



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Town Council

Meeting Minutes

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

Chairman S. Naomi
Rodriguez

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

7:00 PM

Town Hall Council Chambers

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/87432774360?pwd=vtReYNhYM1OLcavTC1azlOxbYpiSDN.1>

Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 874 3277 4360; Passcode: 690310

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Councilor April Brunelle
Councilor Jessica Buhle
Councilor Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
Councilor Gary Paul
Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez
Councilor Tony Saccone

Excused: Councilor Kevin Dombrowski
Councilor Tim Ryan
Councilor Gary St. Vil

IV. PRESENTATIONS

None.

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

Mr. Milton (Dave) Schroeder, 290 Whalehead Road, Ledyard, stated he was encouraged to attend tonight's Town Council meeting to remind the town that 2025 would be the 250th Anniversary of the *Battle of Lexington* and the shot that was heard around the world. He also noted that 2026 would be the 250th Anniversary of the *Declaration of Independence*.

Mr. Schroeder stated in 1976 for our country's Bicentennial that he was only eight years old. However, he stated that he recalled the extravaganza that was held in Ledyard to celebrate the Bicentennial; and he noted that the following events were held throughout the town:

- Costumed Players performed at the Ledyard Fair.
- Fife & Drum Corps participated at the Town Parade.
- Colonial Days were held at the historic Nathan Lester House and at other historic places in town; where people were dressed in period garb.
- Reenactments of small battles with people dressed as the Continental Army and the British Red Coat Soldiers at the Great Oak.
- Demonstrations were held showing how things were made such as candles, soap, lead musket balls, and colonial cooking.
- Demonstrations of black powder musketry, and camp living as a militia members.
- School activities taught the students about the Revolutionary War and the events that led up to it.
- Mr. Schroder stated that his class put together a Time Capsule that was buried in the garden at the Nathan Lester House, which was supposed to be opened in another 25 years. He stated the Time Capsule included things such as news articles of the Presidential Election between Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, and other things that were going on in 1976. He stated as a kid that he remembered that one of his drawings was included in the Time Capsule.
- Gravestone rubbing became a big deal at that time, and there was an awareness of the patriots that fought and/or died in the Revolutionary War; and were buried in Ledyard, noting the American Flags marking the gravestones in town.

Mr. Schroeder stated that he hoped Ledyard would plan events and/or support programs that would make the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence as memorable for today's children; as he remembered from his childhood.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked Mr. Schroder for his comments.

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS

None.

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Chairman Rodriguez commented on the following: (1) One Year Anniversary for Town Councilors - Chairman Rodriguez stated Happy One Year Anniversary to Councilors Buhle,

Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Saccone, and St. Vil. She stated that they have all served one year on the Town Council. She stated that she has seen all of them attend meeting after meeting, public events, Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings, and so on. She stated that they all strive to serve the town enthusiastically and it showed. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment to the Town of Ledyard was greatly appreciated. Thank you; (2) Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Annual Conference - Chairman Rodriguez noted that she, Councilor Brunelle, Mayor Allyn, III, and Administrator of Human Resources Christine Diaz attended the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Conference on December 3, 2024 at the Mohegan Sun Casino. She stated they tried to attend the many meeting that were offered, noting that it was nice to see Ledyard resident Pete Perry at the conference representing Quin & Harry Designs; (3) Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast - Chairman Rodriguez stated on December 10, 2024 that she and Mayor Allyn, III, attended the Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast, which was followed by the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) Legislative Committee meeting; (4) SCCOG Legislative Committee Meeting - Chairman Rodriguez stated on December 10, 2024 she attended the SCCOG Legislative Committee Meeting which was led by Mayor Allyn, noting that many issues were discussed, which Mayor Allyn would address during his Report later this evening; (5) Wreaths for Senior Citizens - Chairman Rodriguez stated on December 8, 2024 the Beautification Committee was joined by residents at the Senior Center to make about 20 wreaths. She stated the group of volunteers delivered the wreaths to the tenants at the Kings Corner Mannor Senior Citizens Housing Facility. She stated it was great to see the interaction between the Senior Housing tenants and the children who delivered the wreaths. She thanked the Beautification Committee noting that it was a Job Well Done!; (6) Ledyard Light Jeep Parade - December 7, 2024 - Chairman Rodriguez stated the parade was a fun event, and that they had a huge amount of participation.

