, containing the following information:

- A. All real estate located within the Town of Ledyard owned by such official or held under lease for a term exceeding five years, excluding, however, his/her principal residence. The foregoing shall also apply to real estate in the Town of Ledyard owned or leased, by a corporation, trust or partnership in which any such official is the legal or equitable holder of at least five (5) percent of the legal or equitable interest in said corporation, trust, or partnership.

- B. The names of any firm, proprietorship, partnership or corporation of which said official is an employee or in which such official holds at least a five (5) percent interest; and if applicable, whether such firm, proprietorship, partnership or corporation has sold or supplied goods or services in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) per annum to the Town of Ledyard during the two (2) years immediately preceding such official's election to office.
- C. Any income, fees, salary or wages, directly or indirectly, received by such official from the Town of Ledyard during the two (2) years immediate proceeding such official's election to public office.

Section 8. Acknowledgment forms

- A. The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of the Code of Ethics to every Town and Board of Education official. Every Town official, including members of the Board of Education, shall sign and file with the Town Clerk an acknowledgement form, prepared by the Town Attorney, indicating his/her awareness of the provisions of this Code. The Superintendent of Schools shall sign and file with the Board of Education Human Resources Director an acknowledgement form, prepared by the Town attorney, indicating his/her awareness of the provisions of this Code. The Human Resources Directors of both the Town and Board of Education, respectively, shall: (i) provide current Town and Board of Education employees a copy of the Code of Ethics within one-hundred-twenty (120) business days of its effective date; and (ii) provide a copy of the Code of Ethics to every Town and Board of Education employee within sixty (60) business days of employment. Copies of the Code of Ethics may be sent to officials and employees electronically.
- B. Within ten (10) business days of the effective date of this ordinance, the Code of Ethics shall be incorporated by reference into all prospective contracts entered into by the Town of Ledyard and the Board of Education with a consultant. The Human Resources Directors of both the Town and Board of Education, respectively, shall provide current Town and Board of Education consultants a copy of the Code of Ethics within thirty (30) business days of its effective date. Copies of the Code of Ethics may be sent to consultants electronically.
- C. The Mayor and Superintendent of Schools shall develop a protocol for periodic training of employees concerning the Code of Ethics. The Commission shall develop a protocol for periodic training of officials.
- D. The Town Council shall approve a procedure for monitoring compliance with this section and approve the training protocols specified in subsection (c).

Section 9. Establishment and Qualifications of Ethics Commission.

- A. Structure The Ethics Commission shall be comprised of five (5) regular members and two (2) alternate members. All regular members and alternate members of the Ethics Commission shall be electors of the Town. No more than two (2) of the regular members may be affiliated with any one political party. At all times, at least one regular member shall be unaffiliated with any political party. Both alternate members may not be affiliated with the same political party.
- B. Member and alternate member qualifications No regular member or alternate members shall:
 - i. be currently employed by the Town or Board of Education;
 - ii. have been employed by the Town or Board of Education for a period of two years prior to being appointed to the Ethics Commission;
 - iii. hold any elective Town office or have been elected to any elective Town office for a period of two years prior to being appointed to the Ethics Commission;
 - iv. be a current member of the Board of Education or have been elected to the Board of Education for a period of two years prior to being appointed to the Ethics Commission;

- v. serve as a member of another Town agency;
- vi. hold office in a political party or political committee;
- vii. have been found in violation of any state, local or professional code of ethics.

If a current member of the Ethics Commission files to run for any elective Town office or for the Board of Education, such member shall resign from the Ethics Commission within seven (7) days of said filing.

- C. Compensation Members will not be compensated for their service on the Commission.
- D. Organizational Meeting Within thirty (30) days of the appointment of the Ethics Commission, an organizational meeting shall be held at which members shall choose a Chair, Vice-Chair and a Secretary.
- E. Method and Terms of appointment The Town Council shall appoint the Ethics Commission members in the manner provided in the Town Charter. Members of the Ethics Commission shall be appointed by a minimum of (7) seven affirmative votes of the Town Council. Members shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years. If a member is appointed to fill an unexpired term, then that member's term ends at the same time as the term of the person being replaced. In making the original appointments under this ordinance, the Town Council shall designate two (2) regular members to serve for three (3) years, two (2) regular members to serve for two (2) years; one (1) regular member to serve for (1) year; one (1) alternate member to serve for three (3) years and one (1) alternate member to serve for two (2) years. Thereafter, vacancies shall be filled for a three (3) year term. Inaugural members shall be eligible to serve two (2) additional three (3) years term beyond his/her initial appointment. No member may serve more than three (3) terms total.
- F. Removal The Town Council may remove members for cause and fill the vacancy in accordance with the Town Charter. Cause for removal shall include, but is not limited to, an unexcused absence from three (3) consecutive meetings. It shall be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Ethics Commission to notify the Town Council when a member has not properly performed his/her duties.

Section 10. Powers and Duties of Ethics Commission.

- A. The Ethics Commission shall be authorized to consult with the Town Attorney or another attorney hired by the Commission if so authorized by the Town Council. The Ethics Commission shall be authorized to request that the Town Attorney provide advisory opinions.
- B. The Ethics Commission may render advisory opinions to any Town or Board of Education official, employee or consultant on whether conduct by that person would constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics. The Ethics Commission will make advisory opinions available to the public unless doing so would violate the confidentiality provisions of this Code of Ethics or is otherwise prohibited by law.
- C. The Ethics Commission may examine complaints and to make a determination of probable cause pursuant to the procedures outlined herein. The Ethics Commission may hold hearings concerning alleged violations of the code, may administer oaths, and may compel attendance of witnesses by subpoena to the extent permitted by law.
- D. The Ethics Commission may review the Code of Ethics policies and procedures on an as needed basis and may make recommendations to the Town Council regarding changes to the Code of Ethics policies and procedures. The Ethics Commission may take action to increase public awareness of the Code of Ethics.

Section 11. Ethics Commission Rules of Procedure

- A. Advisory opinions Any current, former or prospective Town of Ledyard or Board of Education employee, official or consultant may request an advisory opinion from the Ethics Commission as to whether conduct by that person or entity would violate the Code of Ethics. Any current Town or Board of Education official also may request an advisory opinion concerning the activities of any department over which he/she has jurisdiction or agency on which he/she serves.

Individuals initiating a request for an advisory opinion must do so by completing a form available through the Ledyard Town Clerk's Office or through the Town's website www.ledyardct.org. The form must contain a statement setting forth the advice requested and the relevant facts known to the individual making the request so that the Ethics Commission can reasonably be expected to understand the nature of the request. The individual making the request must sign and date the form. Requests must be addressed in a sealed envelope to the Ethics Commission, c/o The Ledyard Town Clerk, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard, CT 06339-1511 who will date stamp the envelope and forward the sealed envelope promptly to the chair or vice-chair of the Ethics Commission. Within five (5) business days that said request is received by the Town Clerk, the Town Clerk or his/her representative shall notify the chair or vice-chair of the Ethics Commission, or both, of same. The date the request is received by the Town Clerk will mark the official date of receipt for purpose of deadlines for decisions. The chair or vice-chair of the Ethics Commission shall sign a form, provided by the Town Clerk, acknowledging the receipt of the request.

The chair will present the request to the Ethics Commission at its next regular meeting or at a special meeting at an executive session, except upon the request of the individual that is seeking the advisory opinion to present the request in open session.

Advisory opinions will be made by a majority of the Ethics Commission members voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The Ethics Commission will issue an advisory opinion as expeditiously as possible but in any event within ninety (90) business days from the day it first considers the request. The Ethics Commission may extend the time for a decision for up to an additional thirty business (30) days. All advisory opinions must be in writing and communicated to the individual making the request.

The Ethics Commission may decline to render an advisory opinion if (1) the subject matter is not covered by the Code of Ethics, (2) the known facts are incomplete or incorrect, and the omission or misstatements are material to the advisory opinion requested, or (3) other reasonable grounds exist for not taking action. If the Ethics Commission decides to so act, it shall state its reasons.

