



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, June 11, 2025

7:00 PM

Town Hall Council Chambers

WORKING DRAFT

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/87357670053?pwd=an50JgqiBIq4R7qBalh6Wl9YwQmH0d.1>

Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 873 5767 0053; Passcode: 832043

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 William Barnes
Councilor April Brunelle
Councilor Jessica Buhle
Councilor Kevin Dombrowski
Councilor Carmen Garcia-Irizarry
Chairperson S. Naomi Rodriguez
Councilor Tony Saccone
Councilor Gary St. Vil
Excused: Councilor Tim Ryan

IV. PRESENTATIONS

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

Mr. Whit Irwin, 2 Winfield Way, Ledyard, stated that he was present this evening to tell the Town Council that he voted on “No” on the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget at both the May 20, 2025 Referendum and at the second Referendum on June 10, 2025 noting that inflation in 2022 was 8%; in 2023 it was 3.3%; in 2024 it was 2.9 5%. He stated after the May 20, 2025 Budget Referendum failed the Finance Committee came up with a plan at their May 21, 2025 meeting. However, he stated the Town Council at their May 26, 2025 meeting threw out the Finance Committee’s recommendations and add more cuts that were frankly disgusting. He stated the Town Council did not address the Board of Education, which was larger side of the budget. He stated instead the Town Council went after the salaries of a few town employees that moved the needle less than five one hundredths of one percent of the budget, noting that it amounted to a penny. Therefore, he stated the budget the Town Council presented at the Second Referendum was garbage; and that he voted against the budget for a second time; noting that the Town Council should be ashamed. He noted that Waterford, Bozrah, Sprague, Colchester, Preston, Griswold, East Lyme, Salem, Groton, Baltic, Franklin, Lyme, North Stonington, and Lisbon all held line on tax increases. He stated every one of these towns have a mil rate that was lower than Ledyard’s mil rate. He stated Ledyard’s residents were getting squeezed noting consumer prices across the board. He noted State Senator Cathy Osten champion a Bill in Hartford that stripped away \$600,000+ in tax revenues that the Town has been collecting from the commercial businesses operating at the Mashantucket Pequot Foxwoods Resort and Casino. He stated the loss of \$600,000+ in tax revenue from these commercial business was almost 1% every year, and that the taxpayers would have to make up for that loss in tax revenue. He stated instead of addressing the larger side of the house; the Board of Education, that the Town Council went after 0.05 of 1% on the General Government side of the budge; and now they want to raise their taxes.

Mr. Irwin continued by addressing the property revaluation that would take effect next year. He stated during the last five-years the median home price in Connecticut went up 45%; which means that their homes were going to be worth more; therefore, residents would be taxed more based in the increased value of their property. He stated even if the town lowered the mil rate that resident’s tax bills were still going to go up, noting that the lower mil rate would not offset the increase in the value of their homes.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that Mr. Irwin’s three minutes were up; and she thanked him for his comments.

Dr. Adrienne Parad, 5 Birch Street, Ledyard, noted that she submitted comments ahead of time, so they were on the record. She addressed Mayor Allyn, III, and the Town Council reading her June 11, 2025 email as follows:

I would not advocate for an improved budget, but to champion a vison, one that prioritizes the needs of the majority, not just the desires of a few.

A budget is not just a collection of numbers; it is a reflection of our town's values, our priorities, and our commitment to each other. We all recognize that resources are limited, and difficult choices must be made. But when we revise our budget, let us ask not, "What do people want?" but rather, "What do people truly need?"

As a physician, I often have difficult discussions with patients and colleagues about noting the differences between wants and needs. Just because one person may want a full body MRI, they likely do not need to have that. They do, however, need to follow evidence-based guidelines on screening for and treating any diseases. I can't be focused on Press-Ganey reviews when making tough medical decisions, and I have to focus on doing the right thing. In my profession, it is very difficult to simultaneously do the right thing and make everyone happy. It is not possible, so I choose to focus on making meaningful and actionable plans even if it doesn't necessarily make everyone happy. If I focused on my image and how people think of me all of the time, I wouldn't be able to make tough decisions and do the right thing.