Councilor Saccone reminded residents who were heating their homes with wood or wood pellets to have their chimney inspected and cleaned prior to starting up their wood stoves; to always use dry wood; and to have a carbon monoxide detector installed.

Councilor Brunelle, attending remotely, via Zoom, stated although today was warm and rainy that the weather was going to get colder, and she cautioned residents to be aware of black ice when the temperatures begin to dip down.

Councilor Buhle stated with the colder winter weather upon them that it was a great time to visit the Library and check out a good book to read at home.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry commented on the following: (1) Food Waste Compost PILOT Program - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in bringing their food waste to the Compost Bins at the Transfer Station the week of Thanksgiving, that her husband told her that both of the Compost Bins were full; and that this past weekend one Compost Bin was full and the other was about half full. She stated this was good news because it showed that the amount of residents using the Food Waste Compost PILOT Programs was increasing; (2) Vehicle verses Pedestrian Accident on Route 117 - Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated a pedestrian was hit by a car earlier this week, noting that although part of the car fell off from the impact that

the driver of the vehicle did not stop. She stated thankfully the pedestrian did not have serious injuries, and that it was unfortunate that this incident happened. She stated Route 117 was not pedestrian friendly noting that there were no sidewalks, and the shoulder of the road was not big. She urged both pedestrians (runners, walkers, bicycles, etc.) and drivers to be careful.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications List - December 11, 2024

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

X. REFERRALS

XI. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

1. Administration Committee

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening noting that they addressed the following: (1) Several appointments to town committees; and (2) a proposed Ethics Commission and a Code of Ethics. She stated the Committee had several appointments on tonight's Agenda.

RESULT: .

2. Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion's next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, December 18, 2024.

RESULT: .

3. Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee met on December 4, 2024 and they have a number of items on tonight's agenda.

RESULT: .

4. Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil was excused.

RESULT: .

Ledyard Farmers' Committee

Chairman Rodriguez noted that the Farmers Market Committee cancelled their December 4, 2024 meeting.

RESULT: .

Retirement Board

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Retirement Board met on November 19, 2024 and approved Fiduciary Advisor's recommendation of retaining 7.5% to Causeway International Value, adjusting the John Hancock International Dynamic Growth to 7.5%, and replacing Invesco Developing Market Fund with Arga Emerging Markets Value and Driehaus Emerging Markets Growth each at 3%; and they eliminated the Vanguard Total International Stock Index Fund.

RESULT: .

Public Safety Report

Councilor Saccone stated the Public Safety Commission met on December 9, 2024 and addressed the following: (1) Election of Officers - Chairman - Administrator of Emergency Services Steve Holyfield; and Vice Chairman - Ledyard Center Fire Chief Jon Mann; (2) Radio Systems - Ledyard would be moving off of the lower frequencies BAN for the Police and Fire Departments Communications and would move onto the State's Program, noting the process would take about one year. Councilor Saccone stated that the communication would be much better noting that the radio transmission could be picked up and put out even from the basement of a five-story concrete building; (3) Installation of the Fire Alarm System for Juliet W. Long Elementary School.

RESULT: .

Ledyard Center Fire Department

Councilor Saccone reported on the following: (1) Emergency Medical Technicians - Two new EMT's graduated from the four-month program. Councilor Saccone stated the EMT Program was extremely difficult noting the time commitment, practical exams, etc., and (2) Firefighters - Two new candidates would be graduating as a Firefighters-One and one candidate graduated as a Firefighter-Two.

RESULT:

Economic Development Commission

Councilor Buhle stated that the EDC met on December 3, 2024 and addressed the following: (1) Route 12 Corridor Study - Councilor Buhle noted that the EDC would receive an update at their January 7, 2025 meeting; (2) Business Directory on the Town's website - Councilor Buhle stated each EDC Members have been assigned a business to follow in an effort to keep the Business Directory up-to-date. She noted that they also discussed some of the new businesses in town.