B. Complaints

i. Filing of a Complaint.

A complaint alleging any violation of the Code of Ethics shall be made on a form prescribed by the Ethics Commission available at the Town's website www.ledyardct.org or through the Town's Clerk office, and signed under penalty of false statement. The form shall be delivered to the Town Clerk in a sealed envelope who will date stamp the envelope and forward the sealed envelope promptly to the chair or vice-chair of the Ethics Commission. On the day the sealed envelope is received by the Town Clerk, the Town Clerk or his/her representative shall notify the chair or vice-chair of the Commission, or both, and the respondent within five (5) business days of receipt of the complaint. The chair or vice-chair of the Ethics Commission shall sign a form, provided by the Town Clerk, acknowledging the receipt of the complaint. The Ethics Commission shall also notify the respondent that a complaint was received and that it will conduct a probable cause determination and invite the respondent to provide any information the respondent deems relevant to the Ethics Commission's determination of probable cause. No complaint may be made under the Code of Ethics unless it is filed with the Ethics Commission within three (3) years after the violation alleged in the complaint has been committed.

The Complaint shall include the: (i) the name of the person accused (respondent); (ii) name of the person filing the complaint; and (iii) the specific acts alleged to constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics and when said actions occurred.

ii. Probable Cause Determination

Within sixty (60) business days of the receipt of a complaint by the Chair or Vice-Chair, the Ethics Commission shall review and determine whether there is probable cause that a violation of the Code of Ethics has occurred. A finding of probable cause means that based on a review of the available information, the Ethics Commission determines that reasonable grounds exist to believe that the respondent engaged in prohibited conduct by the Code of Ethics. If the Ethics Commission does not make a finding of probable cause, the complaint shall be dismissed, and a copy of its decision shall be mailed to both the complainant and the respondent. Unless the Ethics Commission makes a finding of probable cause, a complaint alleging a violation of this Code of Ethics shall be confidential except upon the request of the respondent.

If the Ethics Commission makes a finding of probable cause, which shall require three (3) affirmative votes, it shall so advise both the complainant and the respondent and begin a formal investigation.

iii. Hearings

If the Ethics Commission decides that probable cause of a violation of the Code of Ethics exists, it will conduct a public hearing to determine whether or not a violation occurred in accordance with Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (“UAPA”) (See Chapter 54 of the Connecticut General Statutes). At the hearing, the respondent will have the right to be represented by legal counsel; to present evidence and witnesses and compel the attendance of witnesses; to produce books, documents, records and papers; to examine and cross-examine witnesses; and to inspect and copy relevant and material records, papers and documents. Hearings are not governed by the legal rules of evidence and any information relevant to the matter may be considered. The Ethics Commission will respect the rules of privilege recognized by the law. Not later than ten business (10) days before the start of the hearing, the Ethics Commission will provide the respondent with a list of its intended witnesses. The Ethics Commission will make a record of the proceedings.

iv. Final Decisions

Decisions by the Ethics Commission that a person is in violation of the Code of Ethics must result from the concurring vote of four (4) of its members. The Ethics Commission must render its decision within sixty business (60) days of the closing of the hearing. Such finding and memorandum will be deemed to be the final decision of the Ethics Commission for the purposes of the UAPA. The respondent may appeal to the superior court in accordance with the provisions of Section 4-183 of the Connecticut General Statutes. If the Ethics Commission determines that the Code of Ethics was violated, it will provide the respondent, the Mayor, the Ledyard Town Council and the Board of Education (if applicable) with a copy of its findings and memorandum within ten (10) business days after its decision. It will also advise the respondent of his/her right to appeal the decision pursuant to Section 4-183 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

v. Penalties for Violations of the Code of Ethics

A violation of the Code of Ethics may lead to any one or a combination of the following penalties:

- a. order to cease and desist the violation;
- b. pay a civil penalty of up to the maximum amount permitted by State law;
- c. censure;
- d. suspension without pay;
- e. demotion;
- f. termination of employment or contract; and
- g. Restitution of any benefits received because of the violation committed.

Penalties will be determined by a majority vote of the Town Council within sixty (60) business days after receipt of the finding and memorandum of Ethics Commission.

The remedies and procedures specified in any applicable statutory and Charter provisions, personnel rules, contract grievance rules, or other work rules, policies, and procedures, shall be followed in the enforcement of this section.

Section 12. Severability.

If any part of this Code of Ethics or Ordinance shall be held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such holding shall not be deemed to invalidate the remaining provisions hereof.

Signed/Certified on: _____
Gary St. Vil, Chairman

Approve/Disapprove on: _____
Fred B. Allyn, III, Mayor

Published on: _____
Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk

Effective: _____

*****History:
Based on the public’s interest to establish standards of ethical conduct for all town officials and town employees and for those who serve or conduct business with the Town of Ledyard. This Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission was developed to establish guidelines for the conduct of those in public service; and to establish a procedure to be followed by the Ethics Commission in receiving, adjudicating, and reporting on alleged violations of the Code of Ethics.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Brunelle
Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the third Public Hearing regarding the proposed Ethics Ordinance was held on March 25, 2026, noting that most residents provided positive comments regarding the draft dated March 11, 2026.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated Resident Angela Cassidy emailed her feedback regarding the Ethics Ordinance noting that Ms. Cassidy suggested the following:

- Section 7. “*Required Filings for Certain Town and Board of Education Officials*” Paragraph B & C noting that the words “*to the present*” be added:
 - B. The names of any firm, proprietorship, partnership or corporation of which said official is an employee or in which such official holds at least a five (5) percent interest; and if applicable, whether such firm, proprietorship, partnership or corporation has sold or supplied goods or services in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) per annum to the Town of Ledyard during the two (2) years immediately preceding such official’s election to office *to the present*.
 - C. Any income, fees, salary or wages, directly or indirectly, received by such official from the Town of Ledyard during the two (2) years immediately ~~proceeding~~ *preceding* such official’s election to public office *to the present*.
- Section 11. “*Ethics Commission Rules of Procedure*”; Paragraph B (iv)

B Complaints:

iv. Final Decisions

Decisions by the Ethics Commission that a person is in violation of the Code of Ethics must result from the concurring vote of ~~four (4)~~ *three (3)* of its members.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that she did not have any other changes to the proposed Ethics Ordinance, and she asked whether other members of the Town Council had any changes they would like to provide.

Councilor Buhle stated that she noticed in Section 7 Paragraph © as noted above that the word ~~proceeding~~ should be *preceding*. She stated that this was just a typo that should be corrected, noting that it was not a substantive change.

Councilor Lamb noted Councilor Ryan's email that he sent earlier today in which he provided comments regarding the proposed Ethics Commission. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that she did not receive Councilor Ryan's email today. Chairman St. Vil stated that he received Councilor Ryan's email today, noting that it was sent to him and Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher.

Chairman St. Vil continued by reading Councilor Ryan's April 8, 2026 email as follows:

*“Timothy K. Ryan
Ledyard Town Councilor
Member, Ledyard Finance Committee*

Submitted remarks for the 4/8/26 Town Council Meeting to be included in the official record

First, my apologies for not being able to be present tonight. I have specific comments for two agenda items as follows.

Comments on New Business Agenda Item #1

The current revision of this ordinance, while much better than the myriad of prior revisions, still maintains some of the same language that caused me concern previously. I consider it necessary that these concerns be addressed prior to being adopted.

Section 9.B.v – I would suggest that a prospective member shall not have served as a member of another town agency, or held office in a political party / committee for a period of two years prior to appointment. This would be consistent with requirements listed in 9.B.ii and 9.B.iii. Additionally, section 9 seems to have some hierarchy formatting issues.

There are confidentiality concerns in Section 11.B.ii for those that are subject to an alleged complaint. If 3 members of the commission find probable cause for the complaint – but not an actual finding of a violation – that complaint is then not considered confidential and will be subject to a public hearing, even though the complaint may still be found to not be valid. By the time a final decision is made, as we've seen happen in Waterford, the public tarring of the respondent will not be able to be undone. Their time and money – especially if legal representation is retained – will have already been wasted, as well, which could open up the town to additional liability. This also doesn't make it any easier to obtain the volunteers that a small town like Ledyard depends on.