So, what do we NEED? We need safe roads and reliable infrastructure. We need strong schools that prepare our children for the future. We need emergency services that protect us, social programs that uplift us, and economic initiatives that create opportunity-not just for today, but for the generations that will follow.

Of course, compromise is inevitable. No budget will satisfy every individual preference. But what matters is ensuring that we invest in the greatest good-the foundational services and initiatives that affect the majority of our town's residents. This means resisting pressure from loud voices advocating for pet projects that benefit a few at the expense of the many. It means making decisions based on necessity, impact, and long-term sustainability.

In my opinion, I would like to see the budget originally proposed by the Board of Education, with the adjustment of revenue, to be fully reinstated. Our school district is egregiously underfunded, and we need to slowly try to remediate all of our deficiencies now, and focus on growth in the years to come. I also would like to see a compromise on the raises to the Town employees to show them that we value them, while not also burdening our residents with a large tax increase to pay for it. Additionally, I am a strong believer in environmental stewardship, and would like to see the town composting program to stay intact.

I urge you-our leaders-to craft a budget that stands for fairness, responsibility, and the collective well-being of this town. A budget that may not satisfy every want, but one that meets the essential needs of our community. Because when we prioritize wisely, we don't just balance the numbers-we build a stronger, more equitable future for all.

Thank you.

Mr. Jeff Eilenberger, 2 Village Drive, Ledyard, stated he was present this evening to defend the hacking of Finance Director Matthew Bonin's salary in the Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Budget. He stated for those who do not know Mr. Bonin or know what he has done for this town that he would tell them that since Mr. Bonin joined the Town Hall Staff around 2022 that he worked with the banks to obtain higher interest earnings on the funds the town has in their Capital Reserve Accounts. He stated that these funds were designated for future capital investments and were sitting idle in the bank. However, he stated because of Mr. Bonin's work the Town's Capital Account earned \$43,000 in 2022 (for a partial year) which was .74% of the town's revenue for that year, and saved taxpayers money. He went on to note that in 2023 the interest earnings was \$576,000; in 2024 the interest earnings was \$1,010,000, and to date for 2025 interest earnings was \$623,000. Mr. Eilenberger stated that Mr. Bonin has saved Ledyard's taxpayers more than \$1.5 million by the revenue that has been received through the interest earnings on money that had been previously sitting stagnate in the town's bank accounts. He stated that he understands that a salary increase of over 10% seemed like a lot. However, he stated that he believed that by explaining to residents the amount of revenue Mr. Bonin has brought into the town; his education and background, and the need to bring the Finance Director's salary in-line with the market rate for the position that residents would understand. Mr. Eilenberger went on to state at their May 21, 2025 meeting the Finance Committee spent hours working on the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget. He stated that both Councilor Buhle and Saccone signed off on budget. However, he stated Councilor Buhle basically lied at the Finance Committee Meeting rather than say what she was going to do with the salaries. Thank you.

Ms. Wendy Hellekson, 14-L Lakeside Drive, Ledyard, stated that while she was many things to in this town, that tonight she was speaking as a private citizen to speak about truth. She stated that every morning during her school day she was reminded about what makes this town special. She stated that every person that she encounters was kind, helpful, and generous. Therefore, she stated that was the reason the recent budget vote was confusing and disappointing. She stated out of the roughly 1,100 eligible voters, only about 700 voted against moving the budget forward, noting that this was s not the mandate that some may claim. She stated what they were hearing from the voters was the result of a campaign that was driven by lies and fear. She stated when they live in a time when some say that there was no more truth, noting that too, was misinformation. She stated the truth was that the town started the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget preparation with a \$2.4 million dollars shortfall. The truth was that 700 people voted based on fears and that should not dictate the future of the town's 15,000 residents.

Ms. Hellekson went on to state that she would also like to tell them that Google was not where they could always go to get the truth. She stated that Google was a filing cabinet with the most used documents at the front, noting that it did not matter if the documents were right or wrong, noting that they were just the documents that were looked at the most. She stated that the truth lied in the investigation and verification of information in Ledyard, and like many places, has been assaulted by false information. She stated that anyone could say anything on the Internet. Therefore, she asked that they please be aware of what they were reading and reposting on social media. Thank you.