RESULT:

Board of Education

Chairman Rodriguez noted that due to another commitment Councilor Garcia-Irizarry was not able to attend the Board of Education's December 10, 2024 meeting. She noted that Councilor Ryan attended the meeting; and she asked in Councilor Ryan's absence this evening, that Councilor Buhle read the written report that Councilor Ryan provided for tonight's meeting.

Councilor Buhle read the following report provided by Councilor Ryan:

“Notes from 12/10/24 Board of Education Regular Meeting:

Separately, I just wanted to note that I was impressed with how the meeting was run. I observed a well-managed meeting where the chair kept the agenda moving and maintained discussions so that they were respectful, concise and germane to the topic at hand. Of note, outside of the public comment agenda item, at no time were there any comments or interjections allowed from anyone who was not a regular or ex-officio member of the Board. This, in particular, helped tremendously to maintain focus and increase efficiency.

- *Mr. Anthony Favry and Ms. Mary Harris were elected as chair and vice chair, respectively.*
- *There was one comment from the public, and it was a concern regarding the proposed use of the Cashman property and its proximity to JWL and LMS; vis-a-vis health concerns (air quality, noise, etc.)*
 - *Member of the public requested a BOE member to be at the next public hearing and/or meeting regarding the property.*
- *A LPS staff member, Catherine Dowler, was the 2024 recipient of the “DoDEA Inspire Award”*
- *LMS Gym floor is nearly complete; it should be ready by Monday 12/16/24.*
- *The Board’s Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget is 89% spent (actual + encumbered costs) and is currently projecting to be \$37k under budget.*
- *Councilor Ryan provided an overview of recent Finance Committee actions that have an impact on the Schools.*

- *Councilor Ryan stated that, for any projects >= \$5k in value, three quotes would need to be obtained. Additionally it was stated that for any projects >= \$15k in value, the work would need to go out to bid, unless a state contract was available.*
- *The solid surface for the JWL Playground was received with some apprehension, as a design has not been approved by the Board yet. Councilor Ryan reiterated that Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Guidelines only mandated that funds needed to be obligated for a specific use, and not necessarily started, by the end of this calendar year. Councilor Ryan encouraged the School Administration to work with the Town Executive Staff to come up with a potential path forward.*
- *A presentation was given regarding the “Ignite Reading” program that is planned for implementation next year for the early elementary grades; the program is a 1:1 interactive online reading tutor program that pairs students with a dedicated tutor with a goal to improve literacy. Data was provided that indicated the program has experienced success in other Districts.*
- *A discussion regarding the status of the budget development for school year 2025/2026 took place, and it was noted by the Board Finance Chair (Mr. Earl (Ty) Lamb) that, currently, the projection was indicating a 6.4% increase over this current year.*
 - *Budget Drivers include costs associated with special needs education, transportation, and annual contractual increases.*
 - *Work is continuing by the Board to prioritize expenditures within the budget and hopefully mitigate the projected increase.*
 - *There will be some changes to how the Agricultural Science and Technology Education (ASTE) grant line items are funded to the town, but the board is expecting the total amount of ASTE funding to be at least equivalent to the current year (if not slightly more).*
 - *A discussion was held regarding joint finance meetings with the Town Finance Committee, and it was noted that the Board desired to have the Town Finance Committee Chair present at the meetings to support discussions.*
- *Councilor Ryan indicated that he supported the idea of regular meetings between the Town and Board Finance Committees, and that he would talk to the Town Finance Committee Chair about ensuring a representative from the town finance committee would support future meetings (if not the town finance committee chair). Respectfully submitted, Timothy Ryan”*

Councilor Brunelle noted Councilor Ryan's Board of Education Report, stating that it sounded like Councilor Ryan was able to communicate during the Board of Education's meeting. She stated this was surprising because when she attended the Board of Education's meeting at which Councilor Garcia-Irizarry was there, they never seemed to allow her to speak. Therefore, she stated that she was confused as to why this was.

Chairman Rodriguez called on Board of Education Member Mr. Branden Gruber, who was present, to respond to Councilor Brunelle's comments. Mr. Gruber stated that he would have to review the tapes of the meetings to see what occurred. However, he noted that the Board

of Education's policy was as Councilor Brunelle stated, which was you come, you give your report, and then the Board of Education moved on.