While I'm not sure the CGS allows affirmative probable cause findings to remain confidential, if this ethics ordinance were to proceed to be adopted, I would advocate for the requirements for establishing probable cause to be much more specific and detailed, as they currently only allude to requiring a simple review of “available information”.

Reviewing other ethics ordinances, there are requirements to hear testimony, actively seek additional information and take other actions as necessary to ensure that if a finding of probable cause is made, it is with the utmost of certainty. I would suggest including such specific language, so that the bar is set high for making a finding of probable cause, both for the sake of the town, but most importantly for the sake of the respondent's reputation and right to confidentiality.

In section 11.B.v, the ordinance states that a majority vote of town council will determine the penalty for a violation. I would strongly suggest requiring 7 votes from Council to determine a penalty, so as to ensure a bi-partisan determination on the penalty. This is in alignment with why I suggested – and I’m glad to see incorporated - a requirement of 7 council votes to appoint members to the commission.

Overall, the question of how the execution of this ordinance is funded has been raised multiple times, both by members of council, the town staff and members of the public. This has still not been addressed, and if the amount of funding that’s been expended on legal fees just to develop this ordinance is any indication, this is not an issue to be cavalier about. The town attorney himself has indicated a range of funding needs, from \$20,000, up to \$200,000 and beyond. What’s the plan? This introduces yet another budget variable in a year with many.

In the end, I have been consistent from the start; if we are going to implement an ordinance which has the power to alter our employees’ and volunteers’ lives professionally, as well as personally, we owe it to them to make sure the proper protections are put into place. We also owe it to the taxpayers to ensure we are not wantonly opening the town up to more liability (as ironic as it may seem) and not introducing yet another budget variable in a year where a tax increase is more than likely.”

Continued Discussion:

Councilor Lamb stated that it has been a struggle, but that Ledyard was much closer to the adoption of an Ethics Ordinance. He stated that he thought some of Councilor Ryan’s comments were valid.

Members of the Town Council stated that they did not receive Councilor Ryan’s email; and therefore, they questioned how Councilor Lamb and Councilor Barnes received the email. It was noted that Councilor Ryan’s email was posted on Facebook.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry addressed Councilor Ryan’s comments as follows:

Probable Cause

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry explained they could not make the *Probable Cause* as stringent as the *Investigation Phase* because they would then be doing the same process for the *Probable Cause*; as they were doing for the *Hearing*, noting that it would be redundant. She stated when they look at the *Complaint* and finds that it was true, the Ethics Commission would look at the Ethics Ordinance to see if it violated a section in the Ordinance. She stated that would be when they would determine if it was *Probable Cause*. She also noted that the decision would need to be majority vote, which was three of the five Ethics Commission Members. However, she stated if they find that the *Complaint* was not true, then the case was closed.

Final Decision

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated during the *Hearing* that the vote would need to be four of the five Ethics Commission, because they wanted the *Final Decision* to be a bipartisan agreement.

Costs

Councilor Brunelle stated when they began working to draft the proposed Ethics Ordinance the community and others suggested the Administration Committee get input from the Town Attorney; which they did; and that cost money. Therefore, she stated they received complaints that they were not using the Town Attorney, and now they were getting complaints about the cost of using the Town Attorney. She stated it was smart that they used the Town Attorney.

Councilor Brunelle addressed Councilor Ryan’s April 8, 2026 email, noting that he did not attend the Administration Committee’s meeting to provide comments regarding the proposed Ethics Ordinance, and that he did not send them an email to provide comments, noting that he didn’t send his email to all of them today. She stated that she found that unprofessional and poor.

Ethics Commission Budget

Councilor Buhle noted at tonight’s Special Finance Committee meeting they added a new Ethics Commission Budget and allocated \$3,000 to the new account in the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget that they forward to the Town Council for action later this evening.

She stated the purpose of the New Ethics Commission Budget was to establish a baseline for the Ethics Commission where their expenses could be tracked for transparency. She stated that she did not want to create an Ethics Commission and not provide them with funding should they need to obtain legal support regarding an Advisory Opinion, etc. She stated should the budget line need to be increased that they would cross that bridge when they come to it.

- ❖ MOTION to amend the proposed Ethics Commission to change Section 9; Paragraph B (iv) & (v) as follows:

Section 9. Establishment and Qualifications of Ethics Commission.

B. Member and alternate member qualifications No regular member or alternate members shall:

- v. serve as a member of another Town agency; ***or have served as another Town agency for a period of two(2) years prior to being appointed to the Ethics Commission.***
- vi. hold office in a political party or political committee; ***or have held office in a political party or political committee for a period of two(2) years prior to being appointed to the Ethics Commission.***

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated that she did not think the addition of this language was substantive, noting that it was to provide clarification. She explained that they did not want to have a member of the Town Council; Board of Education; former Town Employee; member of the Democratic Town Committee (DTC); or Republican Town Committee (RTC) sitting on the Ethics Commission making these decisions. However, she stated because an individual was a member of the DTC or RTC in 2014 would not mean they could not be qualified to serve on the Ethics Commission in 2027. She stated after two years an individual’s priorities could change, noting that they may no longer be politically active, but they still may want to give back to their community; commenting that it was unrealistic to say the individual could not serve on the Ethics Commission. However, she stated by saying an individual could not have done these things within the last two years, because they may still have allegiances that would give them biases, would be more realistic and was fair.

Councilor Parad requested clarification, asking whether the language proposed by Councilor Buhle would apply to any member of the Democratic Town Committee (DTC); or the Republican Town Committee (RTC); or whether it was for members who were on the executive committee. Councilor Buhle noted the amendment she proposed would only apply to ***those who have held office***, explaining that it would not apply to those who were members of a political party.

Chairman St. Vil called for a Vote on the Amendment

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	AMENDMENT APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

Continued Discussion:

Penalties for Violation – Required Vote

Councilor Lamb addressed the following:

Section 11. *Ethics Commission Rules of Procedure*”; Paragraph B (v) last paragraph as follows:

(v) Penalties for Violations of the Code of Ethics

“.....*Penalties will be determined by a majority vote of the Town Council within sixty (60) business days after receipt of the finding and memorandum of Ethics Commission.....*”

Councilor Lamb noted Councilor Ryan’s comments, and he requested clarification between the Town Council voting 7 – 2; versus the *Majority Vote* for the *Penalty*.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated a Majority Vote of the Town Council would be 5 – 4; and she explained what Councilor Ryan was proposing in his written comments this evening would require a Town Council Vote of 7 – 2. She stated that she could see the reason for requiring a super majority; explaining in accordance with Minority Representation many Town Council’s have had six members from one party and three members from the other party (6 – 3). Therefore, she stated by requiring a 7 – 2 vote of the Town Council that they would have to convince a member from the minority party to vote with them. She stated that she was not opposed to changing the Town Council’s vote to a super majority (7 – 2) for the approval of the *Penalties*, noting that it was reasonable.

- ❖ MOTION to amend the proposed Ethics Ordinance to change Section 11; Paragraph B (v) last paragraph as follows:

Section 11. *Ethics Commission Rules of Procedure*”; Paragraph B (i) as follows: to increase the vote from six (6) to seven (7)

Moved by Councilor Barnes, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

Discussion: Councilor Buhle provided a “*Friendly Amendment*” noting the following:

(v) Penalties for Violations of the Code of Ethics

“.....*Penalties will be determined by a ~~majority~~ vote of seven (7) members of the Town Council within sixty (60) business days after receipt of the finding and memorandum of Ethics Commission.....*”

Councilor Barnes accepted Councilor Buhle’s “*Friendly Amendment*”

Discussion: Chairman St. Vil questioned whether the Town Council thought the proposed Amendment to increase the Penalty Vote from a *majority to seven (7) members of the Town Council* to be a substantive change. Councilor Barnes stated that he thought it was a substantive change. Councilor Buhle stated that she did not think it was a substantive change. Chairman St. Vil stated “*substantive*” was subjective, and therefore, if Councilor Barnes has interpreted this change as substantial then there could be others that would interpret it as being substantial.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in working with the Town Attorney that he explained that anything outside of minor corrections such as typos and formatting; was substantive.