Mr. Steve Munger, 12 Nutmeg Drive, Gales Ferry, noted that he would begin his comments this evening the way he has started his comments every time he has addressed the Town

Council. He stated that he appreciate everybody on the Town Council for their dedication to the town even though he disagreed with about 90% of what they do, as he has repeatedly said at prior meetings. He proceeded to address the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget; and he noted as others have said, it was tough on both sides (General Government and Board of Education). He stated that he no longer had kids or grandkids in the school system. However, he stated that he loves kids which was why he fought to allow Ledyard kids, who were attending other schools to play sports in town, noting that it was his understanding that it has not gone through yet. However, he stated if he happens to get back on the Board of Education that he would again fight for that because it was for all the kids in town. He stated that he did not prepare any comments because he did not plan to speak tonight. However, he stated in looking at Chairman Rodriguez he thought he better say something otherwise she would be disappointed.

Mr. Munger continued by addressing comments provided by other residents this evening. He stated that they were not all doctors, nurses, or engineers that work at Electric Boat and earn six-digit salaries every year. He stated for those families it was fantastic; however, he stated there were a lot of people who might not earn half that. Therefore, he stated for some to say they should pass the budget because they could afford it, that they were being selfish; because they have to consider everybody in town. He stated in September, 1996 when he bought his house in Ledyard that he did not think many people were that well off; however, he stated that that he may have been wrong because from what he was hearing, Ledyard must be upper middle class, noting that everybody was saying *"We need more money for this, and we need more money for that"*. He stated that he heard residents say that more money for the schools would mean a better education. He stated if more money meant better schools and better graduation rates then the inner-city schools would have the best education and the highest graduation rates, because they get extra money. Therefore, he stated that he did not think that more money was the issue, noting that Ledyard has great teachers, and great schools. He stated that they have to take care of everybody, noting that the budget was supported by everybody's money. Therefore, he asked when the Town Council makes their final decision on the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget that they consider everybody, not only the people that were screaming *"No or Yes"* ; but that they think about everybody in the middle.

Mr. Munger addressed the comments about misinformation, noting that some have said *"Don't believe this; or don't believe that"*; noting that people were going to believe what they want to believe. He stated that he believed that they need to make sure they have the right budget for everybody, not just for those who were well off, but also for people who were in the middle; and in the lower income area, noting that should be their number one concern. He stated that he did not care whether the members of the Town Council were Republican Democrat, or Independent, that they have to take care of the whole entire Town.

Mr. Earl (Ty) Lamb, 95 Lambtown Road, Ledyard, addressed the Town Council's May 27, 2025 meeting in which they worked to make budget adjustments to submit to the Second Referendum on June 10, 2025. He specifically noted the reductions to the some of the General Government's Administrators/Department Head salaries, stating that he thought their action was a political game. He questioned whether any member of the Town Council

knew how the General Government would work without the Mayor and their key Administrators /Department Head Staff. Thank you.

Mr. Edwin Murray, 26 Devonshire Drive, Gales Ferry, noted at the Town Council's May 27, 2025 meeting they came up with the adjusted budget, after a lot of discussion and compromise. He stated the reason he attended the meeting was because he wanted to hear what the Town Council was going to do for the folks who have told them that they did not agree with what they say. He stated that they may not have all the information, noting that some folks heard the wrong information. He stated that he has lived in Ledyard for two-years and that it was his perspective that the Annual Budget Process was this thing that just happened and that 400 to 500 people showed up and voted on the budget, noting that he wondered whether they were the same 400-500 people every year. He stated the point that he was making was that in past years that if about 200 voters said "Yes" the town got their budget. Therefore, he stated questioned those who have said that the 700 people that voted "No" at this year's Second Budget Referendum was not a mandate, when they were looking at the whole population of the town. However, he stated 700 "No" votes was really the people's frustration, because this year, for some reason, they decided to let people know. He stated right now a lot of people did not know everything, but the point was that more people came out. Therefore, he stated out of the 1,100 people who showed up at the polls that 700 people voted "No"; noting that in past years that out of the 400 - 500 people who showed up at the polls that maybe 200 people voted "No". He stated the difference was not only did 1,300 people showed up for the First Referendum that was held on May 20, 2025, but that 1,100 came back for the Second Referendum yesterday on June 10, 2025 to tell them what they thought; and he noted that the Town Council needed to take notice of that participation. Therefore, he stated that the Town Council needed to ask themselves some questions and get some answers for the next budget. He stated the earlier they can hear what people think about the Budget the better. Thank you,