RESULT:**Library Commission**

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Library Commission met on November 18, 2024 and discussed the following: (1) Hoopla (audio & eBooks cost about \$1,500/month) - This service was mainly paid by the *Friends of the Library* and was also supplemented by the town budget. Hoopla usage has been increasing, and therefore, the Library expects the cost to increase; (2) Book Budget - In past years \$60,000 was allocated, to date \$53,000 has been spent; (3) Toy Library - Over 55 items have been circulated since the Toy Library opened on October 30, 2024; (4) Board Games have been introduced at the Library; (5) Transparency & Government Training Presentations - In response to the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion's October 24, 2024 memo Library Director Jennifer Smith submitted the Library's Presentation regarding the services the Library provides at the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion's November 20, 2024 meeting; (5) Libraries On Line (LION) - LION was a consortium of thirty Connecticut Libraries that allows them to share resources such as books, technologies, etc. In addition, the LION Membership also included Libby which was another eBook Platform. However, she stated the Library expected the LION Membership to increase by 3.39% for Fiscal Year 2025/2026, which was for operational and on-line catalog costs; plus a 5% increase for Libby (e-material and services). She explained that the eBooks were metered and were only owned for two years or 25 check outs, whichever comes first; while print books were owned by the Library. She stated that the Library was working to evaluate other consortiums available to look for savings; (6) Friends of the Library Snowflake Festival was held on November 23, 2024; which included a Silent Auction of Baskets at both the Bill Library and Gales Ferry Library.

RESULT:**XII. REPORT OF THE MAYOR:**

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Retirement Plan - Mayor Allyn noted the Town's Retirement Plan was funded at 88.7 %. He stated the town contracts with Fiducient Investment Advisor's to do this work. He stated as a benchmark that the average Retirement Plan for Connecticut Municipalities was funded at 77.6%. He stated the Town's Defined Benefit Plan closed in 2012 and employees hired after that date were now participating in a Defined Contribution Plan (401-K and 457 Plan); (2) State Historic Preservation Office (SHIPO) Strategic Planning Meeting - Mayor Allyn stated that SHIPO presented their Updated Draft Five-Year Plan to Municipal Leaders, noting that they were considering changing it to a Ten-Year Plan; (3) Ledyard Prevention Coalition November 19, 2024 Meeting - (a) Drug Take Back Day - Mayor Allyn shared a photo of a one-gallon Ziplock bag that was full of prescription medications, that came from one individual. He stated this was a tremendous amount of pharmaceuticals to come from one household. He stated the *Drug Take Back Day* was a positive program, noting that it was important that they keep these medications out of