Councilor Buhle noted in accordance to the Town Attorney’s explanation of “*substantive*” that she would now believe that the prior Amendment the Town Council approved this evening would also be substantive.

Chairman St. Vil called for a vote on the Amendment as follows:

- ❖ MOTION to amend the proposed Ethics Ordinance to change Section 11; Paragraph B (v) last paragraph (*with Friendly Amendment*) as follows:

Section 11. *Ethics Commission Rules of Procedure*”; Paragraph B (v) as follows:

(i) Penalties for Violations of the Code of Ethics

“.....*Penalties will be determined by a ~~majority~~ vote of seven (7) members of the Town Council within sixty (60) business days after receipt of the finding and memorandum of Ethics Commission.....*”

Moved by Councilor Barnes, seconded by Councilor Brunelle
8 – 0 Approved and so declared

VOTE:

RESULT:	AMENDMENT APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Bill Barnes, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	April Brunelle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

Continued Discussion:

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry again noted Resident Angela Cassidy’s suggestion as follows:

- Section 7. *“Required Filings for Certain Town and Board of Education Officials”* Paragraph B & C noting that the words **“to the present”** be added:
- D. The names of any firm, proprietorship, partnership or corporation of which said official is an employee or in which such official holds at least a five (5) percent interest; and if applicable, whether such firm, proprietorship, partnership or corporation has sold or supplied goods or services in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) per annum to the Town of Ledyard during the two (2) years immediately preceding such official’s election to office **to the present.**
- E. Any income, fees, salary or wages, directly or indirectly, received by such official from the Town of Ledyard during the two (2) years immediate ~~proceeding~~ **preceding** such official’s election to public office **to the present.**

Chairman St. Vil stated that based on tonight’s discussion and amendments to the proposed *“An Ordinance Establishing a “Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission”* they would need to go back to a Public Hearing. Therefore, he stated to be efficient with their time that the proposed Ethics Ordinance should go back to the Administration Committee to incorporate these changes and any others.

Chairman St. Vil continued by suggesting a New Section be added as follows:

Section 12. Effective Date

The provisions of this Ordinance shall become effective six-months after the Ethics Commission’s Organizational Meeting.

Chairman St. Vil noted that Chapter III of the Town Charter, Section 5. *“Public Hearing On, Publication Of, And Passage of Ordinances”* allows for the Ordinance to provide an Effective Date that would be later than the normal 21 days after publication. He stated by extending the implementation of the provisions of the Ordinance to six (6) months after the Commission’s Organizational Meeting that it would enable the Ethics Commission to:

- ✓ Obtain the obtain and distribute the required forms i.e. Income Statement Form, Acknowledgement Forms, etc.;
- ✓ Review the Ordinance; parameters of their work, and their authority;
- ✓ Draft, approve and publish their Bylaws;

- ✓ Provide time for Elected Officials, Staff and Volunteers to file the required documentation;
- ✓ Provide time for Elected Officials, Staff, Volunteers, and the Public to ask the Ethics Commission questions (Advisory Questions) for clarification.

Chairman St. Vil asked whether those who were not on the Administration Committee had any additional suggestions for the proposed Ethics Ordinance.

Councilor Buhle stated she did not have any additional comments this evening. She stated that she also worked on the proposed Ethics Ordinance with Councilor Garcia-Irizarry and Councilor Brunelle during their last term on the Town Council. However, she stated that she would provide additional comments to the Administration Committee well before their May 13, 2026 meeting. She implored all the members of the Town Council to provide their comments to the Administration Committee whether they were typos, formatting, text amendments, etc., well before they go to another Public Hearing.

Councilor Parad stated if there were comments regarding proposed amendments or improvements and they intend to send them to the Administration Committee Chairman; that they be sent to the Administration Committee Chairman instead of posting them to Facebook.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that she agreed with Councilor Parad's comment, noting that she was disappointed that she did not have the opportunity to read Councilor Ryan's email before coming to tonight's Town Council Meeting. She stated as the Administration Committee Chairman that she would be the person who would answer questions regarding the proposed Ethics Ordinance. Therefore, she stated the ideal thing to do would be to send their emails to her.

Councilor Barnes stated it was somewhat disappointing that the proposed Ethics Ordinance was going to go back through the process. However, he stated he was encouraged because the votes on the amendments presented this evening, noting some were suggested by Councilor Ryan, were unanimous by the eight Councilors that were present. He stated all this discussion was moving them in the right direction.

Councilor Barnes continued by noting that he spoke with Waterford's Town Clerk Dave Campo this week, noting that it was suggested Waterford would be a good reference. He stated in Waterford the Town Clerk was an Elected Position, which was different from Ledyard's structure. He stated in speaking with Mr. Campo he noted that Waterford has learned some things and that they were going to be watching what Ledyard was doing. He stated from their discussion he realized that Waterford's Ethics Ordinance was not perfect and neither would Ledyard's Ethics Ordinance be perfect. However, Councilor Barnes stated that he did not get a sense from Mr. Campo that he would not want to have an Ethics Ordinance for their Town. He stated the situation that occurred in Waterford was unique because they had Elected Board of Education Members, who were also voting on teachers salaries. He stated Waterford had different nuisances than Ledyard would have, however, he stated if Ledyard goes into this assuming there would never be an issue that they were mistaken. However, he stated that they were converging on a place that was balanced. He stated the proposed Ethics Ordinance would go back to the Administration Committee and he thanked Councilor Garcia-Irizarry and Councilor Buhle for their work.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted Councilor Barnes comments regarding the Town of Waterford. She stated that she agreed that Ledyard's Ethics Ordinance was not perfect, and that there would be some unforeseen situations that would arise. She stated what happened in Waterford could not happen in Ledyard, explaining in Waterford their elected officials could also be employees in their town. However, she stated in Ledyard that elected officials could not be employees of the town. She thanked everyone for their feedback

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry questioned the process to send the proposed Ethics Ordinance back to the Administration Committee, noting the Amendments the Town Council already approved this evening.

Chairman St. Vill stated that actions speak louder than words and their behavior has demonstrated that the Town Council preferred to get it right, rather than to just get the proposed Ethics Ordinance passed.

Chairman St. Vil called a 10-minute recess to review *Roberts Rules of Order* to determine the correct approach on how to send the proposed Ethics Ordinance back to the Administration Committee.

Recess began at: 8:14 p.m.
Came out of Recess at: 8:21 p.m.

Chairman St. Vil called the Meeting back to order noting after reviewing *Roberts Rules of Order* he would entertain a request to *Withdraw* the Motion on the floor.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated Mr. Chairman, as the Mover of the Main Motion to adopt a proposed “*Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission*”, I request the Motion be *Withdrawn*.

Chairman St. Vil asked if there was any objection to with the Motion on the floor.

Hearing no objection, Chairman St. Vil stated the Main Motion to adopt a proposed “*Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission*” has been Withdrawn. He referred the proposed Ethics Ordinance back to the Administration Committee.

RESULT: WITHDRAWN Referred back to Administration Committee Mtg 5/13/2026

Finance Committee

2. MOTION to authorize the purchase of fire apparatus in the amount of \$1,173,066 from Marion Body Works, Inc., with funding from Account # 21020401-54325-54325 (Fire Apparatus).

