



TOWN OF LEDYARD

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Town Council Meeting Minutes

Chairman Kevin J.
Dombrowski

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

7:00 PM

Town Hall Council Chambers

WORKING DRAFT

Remote: Information noted below:

In-Person: Council Chambers Town Hall Annex

Remote: Information noted below:

Join Zoom Meeting from your Computer, Smart Phone or Tablet:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83275596205?pwd=c2xOalR4OEx6d1JOQUwrTkFFaG5XUT09>

Or by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 832 7559 6205; Passcode: 384948

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Chairman Dombrowski welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He stated for the members of the Town Council and the Public who were participating via video conference that the remote meeting information was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town's Website - Granicus-Legistar Meeting Portal.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Kevin Dombrowski
Councilor Bill Saums
Councilor Andra Ingalls
Councilor Gary Paul
Councilor John Marshall
Councilor Mary K. McGrattan
Councilor S. Naomi Rodriguez
Councilor Tim Ryan
Councilor Whit Irwin

IV. PRESENTATIONS

None.

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

None.

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS

None.

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor McGrattan announced Our Lady of Lourdes Ladies Guild would be sponsoring a Fraud Prevention and Awareness Presentation on Monday, February 20, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Church Hall. The Guest Speaker would be Ledyard Police Sergeant Michael McKinney.

Councilor Rodriguez reminded everyone about the Law Enforcement Awards and Appreciation Day scheduled for Sunday, February 19, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at the United Methodist Church, in Gales Ferry. Dinner would be provided at 5:00 p.m.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following:

- Town Council Public Hearing Minutes of January 25, 2023
- Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes of January 25, 2023

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Andra Ingalls

SECONDER: John Marshall

AYE: 9 Dombrowski, Saums, Ingalls, Paul, Marshall, McGrattan, Rodriguez, Ryan, and Irwin

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Dombrowski stated a Communications List has been provided. He noted no referrals were listed.

Communications List - February 8, 2023

X. REFERALS

XI. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

1. Administration Committee

Councilor Ingalls stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening and approved the proposal to combine the Parks & Recreation Commission with the Senior Citizens

Commission. She stated the Committee discussed concerns that were submitted by Senior Citizens Commission Chairman Norma Sokolski in her letter dated February 1, 2023. Councilor Ingalls noted the Committee also recommended the Town Council set a Public Hearing date of April 12, 2023 to receive comments on the proposed Ordinance to combine the two Commissions.

RESULT: .

2. Community Relations Committee

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee has not met since the last Town Council meeting. He noted the Committee would be meeting on February 15, 2023.

RESULT: .

3. Finance Committee

Councilor Saums stated the Finance Committee met on February 1, 2023 and in addition to the items on tonight's agenda the Committee also discussed the following: (1) Board of Education Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget Surplus - Councilor Saums stated he reported to the Finance Committee that he, the Mayor, the Superintendent of Schools, the Finance Director, and the Board of Education Director of Finance and Human Capital met to discuss transferring the Board of Education Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Operating Budget Surplus of \$448,253 to the BOE Capital Reserve Fund, which was required by the 1989 "*Resolution Creating a Funding Mechanism for Making Annual Appropriations to a Capital Reserve Fund for the Board of Education*". He stated the consensus was that although the General Government experienced a healthcare deficit of \$861,753 because some healthcare costs were overlooked last year during the budget preparation process, the Resolution should be followed. He stated a written procedure was being developed to ensure this does not happen again, and a process was agreed to between the Board of Education Central Office and the General Government to keep all employee data in the Munis Financial System, keeping it current, and to review and agree on healthcare expense forecast based on the data in advance of budget preparation. The Finance Committee will review a motion to transfer the surplus and make recommendations to the Town Council at their February 15, 2023 meeting; (2) Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Preparation - The Finance Director and the Mayor reported that work was well under way in preparing the General Government Budget, and that there was much work to do before the budget would be delivered to the Town Council on March 6, 2023 (the first Monday in March per Chapter VII of the Town Charter); (3) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding and Projects Status - The Committee reviewed the ARPA Project List and discussed the status of projects started, completed, and not yet started. Councilor Saums noted that Councilor Ryan suggested that a running total of funds spent vs. funds appropriated for each project be included in the tracking workbook; (4) "*Resolution Establishing Administrator/Department Head Benefits*" - The Committee did not take action on the proposed revisions to the "*Resolution Establishing Administrator/Department Head Benefits*" because the Administrator of Human Resources was still working on it. The Finance Committee planned to work on it at the February 15, 2023 meeting.