the wrong hands or from being flushed down the toilet; (b) Narcan Emergency Kits - Mayor Allyn stated because the Narcan needed to be climate controlled that the Kits were available at the Library, Fire Houses, Senior Citizens Center, and the Police Department; (4) Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (seCTer) November 20, 2024 Annual Meeting - Mayor Allyn noted that seCTer provided a good presentation regarding the *"Year In Review - Celebrating Successes"*. He stated that he would like to see more seCTer Loans going to Ledyard Businesses. He stated that he was on the seCTer Board of Directors and that he would work to advocate for Ledyard Businesses. He stated Toxic Brewery located in New London received a seCTer Loan, noting that the owner was a Ledyard resident. He stated they were doing a fantastic job, noting that their operation was impressive; (6) Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) Legislative Committee - Mayor Allyn stated that he was Chairing the eleven Member Legislative Committee. He noted this year's Legislative Agenda included the following priorities: (a) Veterans Tax Relief Bill Clarification; (b) Early Voting Bill - Compress the number of days from fourteen to four days (Thursday, Friday, Saturday, & Sunday). This proposal was based on the feedback received from the 21 SCCOG Member Towns' Registrars; and the recently passed *"No Excuse Absentee Balloting"*; (c) Solid Waste Management - Mayor Allyn stated trucking 800,000 - 900,000 tons of waste out of Connecticut to other states landfills was not a solution. He stated Connecticut had two Waste to Energy Plants (Wheelabrator in Lisbon and Covanta in Bristol) that were already permitted for a second burner. He stated that the SCCOG Legislative Committee was looking to fast track the remainder of the process to get these second burners operating; (d) Special Education Cost Sharing (SPED) - Mayor Allyn explained that currently School Districts had to spend 4.5 times the cost of the average Per Pupil cost before the State would contribute to SPED. He stated Ledyard's cost Per Pupil was \$18,400; (7) Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast - December 10, 2024 - Mayor Allyn stated as Chairman Rodriguez noted they attended the Breakfast which was well attended with about 130 people present. He stated because some of their State Legislators could not attend the SCCOG Legislative Committee Meeting that was scheduled to follow the Breakfast that he pivoted to turn the Breakfast into an opportunity for their Legislative Initiatives to be heard; (8) Nathan Lester House Lead Paint - Mayor Allyn stated the Town received the executed Department of Public Health Agreement regarding the Lead Paint at the Nathan Lester House. He stated going forward that they would not have any residential use, unless and until all lead hazards were fully abated. He stated that they could use the space, however, they could not have it occupied residentially; (9) Power Outages - Mayor Allyn stated as a result of today's storm they had about 316 power outages in Gales Ferry and along Avery Hill Road. He stated per OSHA that the power trucks could not up until the winds have died down to below 15 miles per hour; (10) Public Works Staffing - Mayor Allyn stated Matt Cole has joined Ledyard, noting that he would be replacing Dennis Deslandes who recently retired after many years of service in Ledyard. He thanked Mr. Deslandes for his work in Ledyard, as a North Stonington resident; (11) Mrs. Sheila (Rusty) Godino - Mayor Allyn stated he wanted to honor Mrs. Godino who passed away on November 21, 2024. He stated Mrs. Godino was a lifelong Historian in the Town of Ledyard and served as the Chairman of the Cemetery Committee for 30-years. He stated Mrs. Godino, and her efforts would not be forgotten, noting that she authored several books and was permanently on their Library's shelves. He stated that Mrs. Godino gave a lot to the town and that he thanked her for all that she did for Ledyard. He asked that all keep her husband

Vincent Godino in their thoughts and prayers.

Questions to the Mayor

Chairman Rodriguez noted the passing of Mrs. Sheila (Rusty) Godino stating that a Celebration of Life would be held on Saturday, December 14, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. at the Congregational Church in Ledyard Center.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she participated at the Drug Take Back Day. She noted although they did not collect as much prescription medications as they have in the past, in terms of pounds, that the 20-pounds of pills that were dropped off was hardcore drugs. She stated that they were pleased to see that they were getting these drugs out of community to be destroyed. She gave Kudos to the Police Department and the Ledyard Prevention Coalition for their work.

Councilor Brunelle noted the Quarterly Leadership Meetings that were planned between Mayor Allyn, III, Town Council Chairman Rodriguez, Board of Education Chairman Favry and School Superintendent Hartling. She questioned at their last meeting whether they discussed the Town Mental Health Clinician not having any referrals. Mayor Allyn stated that the Leadership Meeting was scheduled for December 17, 2024 and that the Mental Health Clinician would be discussed at that time.

RESULT: .

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

Administration Committee

1. MOTION to appoint the following as Regular Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission:

- Ms. Beth Ribe (U) 129 Rose Hill Road, Ledyard, to complete a three (3) year term ending October 31, 2026 filling a vacancy left by Ms. Cobb;
- Mr. Matthew Miello (R) 12 Cardinal Lane, Gales. Ferry, to complete a three (3) year term ending October 31, 2027 filling a vacancy left by Mr. Capon.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry explained that Ms. Ribe and Mr. Miello have been serving as Alternate Members on the Planning & Zoning Commission for some time. She stated that tonight's action would move them to serve as Regular Members of the Commission to fill vacancies.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

2. MOTION to appoint Mr. Michael Marelli (D) 4 Lee Brook Road, Ledyard, to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, as a Regular Member of the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission to complete a two (2) year term ending October 31, 2025 to fill a vacancy left by Mr. Maugle.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez noted at the Town Council's October 23, 2024 meeting Mr. Marelli was appointed to serve as an Alternate Member of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. She stated with the unfortunate passing of Mr. Maugle that Commission Chairman Justin DeBrodt has requested that Mr. Marelli be appointed as a Regular Member.