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Thompson

Discussion: Administrator of Emergency Services Steve Holyfield stated that Ledyard Center Fire Chief Jon Mann was also in attendance via Zoom this evening, however, he just got called away to a car fire. Mr. Holyfield noted as discussed at the Finance Committee’s April 1, 2026 meeting that the Ledyard Center Fire Company’s R-13; which was a 2003 American LaFrance Pumper was coming due for replacement in accordance with the Apparatus Replacement Schedule. He explained that the Ledyard Center Fire Company formed a Committee that worked to develop a bid specification to replace R-13 noting that the manufacturers were coming back with cost estimates in the \$1.2 - \$1.3 million range. He stated the Committee identified a suitable piece of Apparatus through the Houston Galveston Area Council (HGAC Buy) Bid Collective; which was in compliance with the Town’s Purchasing Policies. He stated that he worked closely with Ledyard Center Fire Company to ensure that this piece of apparatus would meet the needs of the town, stating that it was efficient and effective in meeting those needs without any lavish or unnecessary add-ons.

Mr. Holyfield continued by stating that he supported purchasing this piece of Apparatus through HGAC Buy, because the Apparatus Manufacturers would have a quarterly price increase effective April 1, 2026; however, he explained Marion Body Works, Inc., whose cost was in the amount of \$1,173,066; have agreed to hold back on the price increase for Ledyard. He also explained that he anticipated there would be an additional 3% - 5% increase July 1, 2026 which would increase the cost of the Apparatus by \$600,000 - \$80,000. Therefore, he stated by placing their order now that it would provide a significant savings, noting that the delivery would be April, 2028.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	James Thompson, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

3. MOTION to appropriate \$73,782.83 of proceeds received from the sale of 528 Colonel Ledyard Highway to Capital Account #21014301-53306 (Land Use - P & Z Document Updates).

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick stated with the sale of 528 Colonel Ledyard Highway, the net proceeds to the Town were in the amount of \$84,011.13; noting that this would close out a longstanding Blight Enforcement Lien. She explained that the Land Use Office incurred \$10,228.30 in Legal Fees regarding this case during the current Fiscal Year 2025/2026, noting that their Legal Fee Account would be reimbursed from the net proceeds leaving a balance of \$73,782.83.

Ms. Burdick went on to explain that the Land Use Department included \$150,000 over the next two budget cycles (\$75,000 in Fiscal Year 2026/2027; and \$75,000 in 2027/2028) to hire a Consultant to assist with the review and rewrite/update of the Plan of Conservation &

Development (POCD) and other Land Use Documents. She stated by appropriating the remaining balance in the amount of \$73,782.83 from the proceeds of the Blight Lien (528 Colonel Ledyard Highway) to the Land Use Capital Account #21014301-53306 (Land Use - P & Z Document Updates) that the Town Council could reduce the requested Capital Funding in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget for this required work; and that it would lower the impact on the tax levy in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2027/2028. She noted that they would be working to update the POCD over the next two fiscal years (fy 26/27 & fy 27/28).

VOTE:

8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

4. MOTION to authorize the Mayor to sign a Commitment to Fund a Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) grant in the amount of \$3,224,800 for the Replacement of the Lantern Hill Road Bridge #71009.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

Discussion: Councilor Buhle noted for the Town to apply for Grant Funding Programs that the Town Council was required to authorize the Mayor to sign the *Commitment to Fund a Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) Grant*. She stated this LOTICIP Grant would be in the amount of \$3,224,800 and would pay for the Construction to Replace the Lantern Hill Road Bridge #71009. She stated that no local matching funds were required and the LOTICIP Grant Application deadline was the end of April, 2026.

VOTE:

8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	April Brunelle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

5. MOTION to adopt a proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Water Operations Budget in the amount \$1,860,262.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Chairman St. Vil provided some background explaining in accordance with Section 4 of Ordinance #400-001 “*An Ordinance Establishing a Water Pollution Control Authority*” : “*The WPCA shall provide, by the fourth Monday in April, a budget of estimated revenues, expenditures and capital improvements for the ensuing fiscal year for inclusion as an appendix in the Town annual budget. **The Town Council shall approve the water system budget**”. The Town Council was not required to approve the Sewer Budget. The WPCA Budget was supported by the Ratepayers and not the town’s taxpayers”.*

Councilor Buhle noted as Chairman St. Vil explained the WPCA’s Water Operations Budget was funded by their Ratepayers and not the Town’s Taxpayers. However, she stated that she wanted to thank Councilor Garcia-Irizarry for her keen attention to detail, explaining at the Finance Committee’s March 18, 2026 meeting they appointed a new Auditing Firm for the upcoming Fiscal Year (June 30, 2026) Audit. She stated during their meeting that Councilor Garcia-Irizarry suggested the Water Operations Budget be reduced by \$2,738 because with the receipt of the RFP #2026-03 (Auditing Services) the cost for the Water Operations came in less than the amount the WPCA had projected and included in their budget. Therefore, she stated the Water Operations that the WPCA forwarded to the Finance Committee was reduced by \$2,738; bringing their Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to \$1,860,262. She also noted that the Finance Committee was able to reduce the Auditing Fees in the General Government’s Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget as well.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

6. Discussion and possible action regarding the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.

Chairman St. Vil asked Finance Committee Chairman Buhle to provide a briefing regarding the work to-date in developing the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.

Councilor Buhle stated the Finance Committee has put forward a proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget in the amount of: \$73,630,506; comprised of a General Government Budget in the amount of \$31,698,171; and Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$41,932,335.

Councilor Buhle noted that the Finance Committee made the following Budget Adjustments reducing the Mayor’s Proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget by a total of \$180,163:

Expenditure Additions:

- Total General Government Additions: \$11,197
- Total Board of Education Additions: \$ -0-
- **Total Expenditure Additions: \$11,197**

Detail of Expenditure Additions

Mayor's Budget as submitted		General Government	Board of Education	Total	
Budget Additions to Expenditures		31,878,334	41,932,335	73,810,669	
Description	Account #	Addition			Justification
Mayor’s Office – Mayoral Asst.	10110201-51607	1,747		1,747	to reflect 3% wage adjustment
Mayor’s Office – Employee Reimbursement	10110201-58300	1,000		1,000	to add mileage reimbursement
EDC – Dues & Fees	10114305-58100	150		150	adjust for updated cost
Ledyard Fire Company – Repairs & Maintenance	10120501-54300	3,000		3,000	requested by Councilor Buhle
Gales Ferry Fire Company – Repairs & Maintenance	10120551-54300	2,000		2,000	requested by Councilor Buhle
Parks and Rec – Contract Maintenance	10160101-53700	300		300	to align with contracts in place
Ethics Commission – Operating Expenses	10110102-56100	3,000		3,000	4/8/26 Council adjustment

Total Budget Additions		11,197	-	11,197	
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Councilor Buhle noted as she mentioned earlier this evening during their Ethics Ordinance discussion (see above New Business Item #1), the Finance Committee created a New Department Budget for the Ethics Commission and allocated \$3,000 to the Account, as shown in the “Budget Additions” above.

Expenditure Reductions:

Total General Government Reductions; \$191,360

Total Board of Education Reductions : \$-0-

Expenditure Reductions (\$191,360)

Detail of Expenditure Reductions					
Description	Account #	Deduction			Justification
Town Council – Accounting Services/Audit	10110251-51606	(14,860)		(14,860)	to align w/RFP results
Employee Expenses – Health Care	10110253-52000	(9,500)		(9,500)	to reduce increase down to 12.7%
Employee Expenses – Health Care BOE	10110253-52100	(45,500)		(45,500)	to reduce increase down to 12.7%
Employee Expenses – BOE Retiree Health Care	10110253-52106	(25,000)		(25,000)	to reduce increase down to 12.7%
BOE Expenditures - Board of Ed Expenses	10170101-58790	-	(75,000)	(75,000)	4/8/26 Council adjustment
Contribution to Capital	10110253-52106	(96,500)		(96,500)	see capital details below
Total Deducts		(191,360)	(75,000)	(266,360)	
Town Council adjusted totals		31,698,171	41,857,335	73,555,506	

Capital Contribution Reductions:

Total General Government Reductions; \$96,500

Total Board of Education Reductions : \$-0-

Capital Contribution Reductions (\$96,500)

Detail of Capital Contributions					
Capital Contribution	Adjustment Details				
Account Description		Adjustment Amount			Justification
Town Council Capital – Laptop Reserve		(1,500)		(1,500)	to reflect actual need
Land Use – P&Z Document Updates		(75,000)		(75,000)	to reflect alternate funding source
Public Safety - Police in Car Video		(20,000)		(20,000)	to reflect alternate funding source
Total Capital Reductions		(96,500)	-	(96,500)	

Chairman St. Vil stated as previously mentioned this evening, in his absence that Councilor Ryan sent an email earlier today regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget and he asked Councilor Buhle to read Councilor Ryan’s ’s April 8, 2026 email.