RESULT: .**4.** Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor Paul stated the LUPPW Committee met on February 6, 2023 and he noted in addition to their routine work that Conservation Commission Chairman Michael Marelli attended the meeting to discuss the Commission's interest to purchase a 36-acre +/- parcel located at 154 Stoddards Wharf Road which was currently owned by Pfizer. He stated the asking price was \$195,000 and that the Commission was looking to apply for an Open Space Watershed Grant offered by the State of Connecticut that would pay up-to 65% of the purchase of the property. He explained this was just in the beginning stages and that they recommended Mr. Marelli work with the Mayor's Office regarding the Conservation Commission's interest to purchase the open space parcel; and about negotiating on the price of the property; and that they follow all town procedures with regard to applying for the Grant and for the town to purchase property.

RESULT: .**5.** Economic Development Commission

Councilor Paul stated the EDC met on February 7, 2023 and discussed the following: (1) Business Directory was coming along great. EDC was working to develop a Form for new businesses to be added to the Business Directory; (2) Marketing Video was still in the development stages and would feature the following segments: Welcome, About the Community, Quality of Life, and Business and Commerce. Some footage would be videoed in June, 2023. Therefore, the EDC was also looking for pictures and videos to add into the Marketing Video that would showcase the other three seasons in Ledyard. The video was being paid for by the advertisers; (3) Ribbon Cuttings will be held on Saturday, February 18, 2023 for the following new businesses in Gales Ferry: (a) My Pets World at 10:00 a.m.; and (b) Dollar General at 11:15 a.m.

6. Ledyard Beautification Committee

Councilor Ingalls stated the Beautification Committee met on February 7, 2023 and addressed the following: (1) Election of New Officers as follows: Chairman Jennifer Eastbourne; Vice-Chairman Kate Kohrs; Recording Secretary and Treasurer Jennifer Holdsworth. Ms. Holdsworth would fill both roles until the Committee can identify someone to take one of the roles; (2) New Members - Because the Committee had three new Members they spent time updating them on past business. The Committee still had three vacancies that needed to be filled; (3) Flowerpots at Municipal Buildings - The Committee discussed the sustainability of providing flowerpots at various Municipal Buildings (Town Hall, Police Station, Parks & Recreation/Senior Citizens Center). They also discussed who watered the flowerpots, suitability of the size of the flowerpots and where the flowerpots were stored off season. The also discussed whether the flowerpots were the best use of the Committee's time and resources; (4) Ideas for New Beautification Projects; and New Fundraising Projects were

discussed; (5) Meeting Schedule - The Committee discussed the possibility to add special meetings to their calendar. The Committee currently meets quarterly which was not often enough for continuity and planning purposes. Councilor Ingalls concluded by noting the Committee's next meeting would be held on April 4, 2023.

7. Housing Authority

Councilor McGrattan stated the Housing Authority met on February 6, 2023 and discussed the following: (1) Renovation work to the apartments should begin in April, 2023. The renovation/improvement work had been scheduled to begin in September, 2022; however, due to various approval processes, etc. the start of the project was delayed; and (2) Smoking Policy - The Board was still working on the Smoking Policy.