Councilor Buhle stated that she served on the Conservation Commission with Mr. Marelli, and she stated he was a great fit for the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, noting that he was passionate about their town.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

3. MOTION to appoint Mr. Robert Graham (U) 72A Long Pond Road, South, Ledyard, to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, as a Alternate Member of the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission to complete a two (2) year term ending October 31, 2026 to fill a vacancy left by Mr. Marelli.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that Mr. Graham has been an active participant in the community. He was a member of the Lantern Hill Valley Alliance, a member of the Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed, and a member of the Water Quality Committee. She stated that Mr. Graham would be a good addition to the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission.

Mr. Graham, attending remotely, via Zoom, thanked the Town Council for appointing him this evening, noting that he hoped to have a positive influence on the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

4. MOTION to appoint Ms. Wendy Hellekson (D) 14L Lakeside Drive, Ledyard, to the Library Commission to complete a two (2) year term ending November 7, 2026 filling a vacancy left by Ms. Nash.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that Ms. Hellekson was a Media Specialist at the Gallup Hill School Library.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry continued by thanking Ms. Nash for her contributions and many years of service on the Library Commission, noting that she would be missed.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: April Brunelle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

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

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez stated that Mrs. Schneider served on the Senior Citizens Commission for many years. She went on to note when the Parks & Recreation Commission was combined with the Senior Citizens Commission that Mrs. Schneider continued to serve the town as an Alternate Member. She stated with the resignation of Ms. Sokolski that Commission Chairman Kenneth DiRicco requested that Ms. Schneider be appointed as a Regular Member. She noted that Ms. Schneider was a valuable member of the Commission noting that she always volunteers to help with events at the Center.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

6. MOTION to appoint Ms. Stephanie Bacon (D) 6 Patricia Court, Gales Ferry, to the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission, as an Alternate Member, to complete a three (3) year term June 28, 2025 to fill a vacancy left by Ms. Schneider.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: None.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

Finance Committee

7. MOTION to approve a proposed “Authorizing Resolution of the Ledyard Town -Council State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security” as contained in the draft dated November 25, 2024.

DRAFT: 11/25/2024

Res: 006-2024/ _____

**AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION
OF THE LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL
STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND
PUBLIC PROTECTION, DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND
HOMELAND SECURITY**

CERTIFICATION:

I, Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk, of the Town of Ledyard, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Town Council at its duly called and held meeting on _____ at which a quorum was present and acting throughout, and that the resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked and is at present in full force and effect:

RESOLVED, that the Town of Ledyard may enter into with and deliver to the **State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security** any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, Fred B. Allyn, III as Mayor of the Town of Ledyard is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Ledyard and to

do and perform all acts and things which he deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

Approved by the Ledyard Town Council on: _____

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

The undersigned further certifies that Fred B. Allyn, III, now holds the office of Mayor and that he has held that office since May 1, 2017.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF: The undersigned has executed this certificate this _____ day of _____ 2024.

(SEAL)

Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated this was a housing keeping item the town does each year through the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS). He explained that annually Municipalities were required to approve “*Authorizing Resolution of the Ledyard Town - Council State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security*”; to be eligible to apply for grant programs.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

Councilor Saccone noted that the next several items were related the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Funding and Projects List. He explained as part of the recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency that the Federal Government released ARPA Funding to support State and Local Governments. He stated Ledyard’s General Government received \$4,327,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act that was released in two tranches. The first tranche was received in July, 2021; and the second tranche was received in June 2022.

Councilor Saccone went on to explain that per the ARPA Funding Guidelines the funds had to be “*obligated*” by the end of the 2024 calendar year, meaning that signed contracts needed to be in place, and “*liquidated*” by end of calendar year 2026, meaning that the funding had to be totally expended. Any ARPA funding that was not expended would need to be returned to the

United States Treasury. He stated during the past two years that Ledyard has accomplished some important projects, noting that the Mayor, Finance Director, Department Heads, and Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin have done a tremendous job on some major sewer projects. He also noted that the good work and forethought of previous Finance Committee (Councilor Bill Saums, Councilor Andra Ingalls and Councilor Tim Ryan) and this current Finance Committee (Councilor Jessica Buhle, Councilor Tim Ryan and himself).