Mr. Matthew Bonin, Finance Director, stated that he would like to speak to the Town Council this evening. Chairman Rodriguez that Mr. Bonin could address the Town Council. Mr. Bonin noted that he sent an email to the Town Council. He stated although he did not receive an response that he assumed they read it, but that he was not sure if they did. He stated he had a few comments regarding the Town Council's May 27, 2025 Special Meeting. He stated that he has never felt more unappreciative than he did at that meeting. He stated the message he heard loud and clear was that members of the Town Council do not value what the General Government Administrators/Department Heads do for the Town. He stated the fact that none of the Town Councilors who were championing the salary cuts could look him or Town Clerk Patricia Riley in the eye when they brought forth the Motion was very telling. He stated that the entire process of un-doing the long overdue salary survey was pre-orchestrated. He stated that he would like to clarify a glaring error in Councilor St. Vil's Motion, noting that the Motion was presented in response to the *Budget Advisory Questions*; however, Mr. Bonin stated that the problem was that the budget failed. He noted that Councilor St. Vil claimed that he was pushing for 4% raises for the Administrators/Department Heads, but that was not true. Mr. Bonin stated that Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick was hired at a salary of \$105,220 annually and that

the information that was provided in the proposed budget reflected a 3% raise to get to the total of \$108,150. Yet Councilor St. Vil proposed reducing that salary line to \$102,066, resulting in a pay cut of \$2,934; stating that they were reducing her salary to less than what she was making now, which was a pay cut.

Mr. Bonin continued by addressing Councilor Brunelle's comment regarding why employees were paid more than others could not have been more disingenuous and insulting to all of the Town's Administrators/Department Heads. He stated that Councilor Brunelle's comment, was "*The pay is probably appropriate to what the Education and skill level is.*" Mr. Bonin said *seriously education and skill level*. He stated that he has BS in Accounting, and he is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), which was one of the hardest professional certifications to acquire, of which Councilor Brunelle clearly knows nothing about what any of their education and skill sets were. Mr. Bonin stated in talking about pay disparity, for comparison purposes, that he would note that the salary of his counterpart at the Board of Education was \$155,250 a year, noting that his annual salary is a hundred, \$111,459. He noted that his Board of Education counterpart was being paid almost \$44,000 more per year than he was being paid, that was a difference of \$850 a week, noting that he would remind the Town Council that he is a CPA; while his Board of Education counterpart is not a CPA. Mr. Bonin stated that based on Councilor Brunelle's statement that it would seem as though he should be making north of \$155,000. He stated the Finance Director's salary that was requested in the Fiscal Year Budget was not even close to that. He stated that he found it ironic that there was no discussion whatsoever on Board of Education's salary increases, noting that although Councilor Ryan tried it fell on deaf ears.

Mr. Bonin went on to noted Councilor Garcia-Irizarry's pre-orchestrated contest in which she referenced Colchester as a comparison; and he questioned whether any members of the Town Council knew the history of the Finance Director position in Colchester.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked Mr. Bonin for his comments noting that his three-minutes was up.

Ms. Rebecca Watford, 429 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard, stated as a low- income family that she has seen how one bad vote could turn low-income families in town to being homeless. She stated that they were now homeowners and that a tax increase could very well tip that scale, to make her family homeless again. She went on to address the Board of Education, noting that she did not have much faith in the Ledyard School District. She stated that she had two autistic children in the Ledyard Public Schools, and that they absolutely failed; therefore, she has chosen to homeschool her children, and she pays for all the curriculum they need. She also noted the large population of Ledyard residents that were pulling their children from the Ledyard Public Schools and were also homeschooling their children. She stated the homeschooled children do not get invited to play sports in this town, and that their children cannot take part in any activities in this town. She stated as taxpayers on a low-income they have to question how a tax increase fits into their household budget. She stated that she wanted the town to know that a vote to increase taxes could make these homeowners who were living on a very low-income, to become a homeless population in Ledyard. She questioned with no low-income housing in town where these families could go,

noting that these low-income residents would be pushed to leave the town the town they loved so much. Thank you.