XII. REPORT OF THE MAYOR

REPORT OF THE MAYOR:

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Preparations - Mayor Allyn stated he has completed meeting with Department Heads, noting that the current proposed budget, excluding the Board of Education's numbers, has come in \$3.4 million over the current fiscal year, after he has already cut about \$400,000 from the Department Head's budget submittals. He stated some of the proposed budget increase was capital driven, noting there were a number of projects, that may need to be funded over a period of a few years. He stated the proposed Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget will be pared down before it was delivered to the Town Council on March 6, 2023; (2) Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner - Mayor Allyn stated he attended the event that was held at the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation Museum at which about 300 people were in attendance. He stated he had the privilege to introduce the "*Business of the Year*" that was awarded to Dave and Debbie Vessels of AA Lock & Key. He stated the recipients were elated, noting that they did some amazing things during their 35th year of being in business which included giving substantial gifts to about ten different charities over the course of the year; (3) Bush Pond - Lantern Hill Valley Park Lease - Mayor Allyn stated the Lease the Town Council approved at their January 25, 2023 meeting has been signed and executed with Bob and Betsy Graham. He stated Parks & Recreation Director Scott Johnson, Jr., would be meeting with Public Works Director Steve Masalin to begin preliminary work on the Park; (4) Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) State Budget Meeting - February 3, 2023 - Mayor Allyn stated at last week's meeting they received some insight on what they were expecting from the State's budget proposal. He stated the Governor has since released his Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget noting that State funding for Ledyard looked stable. He stated he would keep the Town Council informed as State budget numbers become available; (5) Linda C. Davis Food Pantry Non-Profit Sponsorship - Mayor Allyn explained because the Food Pantry was not sponsored by a non-profit organization, that the Food Pantry only qualified to receive T-Fab food items from the Connecticut Food Share, which included five specific food type items. He explained that the T-Fab Items were the foods that the Food Pantry would give to anyone who has requested food, with no questions asked. He

stated on February 7, 2023 the Ledyard Rotary Foundation agreed to sponsor the Linda C. Davis Food Pantry. He stated by having the sponsorship of the Ledyard Rotary Foundation that the Food Pantry was now eligible to receive all of the foods that were distributed thru Connecticut Food Share, which were donated from stores such as Costco, BJ's Wholesale, Whole Foods. He stated they had a small ceremony at the Linda C. Davis Food Pantry with the Rotarians and Connecticut Food Share Board Chairman Beth Henry. He stated under the Linda C. Davis Food Pantry sign a plaque has been placed stating "*Sponsored by the Ledyard Rotary Foundation*"; (8) Lantern Hill Road-Whitford Brook Bridge State Grant Funding - Mayor Allyn thanked State Senator Cathy Osten for securing the \$3 million for the bridge and dam replacement and repairs. He stated the town now had an executed Agreement with the State to receive the \$3 million grant funding and that Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin was working to prepare the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) which would be followed by a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the project. He stated the hope was to have the bridge replacement work completed this calendar year; (9) Eversource Easement Request - Mayor Allyn noted that Eversource has requested a permanent easement through the Clark Farm property for \$5,000. He stated the proposed easement would bisect the most useable portion of the property. He stated Eversource currently had a temporary easement over the property because they were replacing all of the former wooden structures with the steel monopoles which were supposed to last 50 - 100 years. He stated if that were the case he did not see why Eversource would need an easement to do work. He stated a formal proposal has not yet been received from Eversource and he noted if the Town Council wanted to discuss this proposal at another meeting and vote on the request, that he would deliver their decision; (10) Winter Operations - Mayor Allyn stated there was no measurable snow in the weather forecast thru February 17, 2023, and it poses a unique situation for the town, because they have a commitment to buy 250 tons of road salt this year. He stated Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin has never found himself in a position to accept 250 tons of road salt when there was full salt shed; (11) Ribbon Cuttings - Mayor Allyn stated as Councilor Paul reported earlier this evening during his Economic Development Commission Report, two Ribbon Cuttings were scheduled for Saturday, February 18, 2023 for the following new businesses in Gales Ferry: (a) My Pets World at 10:00 a.m.; and (b) Dollar General at 11:15 a.m. He stated one of the Ribbon Cuttings was scheduled for February 4, 2023, but due to the below zero temperatures that weekend the event was rescheduled. He stated Dollar General had a soft opening and things were going well. He stated that he hoped folks would be able to join them in welcoming the new businesses at the Ribbon Cuttings.

Questions to the Mayor - -

Councilor Ryan noted the Eversource easement over the Clark Farm property and he questioned whether the \$5,000 was a one-time payment or was it in perpetuity. Mayor Allyn stated the \$5,000 Eversource offered for the easement was a single one-time payment.