Councilor Buhle read Councilor Ryan’s April 8, 2026 email as follows:

*“Timothy K. Ryan
Ledyard Town Councilor
Member, Ledyard Finance Committee*

Comments on New Business Agenda Item #6

As we have seen over the course of the multiple Finance Committee budget workshops, the general government budget is indeed running lean, with responsible, thoughtful budgets put forward by our town department heads. Unfortunately, healthcare costs continue to rise, and this year we are incurring a 10.5%, or nearly \$900k increase, in overall health care costs compared to last year. While these costs continue to be burdened entirely on the general government budget, it’s important to note that 75% of the total healthcare cost is attributed to the BOE.

Taking healthcare and town-wide capital out of the equation (to isolate operational costs), we see the following increases in operations costs:

- *General Government: ~2.4% from 2025-26*
- *BOE: ~3.6% from 2025-26*

To be clear, I do not perceive these to be exorbitant increases. However, after revaluation, ANY increase to the equivalent neutral mill rate will have an outsized effect on all homeowners, since the value of a “mill” is substantially more than the last budget cycle.

Additionally, revaluation did not result in uniform increases to all housing values (i.e., some home values increased more than others) and shifted a bigger portion of the tax burden onto residential properties, since commercial valuation was essentially flat. The net result is the sad truth that even if we passed a budget with a zero mill increase, homeowners would still see an increase in their tax bill.

There is, unfortunately, no clear path to additional significant revenue at this time, and in fact we have lost some revenue when it comes to motor vehicle taxes, due to the decreased mill rate and revamped assessment method established by the state. We also continue to be short funded by the state when it comes to PILOT funding, recovering only 49% of tax revenue from land that is otherwise non-taxable.

That said, I am hopeful that the CT state legislature will take up a bill to fix the PILOT issue related to tribal land, and favorably pass CT House Bill 5407, which reimburses municipalities for 100% P&T veteran’s exemptions. I am also hopeful that the CT Legislature will consider revising the ECS formula, which would increase the amount sent to municipalities. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that any of these issues will be resolved before we need to finalize a budget, and so we must work with revenues we know to be true.

Compounding this, we also have future revenue concerns when it comes to personal property tax revenue from the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe (tax on property that belongs to private, non-tribal businesses that exist on tribal lands, such as the Tanger Outlets); Legislation was endorsed and passed by our own state senator that eliminated our ability to collect this tax, creating a \$700k hole in our revenue. This has been temporarily supplanted by state funding, but that is only guaranteed for the next two budget cycles.

This ultimately reinforces the fact that we, as a council, need to do whatever we can to control the ever-increasing burden on ALL taxpayers, and also respect the negative optics of introducing new, recurring expenses in an environment with so many variables.

To that end, the only proposed budget changes I would offer are the following:

- *Change the top line BOE budget to \$41,700,000, a ~3% or \$1.24M increase over last year’s budget. This is a \$232,335 reduction to the board’s request for \$41,932,335.*

This is still a significant increase over last year, and a markedly less aggressive proposal than I previously offered. This should result in a further .13 Mill reduction to the proposed 26.58 Mill Rate (in addition to reductions already made on the town side), or a 16% reduction to the proposed increase to the tax levy; but I'll leave the exact calculations to Finance Director Bonin.

I arrived at this proposed figure after carefully reviewing the BOE budget, and believe this more accurately represents a budget that is not only more than adequate for maintaining current operations, but also supports myriad of operational facility improvements, all without adding the burden of additional recurring salary positions (as well as benefits costs for said positions).

Considering the BOE expects a projected 10% decrease in enrollment over the next 10 years, I do not believe adding new positions (along with the resulting benefits costs) is the right move at this time. Additionally, because of this decreased enrollment projection, the teacher to student ratio will increase naturally, as will the per pupil expenditures. All good things for student facing services.

It is important to note that any significant housing developments currently being proposed and/or discussed in town would not come to fruition during the next budget year; as such, if these developments happen, and if they introduce additional students into the school system, we will have the opportunity to address these needs in the next budget cycle.

During the last few budget cycles, I had repeatedly warned against the financial realities that Ledyard would have to face in the coming years (e.g., revaluation, loss of personal property tax on tribal lands, etc.), and unfortunately those realities have come to fruition.”

Chairman St. Vil thanked Councilor Buhle for reading Councilor Ryan’s April 8, 2026 written comments and he called for a Motion on the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.

- ❖ MOTION to adopt a the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget in the amount of \$73, 555,506 ~~\$73,630,506~~ comprised of:
 - General Government: \$31,698,171
 - Board of Education: \$41,857,335 ~~\$41,932,335~~
(as Amended at this April 8, 2026 meeting; please see discussion and amendments below:)

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Parad

Discussion: Councilor Lamb stated that he appreciated the many hours and the amount of time the Finance Committee spent working with the Town’s Departments on the General Government proposed budget noting that he did sit through one of their long meetings. He also expressed the same sentiments to the Board of Education’s Administration. He stated this year has been a good process compared to last year, noting the number of variables that impact the town which Councilor Ryan mentioned in his written comments submitted for tonight’s meeting. He stated that he believed they were all concerned about the impact of the 2025 Revaluation, which shifted the tax burden from commercial property to residential property; and more specifically the condominiums and lower priced homes. He commented on the balancing act to maintain town services, and their schools top notch, and the tax burden placed on their residents, especially their most vulnerable residents. He stated in view of Councilor Ryan’s comments that he would propose the following an amendment:

- ❖ MOTION to reduce the Board of Education’s proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget in the amount of \$41,932,335; by \$232,335, providing a revised Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$41,700,000.

Moved by Councilor Lamb, seconded by Councilor Barnes

Discussion: Chairman St. Vil stated reducing the Board of Education’ proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 by \$232,335 was everything that was contractually required. Therefore, he questioned whether this reduction would create a downstream impact for the Board of Education.

Councilor Buhle stated Councilor Ryan proposed reducing the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 by \$232,335 at the Finance Committee's April 1, 2026 Meeting. She stated it resulted in a stalemate, which prompted the Special Finance Committee that was held earlier this evening. She noted her concerns with a \$232,335 reduction as follows:

- The Board of Education did not have \$232,335 of New Recurring Expenses in their "Green" Category.
- Two New Positions included in the "Green" Category were:
 - ✓ One Full-time Elementary School Math Coach
 - ✓ One Additional Staff for Facilities Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Department

Councilor Buhle stated while the Town Council does not get a say where the Board of Education budget cuts would be made; that she thought the following types of things would be on the chopping block: graphing calculators, text books for curriculum opportunities, supplies, marching band equipment, etc. She stated that she did not see things that would create burdens in the years to come that cutting \$232,335 would eliminate. She stated while she understood Councilor Ryan felt comfortable with reducing the Board of Education's proposed budget by \$232,335; that without knowing which budget lines the \$232,335 would be cut, that she could not support the reduction.

Councilor Buhle went on to state that the Finance Committee worked hard to develop a Budget Letter of Directive that asked for the Board of Education and the General Government proposed Budgets to provide specific criteria; and she noted the proposed Fiscal Year Budgets that were presented to the Finance Committee met those expectations. She stated that she fully supported the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 as presented this evening.