Mr. Mike Cherry, 5 Whippoorwill Drive, Gales Ferry, stated that he and his wife Mary have lived in town for about 40 years. He stated that this was probably the first year that he voted against the budget. He stated during the budget process that most years he has talked with the School Superintendent and that he has asked how they could do more for the schools. He stated this year they did do more for the schools to the tune of about seven (7) full-time positions noting that there was a reason for those positions. He stated that he was not an educator, and he did not know what the requirements were, but that he trusted the Board of Education, the Superintendent, and the staff to know what those need were.

Mr. Cherry went on to state in reviewing the numbers that were presented at the Second Referendum on June 10, 2025 that the General Government budget increased by \$742,429. He stated in looking at the Healthcare Expenses, which has been a subject of discussion throughout this budget process, that the Board of Education Employees Healthcare increased by \$875,960. He stated if you take that almost \$1 million off of the General Government's proposed \$29,901,179 Budget that the General Government was less than their current year's budget to support the town's operation and services to residents, noting there was nothing to cut without impacting services. He stated that they could cut bulky waste pick-up but that would make the town look bad, noting that they had been there before. He stated that they could eliminate one of the library buildings; which was discussed in previous years, and it was decided that it was not a good idea. Therefore, he stated that there was no place to cut in the General Government side of the budget. He stated while he understands the constraints, and he understands how people feel, noting that the town paid to educate his two children and the majority of that came from other people, who paid their taxes; that it was now his turn. Thank you.

State Senator Cathy Osten, asked Chairman Rodriguez if she could speak during public comment. Chairman Rodriguez stated "Yes". Senator Osten stated that she wanted to correct the record regarding the *Dual Taxation Bill* that has been talked about this evening. She explained that the *Dual Taxation Bill* passed the General Assembly today; and as a result Ledyard would receive \$800,000, which was more than the amount they were receiving right now; and it was more than what the town would receive next year after the Property Revaluation has been completed. She stated with the current Property Revaluation that there would be a decrease in commercial property; and an increase in residential property. She stated the State has included that \$800,000 for Ledyard through the year 2027. However, she stated that some people were saying "*Well, we can't trust the State.*" She stated that since she has been a State Senator, that she has brought in more than \$1.2 million in grants that were directly reflective of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation; and an increase in PILOT Funding (Payment in Lieu of Taxes); and an increase in Pequot Fund, that has been incorporated in this year's State Budget, noting that it has been incorporated in every State Budget for the last five (5) years, stating that there has never been a decision to decrease those dollars. She stated in addition; the State has put into their budget that they would

maintain *Hold Harmless for the Schools*. She stated for Ledyard this was a lot of money noting that it was \$13,000 in year-one; and \$26,000 in year-two. She also stated that there was also additional special education money that for Fiscal Year 2025, noting for the current year Ledyard received \$192,000 that they were not expecting to receive and that these funds helped out with special education costs. Senator Osten stated in addition to that, there was the same dollar amount in both year-one and year-two, with an increase for Special Education. She noted the State has \$181 million dollars in year-one and year-two which was increased by \$40 million dollars. In addition to that, she stated that the State put \$30 million dollars in the Budget for Seed Money, noting according to the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA), Ledyard would receive \$173,000.

Senator Osten concluded by stating that that every year she works to make sure that she brings more dollars back to this town, and that she would continue to protect those dollars as she has done every year, noting that she had a proven track record of that. Thank you.

Ms. Joanne Kelley, 12 Thames View Pentway, Gales Ferry, stated that she wanted to correct the record on a lot of the inflammatory rhetoric that has been going around; and she wanted to correct statements made by Mr. Bonin and Councilor Ryan, who she was sorry was not present this evening.