Chairman Dombrowski addressed the requested Eversource easement over the Clark Farm property, noting that this was the one large piece of usable land that the town owned. He stated to bisect the property with an easement would prohibit the town from ever thinking about doing anything on that property. He stated one of the use options discussed for the property was in the event the town had to build a new High School, noting that the Clark Farm was the only town-owned property where they could build a High School. He stated if they granted the easement the property would be landlocked to a point where it could only be

used as open space. He stated he would be more amenable to an easement that went around the perimeter of the property, noting that would grant Eversource what they wanted, which was to gain access if they needed to; but at the same time maintained the majority of parcel being useful for the town. He went on to note the proposed easement was located where the Tri-Town Trail was being constructed. Mayor Allyn stated he could provide the Town Council with the sketch that he sent to Eversource, which was for the easement to hug the perimeter of the property, as Chairman Dombrowski suggested. However, he stated that Eversource responded stating that was not what they wanted, noting that they wanted to go through the property. Chairman Dombrowski stated if that was the case, then his response to Eversource was “No”. Mayor Allyn stated he would deliver that message to Eversource.

RESULT: .

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

Finance Committee

1. MOTION to authorize the purchase of a 2015 Ford Utility vehicle in the amount of \$12,000 from Account # 21020551-57510 (GFFC CNR Vehicle) and authorize the transfer of \$7,500 from Account # 21020551-57300 (GFFD CNR New Equipment) to Account # 21020551-57510 (GFFD CNR Vehicle).

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Councilor Saums stated the Gales Ferry Fire Chief’s 2004 Tahoe vehicle was aging and it was beyond reasonable repair, noting that it had 167,000 miles on it, and the dashboard no longer lights up, noting that the costs to repair the electronics was more than the value of the vehicle itself. Therefore, he stated the Fire Chief has requested authorization to purchase a used 2015 Ford, which had 67,000 miles on it, as a stop gap measure.

Councilor Saums went on to explain that Gales Ferry Fire Chief Tony Saccone, who was present this evening, received quotes for three used vehicles and felt that the 2015 Ford was the best option noting that they would receive \$1,500 for the trade-in of the current vehicle, which would bring the cost to purchase the used 2015 vehicle to \$10,500. He noted that Account #21020551-57510 (GFFC CNR Vehicle) currently had an available balance of \$4,500; and Account # 21020551-57300 (GFFD CNR New Equipment) had a current available balance of \$122,754, prior to the proposed transfer.

Councilor Ryan stated during the Finance Committee’s discussion they agreed that going forward that the funding for the Fire Chief’s vehicles for both Fire Companies (Ledyard Center and Gales Ferry) would be included in the Fire Apparatus Replacement Capital Improvement Plan and that they would further discuss that during the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget preparation.

VOTE Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Bill Saums

SECONDER: Tim Ryan

AYE: 9 Dombrowski, Saums, Ingalls, Paul, Marshall, McGrattan, Rodriguez, Ryan, and Irwin

2. MOTION to allocate funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the replacement of the following HVAC Systems:

- Ledyard Emergency Services Building at 11 Fairway Drive, \$200,000
- Ledyard Senior Citizens Facility at 12 Van Tassel Drive, \$155,000

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums stated that he has been communicating with Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin about these two HVAC System replacement projects (Emergency Services Building and the Parks and Recreation/Senior Citizens Facility). He provided some background noting the following:

- Emergency Services Building was constructed in the 2004 and had two separate heating systems:

(1) Phase I - Heating System for the Fire Apparatus Bays where the apparatus was housed was currently working fine. Councilor Saums provided some background noting that there were multiple failures of heating and A/C system in the building. He stated because of the urgency to provide heat in the Apparatus Bays that Phase I has been completed. He stated these heating repairs involved the straightforward replacement/reorientation, noting the total cost of the project was \$84,000 which included the associated electrical work. He also noted that the air handlers 3 & 4 in the Emergency Services Building have been taken care of, noting that the Modine Heaters were removed, and they installed radiant heat in the Apparatus Bays. He stated the Modine Heaters were reused where they could these types of heating units. He stated funds were drawn from the Building Upgrade Reserve Account to pay for this project. He stated Phase I was not part of tonight's request.