Councilor Saccone noted that the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Funding enabled the town to accomplish the following Projects: Emergency Operation Center and Police Department Station Upgrades; Town Green Improvements; Vertical Lift at the Town Hall for those with physical disabilities, Sandy Hollow Road Guiderails, Sewer Line Extension Projects, to name a few. He thanked all who were involved in the planning and execution of the many projects that were accomplished.

8. MOTION to update the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects list to transfer the unencumbered balance of \$1,680 from the Nathan Lester House Projects to the Sawmill Projects.

In addition, grant a Bid Waiver to Savy & Sons of Aniston, Connecticut in the amount of \$46,404 due to the lack of receiving the required three bids in response to Bid #2025-03 (Up-Down Sawmill Penstock Repairs/Improvement) in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev.1) "An Ordinance for Purchasing".

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated the town solicited bids to repair the penstock at the Historic Up-Down Sawmill. However, only one bid was received, which was the reason a bid waiver was being requested. She went on to explain that \$1,680 was remaining from the Nathan Lester House Projects; and therefore, it was being moved to the Up-Down Sawmill Project.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

9. MOTION to appropriate an additional \$74,000 out of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding designated for Youth Mental Health Clinicians to Child and Family Agency for a combined total of \$164,888 to extend the contract to provide services into the 2025/2026 School Year.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, provided some background stating the Town Council initially allocated \$190,000 of ARPA Funding to provide one Youth Mental Health Clinician at the schools. However, he stated because the Youth Mental Clinician's services were being underutilized, and that in light of the State not providing funding for Child and Family Agency Services at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School, at the Town Council's August 14, 2024 meeting \$90,888 was reallocated from the original Youth Mental Clinician's allocation

to pay for the Child and Family Agency services at both of the Elementary Schools for one school year (2024-2025).

Mayor Allyn went on to explain that because the Child and Family Agency Clinicians seemed to be working out well in the schools, that this action to transfer \$74,000 would move almost all of the remaining funding from the original \$190,000 that was allocated for Youth Mental Health Clinicians, to continue the Child and Family Agency Services at the Juliet W. Long School and Gales Ferry School for the following school year (2025/2026).

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

10. MOTION to increase the budget for the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project by \$3,118.33.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Saccone stated that an additional \$3,118.33 was needed to complete the upgrades to the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He explained with extending the sewer lines into Ledyard Center that this equipment was needed to help process the waste when it starts to flow. He thanked Wastewater Supervisor Steve Banks for his work.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Garcia-Irizarry, Ryan, and St. Vil

11. MOTION to appropriate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding in the amount of \$10,000 for the Up-Down Sawmill Improvements.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Councilor Saccone noted that this action would provide additional funding for the work at the Up-Down Sawmill.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that Historic District Commission Chairman Earl (Ty) Lamb was present this evening and she asked if he would like to provide any additional comments. Mr. Lamb noted that he discussed the project with the Finance Committee at their December 4, 2024 meeting and that he did not have any additional comments to provide this evening. He stated that this was a key project, and the Historic District Commission would appreciate the additional funding to keep the Sawmill running.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

12. MOTION to appropriate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding as follows providing adequate ARPA Funding is available:

- \$14,999 for Smart Projectors for the Board of Education @ \$3,000 each
- \$10,000 to install a concrete barrier wall in the Boiler Room at the High School's Agri-Science Building
- \$50,000 to install a Solid Playground Surface at the Juliet W. Long School
- 10,000 to the Parks & Recreation Summer Camp Scholarships
- \$2,500 to conduct an A2 Survey of the Spicer Homestead Ruins
- \$20,000 to purchase CPR Devices
- \$5,500 to purchase/install an ADA Compliance counter in the Town Clerk's Office.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Saccone stated the allocations listed for these projects would close out the balance of the \$4.3 million of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding the General Government received. He stated these projects were proposed by Department Heads and would be a good use of the money, noting that these projects could be accomplished to meet the ARPA Deadlines.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that the projects listed above would be contingent upon the amount of ARPA Funding remaining from projects that were currently underway. She noted that she would be sending a Memo tomorrow to all the Departments who had projects on this list to inform them of the Town Council's action this evening; and to provide transparency explaining that depending on how the ARPA Funding settles out, some of the projects listed above may not be possible.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated that Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin was working to close out the Sewer Line Projects and that once this work has been completed they would know how much ARPA Funding could be directed to the Projects List above.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