Ms. Kelley noted at the Town Council's May 27, 2025 Meeting that Councilor Ryan stated that he was reading from a Report that stated the Board of Education had salary increases in the amounts of 10%; 26% and 36%. She stated that it was all made up, noting that those percentage increases had nothing to do with salaries, and as she has stated there has been a lot of inflammatory rhetoric going around town. She stated that she gets it, noting that it was an election year; and that it was an attempt to pit residents against each other; and particularly against the Board of Education, and it was successful. She stated the Budget Referendum failed twice, noting that there was a lot of information put out without context, that led people to make incorrect assumptions about what the mil rate increase would mean to them. She stated that she tried to correct a lot of that as she could, but it was like playing whack-a-mole.

Ms. Kelley continued by stating that she was not going to stand here and beg the Town Council to listen to the results of the *Budget Advisory* Questions and to restore the \$160,000 to the Board of Education's Operating Budget, noting that more people asked that the Board of Education Budget not be cut, commenting that it was bad enough that 80% of the approved Capital Plan that was presented had been chopped away. She stated that the original Capital Plan that the Board of Education approved was \$569,000; and that only \$114,000 was left. She stated in reality, what that does was just kick the can down the road, which will wind up costing taxpayers more in the long run, and that she thought it was important for people to know that. She stated that they all know what happens when they defer maintenance on our homes, noting that it may be necessary at times, but that it was never cost effective.

Ms. Kelley went on to state that she wanted to talk a little bit about last year's Board of Education Budget, noting that they attempted to cut roughly \$300,000 from the budget that

was related to two very important positions. She noted one position was for the one full-time Multi-Tiered Support Systems (MTSS) Coordinator to oversee the literacy and numeric numeracy intervention team that they had slowly, laboriously, and incrementally funded over the previous eight-years, with the very spare budget increases because Ledyard was sorely lacking in these skilled specialists who assess plans and provides support for students.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked Ms. Kelley for her comments noting that her three-minutes was up.

Ms. Elizabeth Burdick, Land Use Director/Town Planner, noting that she was not a Ledyard Resident, but was a member of the Town's Staff. She stated after the Town Council's May 27, 2025 meeting that she received a copy of the Post Meeting Action Letter, which showed that her salary had been cut. She stated that she sent a letter to Councilor St. Vil because he made the Motion. She stated although she did not receive a response to her letter that she hoped all the members of the Town Council read her letter noting that it was posted to the Correspondence List for tonight's meeting.

Ms. Burdick continued by stating her comments would be brief noting that the Town of Ledyard Staff were some of the hardest working, most qualified, and most pleasant people she has had the privilege to work with in municipal government. She stated any of the staff members whose salaries were cut and those who were not cut, would go out of their way to help any resident that asked for their assistance, and they should be paid at least the mid-range market rate salaries for high-rate service they provide to the public. She stated that she felt that none of them deserved to be blindsided, or to have their salaries cut. She stated that she watched the video of the meeting and that she was disappointed that one Councilor said that the Board of Education Staff should be paid more because of their education and skill level. She stated that she would invite any Board of Education Department Head to walk into Town Hall and perform the duties of any Town Hall Department Heads; and vice-versa, noting that she does not know anything about running school. She stated that they were all skilled in their respective jobs. She stated that that she confirmed that there were no cuts to the Board of Education salaries that she was aware of; and she asked that the Town Council correct her if she was wrong. She stated that she started working in Ledyard in 2018 and after three-years she relocated out of state. She stated that she came back to Connecticut because her parents were ill, and when she had the opportunity to come back to Ledyard that she was thrilled

because she loved working in Ledyard during the three-years she had previously spent here. She stated even though there was no complaints about her and that she did great work in the just over 3-years she had spent in Ledyard, that she was not given a warm welcome by the residents of this town when she returned. She stated in fact, that she has been treated by the residents of this town worse than in any town that she has ever worked in, despite the fact that she was the Ledyard Town Planner before, simply because she was not the previous Town Planner. Therefore, she stated having her salary reduced felt a little personal; noting that not only did the Town Council not give her a cost-of-living increase, that they actually cut her salary current salary by \$3,000, noting that she just wanted to say that for the record. Thank you for listening.