Chairman St. Vil stated there was a balance between fiscal discipline, and maintaining stability in a budget that was largely driven by fixed and contractual costs. He stated they had to work to ensure that they were not crossing that line, moving from their oversight role to operational impact role; and precluding the School District's ability to operate.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated when the Board of Education drafted their proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget they looked at their savings from the previous year, which was in the amount of \$297,000. She stated by reducing the Board of Education's proposed budget for the upcoming year by \$232,335 that they would have a completely flat budget. She stated taking away the contractual increases and the \$232,335 that they would be taking away all the money the School District needed to fulfill certain needs; leaving them to have to do without. She stated the High School kids needed the graphic calculators for pre-calculus and calculus, noting the ones they have were old, and that certain tools were required for a quality education.

Healthcare Costs:

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated when they talk about Healthcare Cost they say that the majority of the cost comes from the Board of Education; commenting that the Board of Education has 400 employees compared to the General Government that had 40 something employees plus other Departments. She stated it was a simple math problem noting that the Board of Education's Budget was always going to be higher than the General Government Budget.

Administrative Work

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated many of the Teachers were having to do administrative work that should be done by an actual administrator. She stated this issue was corrected in previous years with some of the administrators the Board of Education added into their budget. However, she stated the issue has not been completely corrected. She stated this means that the Teachers have to spend more time doing administrative tasks and less time teaching.

Teachers Lesson Planning Time

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated many times the Teachers cannot use their Lesson Planning Time to plan lessons because they had to do the administrative work; or be a substitute for another teacher that did not come to work that day, or be in the cafeteria helping the kids. She stated then the Teachers had to go home and spend several hours working on Lesson Plans, or grading papers.

Teachers 10 Month Annual Salary

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that some say the Teachers were very well paid and they only worked 10-months a year. She stated it was ten months in the calendar year; however, she stated when they added up all of the extra hours the Teachers do on Saturdays and Sundays to do grading, etc. that they worked a lot more hours than the two-summer months that school was not in session. She stated that they needed to start valuing the work their Teachers do.

School District Serves 10% of Ledyard's Population

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that it bothered her that they always blame the problems of the town on the Board of Education side. She stated the Board of Education served at least 10% of the town's 15,000 population every single day, noting that they serve 2,000 students in the School District; and they were also serving the students parents. She stated the only other two Departments that served the entire population were the Police Department and the Fire Departments. She stated there were no other Departments in town that served 10% of the town's population every single day; and she commented that they could not do what they needed to do if they were not appropriately funded.

Per Pupil Expenditure

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in previous years Ledyard's Per Pupil Expenditure ranked them 154 out of Connecticut 169 Cities & Towns. She stated Ledyard's Per Pupil Expenditure ranking was now at 144; noting although it was a little better; that they were still at the bottom of the barrel.

2025 Property Revaluation – Mill Rate

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated she agreed with Councilor Ryan that even with the equalized adjusted 26.58 Mill Rate that some of their property owners would receive a higher tax bill. Therefore, she stated whether they reduce the Board of Education proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 by the \$232,335; or not, that residents were still going to receive a higher tax bill.

Revenues – State Legislation

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that she hoped the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Program; and the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Formula would be improved; and that the Legislature would fix other revenue programs. She stated if these things get fixed the Town might receive additional revenue that would cover the \$232,335 that they were talking about reducing the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget by. She stated they could not do things based on a maybe, however, she stated that they had to be cognizant that by reducing the budget by \$232,335 that they were making things more difficult for the Board of Education.

Councilor Barnes stated the reason he seconded Councilor Lamb's Motion to reduce the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget by \$232,335 was for discussion purposes; and that he did not want it to be misconstrued as an endorsement. He stated because there was not much discussion regarding Councilor Ryan's reduction proposal at the April 1, 2026 Finance Committee Meeting that he wanted to hear the full story; and he thanked Councilor Buhle and Councilor Garcia-Irizarry for their comments this evening. He stated during this budget process he has been transparent noting that he thought where they landed for both the General Government and Board of Education's Budget was directionally correct. He stated that he has family and friends who have been school teachers for their entire careers, noting at every family gathering he hears about the trials and tribulations of being a teacher. He stated his three children all graduated from the Ledyard Public School System, noting that it was a fantastic school system. He noted that two of his children have gone through college and his third child was almost done with college. He stated he hoped that future generations would have the same benefit and experience his family has had with Ledyard Public Schools, noting what they offered from PreK though Grade 12 was fantastic, and he did not want to see that diminished.

Councilor Barnes continued by stating that it was clear that a \$232,335 reduction to the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget was too much based on Councilor Buhle's and Councilor Garcia-Irizarry's comments. He asked whether there was any amount they could consider; or whether they thought the Board of Education's proposed \$41,932,333 Budget was the best they could offer.

Councilor Buhle stated by being proactive they were making long-term plans for the town. She went on to state although the Town Council could not make line item cuts to the Board of Education's Budget that if she were to make a line item cut that it would be the additional Staff member for Facilities Department, because that was not in the Superintendent's original proposed Budget, noting that the Board of Education unanimously voted to add the position to the budget. She stated that this speaks to their long-term planning and the importance of it. She stated that she did not see a path forward if they continued to kick needs down the road.

Chairman St. Vil noted Councilor Barnes comments; and he stated that he believed that residents were feeling impacted. Therefore, he stated that some level of reduction made sense; noting that Councilor Barnes was asking what level reduction could be made without unintended consequences and downstream impacts. He stated that he would like to propose the following "*Friendly Amendment*" to Councilor Lamb's Budget Amendment.

- ❖ MOTION to reduce the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 from ~~\$232,335~~ to **\$75,000**; for a revised Board of Education Budget in the total amount of \$41,857,335

Councilor Lamb stated as the mover of the proposed Amendment he agreed to the *Friendly Amendment*".

Chairman St. Vil stated a \$75,000 reduction to the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget would recognize the taxpayers and the Board of Education and the hard work that they were doing. He stated this budget reduction would be both a Town and Board of Education shared sacrifice.

Councilor Lamb thanked Councilor Buhle and Councilor Garcia-Irizarry and everyone else that has been working on the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget. He stated that this year's budget season was an improvement over last year's budget season, noting that it was a more collaborative effort. He stated the proposal to reduce the Board of Education's proposed budget by **\$75,000**; would show that the Town Council has come together to work out the issues; noting it was a positive motion going forward. He stated that he appreciated Chairman St. Vil's "*Friendly Amendment*".

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry addressed the Board of Education's vote to add a Staff member to the Facilities Department, which was not included in the Superintendent's original proposed Budget. She explained that the Board of Education's Director of Grounds and Facilities Wayne Donaldson does a lot of work at the schools, and she noted that he was not far from retirement. She stated they could not expect to have an employee retire and the next day hire a new person that does not know anything about what was going on, noting that they have to have a person on staff that they could train and bring up to speed. She stated if they wait another year to hire a person, that it could cost the town a lot more money, because things could fall between the cracks; and when they actually find them it could cost more.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted at their March 19, 2026 Budget Work Session that she and Councilor Buhle went through the proposed Budget line by line, and they considered the effect on their taxpayers. She noted as an example they discussed increasing the Police Overtime Pay line, and decided not to increase it at this time because they did not want to add more burden to the residents. She also stated they cut the General Government Budget where they could and she noted as an example that because the Bids for Auditing Services came in lower than expected, they reduced the Annual Audit line by \$13,000. She stated that they were trying to balance and meet the needs of their kids and their residents.

Councilor Parad stated that she appreciated the work, time, and the Finance Committee explaining how they went line by line to prepare the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget. However, she stated at the Town Council's February 25, 2026 meeting Board of Education Finance Committee Chairman Amanda Veneziano presented their proposed Budget and that she described they did same exact process in submitting their budget to the Town Council. She stated the Town Council went through a whole process to ask the Board of Education present their proposed budget to them differently this year; and they did exactly what the Town Council asked them to do. She stated the Board of Education did not put extra things in

their proposed budget to try to pad it to prepare for the Town Council to reduce their budget, noting they gave them what they needed. She stated asking the Board of Education to reduce their proposed Budget by a large amount sounded like the Town Council did not care about all of the work they did to put together a really good budget for the upcoming fiscal year. She stated that she did not think they should do this to the Board of Education, who worked to give them a lean budget, that was much better than the towns around us.