13. MOTION to appropriate any American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding not obligated by the end of calendar year 2024 shall be re-classified to the Colby Drive, Fairway Drive and Route 117 Design and Engineering Project, or other applicable town projects, with a correlating amount of existing funding for said projects transferred back to Account #21090305-58915 (Undesignated).

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated that this was an accounting/journal entry task. He explained that the Design and Engineering for the Colby Drive, Fairway Drive and Route 117 was paid from the Undesignated Account, which was used for capital purchases. Therefore, he stated should there be American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding remaining from the Sewer Projects that the funds would be reclassified back to the Undesignated Account; which would free up the funding that was taken from the Undesignated Account to go back into their capital lines.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: April Brunelle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

14. MOTION to approve two tax refunds in the combined total amount of \$6,559.73 with each exceeding \$2,400.00 in accordance with tax collector departmental procedures.

· Marlie Schmidt \$3,901.97
· Anthony & Genelle Smith \$2,657.76

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained in accordance with the Tax Collector's Procedures that refunds over the amount of \$2,500 need to be approved by the Town Council. He stated because both the property owner and the lender paid the taxes that refunds were due.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

15. MOTION to grant a Bid Waiver to Perkins Home Improvement LLC of Norwich, CT in the amount of \$20,700 due to lack of receiving the required three bids in response to Bid #072-PI-31 (Rehabilitation Work - 43 Blacksmith Dr.) in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev.1) "An Ordinance for Purchasing".

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained that the town offers a Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Program which provided qualifying homeowners with the ability to borrow money from the town at zero interest for critical home improvements such as the replacement of a

boiler/heating system, roof, septic system, etc. He stated when the funds were paid back to the town, either when the house was sold, the title was transferred, or refinanced; that the funds would then become available to be loaned to other qualifying homeowners. He stated because only two bids were received for the work at 43 Blacksmith Drive to replace the siding and windows that a bid waiver was being requested.

Councilor Saccone noted that the Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan program was funded by State Grant Funding, noting that it was not taxpayers dollars. Mayor Allyn, stated in addition to the funding received from the State that the Town also added some American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to the program.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Tony Saccone

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

16. MOTION to approve the Town Council Department Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget in the amount of \$227,279.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez noted that the Town Council Department Operating Budget included \$21,910 or 10% increase over the current year's budget.

Chairman Rodriguez went on to explained that the Town Council Department's proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Operating Budget provided for the following:

- Staff Salaries (Admin Asst & Treasurer)
- Auditor Services - Increase of \$1,910
- Legal Fees - Attorney Perkins Coie (Washington) Tribal Issues- Increase \$20,000
- Office Supplies
- Training for Councilors to attend Conferences.
- Contingency for unexpected but necessary expenses.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that members of the Town Council do not receive a Stipend or any Salary for their services to the Town.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

17. MOTION to approve the Town Council Department Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Capital Improvement Budget in the total amount of \$1,500.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez stated each year \$1,500 was included in the Capital Budget for the replacement of laptops that were used by the Town Council. She explained that the laptops were necessary for Town Councilors to participate in their elected role relative to town business. She stated that older laptops were replaced on an as-needed basis/rotation.

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Tony Saccone

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

General Business

18. MOTION to cancel the Town Council's Regular Meeting of December 25, 2024 for the Christmas Holiday.

Moved by Chairman Rodriguez, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: None.

VOTE: 6- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

AYE: 6 Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Paul, Rodriguez, and Saccone

EXCUSED: 3 Dombrowski, Ryan, and St. Vil

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Rodriguez wished a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to the Town Council, Mayor Allyn, III, Town Staff and the residents of Ledyard and Gales Ferry. She stated that they would see all next year.

Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Paul

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

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

I, S. Naomi Rodriguez, 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 December 11, 2024.

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

DISCLAIMER:

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

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