(2) Phase II - was the Heating System for the remainder of the building which included the Meeting Room, Offices, and Dormitory, which was the system that has failed and was the system that they were addressing tonight. He explained that that radiant heating in this part of the Emergency Services Building would not work, noting that they needed to replace the boiler and put in a cooling unit which would require a substantial realignment to meet present and prospective building needs. He explained that a quote was received through a CT State Bid proposal for \$190,000. The Air Temp proposal was attached to the agenda on the meeting portal; and that this price was good until February 19, 2023. He stated that Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin has added some funding to cover electrical services that may be needed to support the project. He also noted although the Omni Partners Government Services Bidding (Trane) prepared a Bid that it was not completed; and therefore, was not attached to the Agenda on the meeting portal.

- Parks and Recreation/Senior Center Facility - Constructed in 1991:

Councilor Saums stated the Parks and Recreation/Senior Center has been operating with a partial A/C and had to use window air conditioning units last summer. He stated the 32-year-old building had the original heating equipment that was inefficient and was also due for replacement. He stated separate proposals for the heating and the air conditioning were obtained through the CT State Bid pricing in the amounts of \$75,000 and \$72,000, respectively (Air Temp proposal, was attached to the agenda on the meeting portal) for a combined total of \$147,000. He stated both of these proposals were also good until February 19, 2023. He stated that they had previously received a separate proposal through Omni Partners Government Services Bidding (Trane) for the combined package in the amount of \$262,000 - \$293,000.

Councilor Saums stated that Mr. Masalin works to use all of the different opportunities available to save administration time, to take advantage of the competitive bidding process in other ways, and to get the best possible price. He stated because the cost of these HVAC projects seemed to be expensive the Finance Committee discussed with Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin the possibility of obtaining better pricing if they solicited bids outside of the State Bid List. He stated to solicit additional bids that it would require hiring an engineer to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP); and they were not confident that the savings they might get by soliciting bids outside the State Bid List, would pay for the engineering costs and the RFP. He went on to state that although they have had both good and bad experiences using the State Bid List process, that they have found that generally these opportunities were more viable than other approaches. He noted as an example at their October 12, 2022 meeting the Town Council voted to move forward with the State Bid List proposal for the construction of the concrete floor at the Town Green Vo-Ag Pole Barn, only after they spent more time and money to solicit additional bids, which came in higher than the State Bid proposal.

Councilor Saums stated they also discussed Councilor Marshall's suggestion to consider replacing the existing HVAC Systems with a Geothermal System, noting that the Mayor has a Geothermal System in his house, which was installed during new construction. He stated it would not be advantageous to install a Geothermal System in an existing building because it needed to be coupled with spray foam insulation, to create a tight building envelope for the system to work and so that the electric costs would not soar, noting that during the winter the system used electricity to compress the water coming up from the well. He went on to explain in addition to trying to install spray foam insulation into the entire exterior wall cavities and roof trusses in an existing building, such as the Emergency Services Building, that it would also need to include costs for an engineering evaluation, the design work which would need to include integrating the system with the sites which were very tight, along with subterrain issues at both the Emergency Services Building and the Parks and Recreation/Senior Citizens Facility.

Councilor Ryan noted that some additional funding was included in both projects for other miscellaneous costs related to the projects such as electrical work, etc.

Councilor Paul stated from his personal experience in working in the field of HVAC systems that he was pleased that the town did not choose to use Trane, noting that they were typically more expensive, noting that they had proprietary parts, which could be harder to get, making the systems more expensive to maintain.

Councilor Saums concluded by stating that a bid waiver was not required for either of these two projects because they were using contractors on the State Bid List.

VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Bill Saums

SECONDER: Andra Ingalls

AYE: 9 Dombrowski, Saums, Ingalls, Paul, Marshall, McGrattan, Rodriguez, Ryan, and Irwin

General Business

- 3. Discuss Work Session Items as time permits.

None.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Rodriguez moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Marshall

VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

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

I, Kevin J. Dombrowski, 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 February 8, 2023.

DISCLAIMER:

Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.

The Town Council's Official Agenda and final Minutes will be on file in the Town Clerk's Office.