Councilor Brunelle stated that she attended remotely via Zoom all but the last Budget Work Session the Finance Committee held, noting that she watched them go line by line through the budget, noting that she learned a lot, and she appreciated the work that they did to reduce the General Government proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget by \$191,360. She addressed the following:

Reduce Board of Education Budget:

Councilor Brunelle commented on the original proposed amendment this evening to reduce the Board of Education's proposed budget by \$232,335. She stated that this was only \$37,000 more than the \$191,360 the Finance Committee already slashed from the General Government Budget. She stated even if they did not cut the Board of Education's proposed Budget by \$75,000 that they already saved the town \$191,360. She stated they already saved the town \$191,360; and now they were talking about cutting \$75,000 from the Board of Education's proposed budget. She stated she agreed with Councilor Parad that cutting the Board of Education's proposed Budget did not seem fair, because systematically this town already chokes their kids, noting that if they need to save money they always take it from the kids. She stated that she hated that because the kids were their future; they were 10% of the town's population; and they owe it to their kids to have a great education. She stated the town would not be able to get more families to move to Ledyard if their education started to slip.

Revenues

Councilor Brunelle stated that Ledyard had a revenue problem, noting it was not a school problem. She stated that Ledyard needed to increase their revenue, stating that they always blame the children.

Healthcare Costs

Councilor Brunelle stated they have had citizens come up to the podium and talk about how they hate it when the Town Council discusses Healthcare Costs. She stated a lot of people have health issues and when they keep throwing in their face that the Board of Education Healthcare costs were so high; it was like they were blaming the people for having Healthcare, but it was not something they could just not pay, stating that Healthcare had to be provided for all of their town workers and their school workers. She stated Healthcare should not be something they throw in the faces of their teachers or town workers. She stated that it irked her when she hears those comments.

Councilor Brunelle concluded her comments by stating that the point of the problem was that they were trying to make a very lean budget for their community, because as they all know costs keep going up , noting gas prices have increased, groceries have gone up; and of course healthcare costs was part of that. She stated they do not want to pay more taxes; however, she stated they cannot help that all of the property values have gone up with the 2025 Revaluation. She stated that this was outside of the Town Council's control, noting that she did not like the idea of choking their children because everything else was more expensive. She stated because they have already saved \$191,360 from the General Government's proposed budget, that she did not think that they needed to take \$75,000 from the kids, questioning how much this \$75,000 would affect every ones wallets. However, she stated the \$75,000 would mean a lot to the students, noting that it would provide for the calculators, or another janitor. She rhetorically questioned how much the \$75,000 would mean to the town's taxpayers as a whole, maybe \$1.00; \$2.00; or .50 cents. She stated the \$75,000 would mean more to the kids; than it would mean to arbitrarily take the \$75,000 away.

Chairman St. Vil stated that he sometimes goes through an exercise where he would debate the opposing point to convince himself that he was not entrenched in a position; and ensure he was not in a paradigm. He stated that he was pro schools and pro education; however, he stated that he did not want this to force him into a position without evaluating all of the facts

and the opportunities presented before him. He stated his role was to the Town Council and to the Taxpayers, not to the Board of Education. He stated the Taxpayers were comprised of parents who send their children to their schools; so he cared about the children as well. However, he stated to the point of the Taxpayer that he had to evaluate what was the lowest amount that the Town Council should recommend and/or approve as a budget that accomplished the Strategic Plan and the Goals of this Town. He stated with respect to the Board of Education; what was the lowest possible amount that reflected the Board of Education's Strategic Plan. He noted as everyone has stated this evening the Board of Education has presented their proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget that required a lot of hard work and time going line by line through their budget. However, he stated it also reflected an increase that was above and beyond the original budget that the Superintendent submitted. Therefore, he questioned how he could rationalize that the additional funding reflected the lowest amount that was required by the Superintendent and his Office in order to execute and run the Board of Education. He stated he recognized that the Town Council does not have a say in which Board of Education budget lines would be reduced, noting that the Town Council could only provide a dollar amount for the Board of Education to reduce their budget by. However, he stated based on the facts presented, it was difficult for him say that a \$75,000 reduction would impact the students in the long term, because when the Superintendent and his Team submitted their proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget they did not include the additional \$75,000. He stated that he agreed that strategically in the long term it was wise to include \$75,000 for the addition of staff in the Board of Education Facilities Maintenance Department. However, he stated in light of what their Taxpayers were facing this year; they may have to make a sacrifice and take that risk this year; and work to come up with a plan for next year. He stated to him it was uncomfortable to say that; but in his role as the Town Council Chairman that was the conversation he had to have with himself, and that they were all having this conversation out loud with each other.

Chairman St. Vil called for a Vote on the following amendment (including "*Friendly Amendment*):

- ❖ MOTION to reduce the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 from ~~\$232,335~~ to **\$75,000**; for a revised Board of Education Budget in the total amount of \$41,857,335

VOTE:

7 – 1 Approved and so declared (Councilor Parad not in favor)

RESULT:	AMENDMENT APPROVED 7 – 1
MOVER:	Ty (Earl) Lamb, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Bill Barnes, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, St. Vil, Thompson
NAYES:	Parad
EXCUSED:	Ryan

Chairman St. Vil called for a Vote on the Main Motion, as amended below:

- ❖ MOTION to adopt a the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget in the amount of ~~\$73,555,506~~ ~~\$73,630,506~~ comprised of:
 - General Government: **\$31,698,171**
 - Board of Education: **\$41,857,335** ~~\$41,932,335~~
(please see discussion above)

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Parad

Continued Discussion: Councilor Buhle noted that this would be the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 that would be presented at the Public Hearing.

Councilor Lamb stated that he thought that tonight's vote on the Budget vote was a bipartisan effort; and that it was a budget that they could support to present to the town. He stated he appreciated everyone's conversation this evening.

VOTE:

8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Adrienne Parad, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

7. MOTION to set a Public Hearing (Hybrid Format - Video Conference and In-Person) date to be held on April 21, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. to be held in the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard, to receive comments and recommendations on the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.
 Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Parad

Background: In accordance with Chapter VII; Section 5: “After the formation of a preliminary budget, the Town Council shall provide sufficient copies of said budget for general distribution in the office of the Town Clerk, and shall conduct one or more public hearings on or before the last Monday of April.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Adrienne Parad, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

8. MOTION to set the Annual Town Meeting (Hybrid Format -Video Conference and In-Person) date regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget on May 18, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. to be held at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard Connecticut; and to adjourn to a Referendum to be held on May 19, 2026 between the hours of 6:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Thompson

Background: In accordance with Chapter VII; Section 5: “The Town Council shall then prepare a budget for recommendation to the annual Town Meeting and shall file said budget with the Town Clerk no later than the first Monday of May (May 4, 2026) . The annual Town Meeting for the consideration of the budget and the transaction of other business shall be held on the third Monday of May at such hour and at such place as the Town Council shall determine. The vote of the Town meeting on the annual budget shall be adjourned to a vote on the voting machines the day following the Town Meeting.”

In accordance with Chapter VII; Section 6: *The Town Meeting may, by failing to approve the budget presented at referendum, refer the entire budget back to the Town Council for further consideration and changes.*

*Should the referendum on the budget refer the budget back to the Town Council, the Town Council shall reconsider the budget and present it for a **second vote** on the voting machines **three weeks** (June 9, 2026) following the previous referendum.*

In the event that the **second referendum** does not approve a budget; the **Town Council shall adopt a final budget by the fourth Monday in June** (June 22, 2026). *Should both the referenda and the Town Council fail to adopt a final budget by the fourth Monday in June, the budget that was presented at the second referendum shall be deemed to have been adopted, and expenditures made in accordance therewith for the ensuing fiscal year.*

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	James Thompson, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

XV. ADJOURNMENT

VOTE: Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Thompson
8 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

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 April 8, 2026.

Gary St. Vil Chairman