Ms. Catilyn Greco, 9 Stone Court, Gales Ferry, attending remotely via Zoom, stated that she and her husband were raising three boys that were attending Ledyard Public Schools. She stated that she has a background in finance, technology, and education. She stated after extensively reviewing the Board of Education Budget that she voted “No”. She stated the reason she was present this evening was because she attended the Board of Education’s June 10, 2025 meeting and after only partially providing her comments regarding her reasons for voting “No” on the budget; that she was cut-off, and the Board of Education told her to tell the Town Council her reasons instead

Ms. Greco continued by stating that she was extremely disappointed in the Budget, as well as some of our Elected Official’s insistence in misleading residents about the budget on social media and she noted the following:

- **Funding Residency Verification** - Ms. Greco stated if the quality of Ledyard’s education was suffering so much over money, why the School Administration was asking for additional funding for Residency Verification, stating that non-Ledyard Residents prefers Ledyard’s Schools to the ones in their town.

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following Town Council Minutes:

- Special Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2025
- Regular Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2025
- Special Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2025
- Special Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2025
- Public Hearing Minutes of June 4, 2024
- Special Meeting Minutes of June 4, 2025

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Kevin Dombrowski

SECONDER: April Brunelle

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications List - June 11, 2025

X. REFERRALS

XI. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

1. Administration Committee

Councilor Buhle stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening and addressed the following: (1) “*Ordinance Establishing an Ethics Commission for the Town of Ledyard*”. - Councilor Buhle noted the Committee made some final edits to the Ordinance and would be forwarding the document to the Town Attorney for their legal review and recommendations; (2) “*Resolution Establishing a Sustainable-CT Ad-hoc Committee*” - Councilor Buhle stated the Committee made some final edits to the Ad Hoc Committee Membership and forwarded a recommendation for Town Council approval at their July 9, 2025 meeting; (3) Job Descriptions - Councilor Buhle noted the Committee reviewed updates with Human Resources Director Christine Dais regarding the following: Mechanic II; Fiscal Assistant II Finance and Human Resources; Fiscal Assistant II Finance Department; and Assistant to the Tax Collector; and (4) Reappointments to the Farmers Market Committee and the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission - Councilor Buhle noted these reappointments would be forwarded to the Town Council’s July 9, 2025 Agenda

RESULT: .

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

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee for DEI next meeting was scheduled for June 18, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. She reported that the Pride Day Pizza In the Park would be held on the Town Green on Saturday, June 28, 2025 from 12:00 Noon to 4:00 p.m. She stated that they would have a Pizza Truck, Ice Cream Truck, Balloon Twister, and D.J. She stated that all were welcome.

RESULT: .

3. Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee cancelled their June 4, 2205 meeting; however, they have two items on tonight’s Agenda.

RESULT: .

4. Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil stated the LUPPW Committee met on June 2, 2025, however, he stated he did not have anything noteworthy to report on this evening.

RESULT: .

5. Liaison Reports**XIII REPORT OF THE MAYOR:**

RESULT: .

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

Finance Committee

2. MOTION to grant a Bid Waiver to Groton Utilities, 295 Meridan Street, Groton, in the amount of up-to \$138,000 for emergency repairs to a water line that has impacted 10 homes in the Highlands Neighborhood.

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Buhle

~~VOI~~ Approved and so declared (St. Vil abstained)

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Kevin Dombrowski

SECONDER: April Brunelle

AYE: 8 Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Saccone, and St. Vil

EXCUSED: 1 Ryan

2. MOTION to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget in the amount of \$70,364,977 comprised of:

- General Government: \$29,902,735_
- Board of Education: \$40,462,242.

Chairman Rodriguez noted the Budget that was presented at the Second Referendum on June 10, 2025; and failed was as follows:

Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget in the amount of \$70,408,421; (comprised of General Government of \$29,901,179; and Board of Education of \$40,507,242)

Chairman Rodriguez stated with that being said that she would like to put forward the following budget adjustments.

❖MOTION to approve the following adjustments to the proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget:

Account #	Title		Reinstate Salary (change from 6/10/2025)	
1011-2101-51600	Finance Director	\$133,000	\$17,083	
1011-0311-51600	Town Clerk		\$ 77,400	\$ 7,639
1011-4301-51600	Land Use Director		\$108,150	\$ 6,084
<u>1011-0205-51606</u>	<u>Human Resource Director</u>		<u>\$ 97,850</u>	<u>\$ 1,442</u>
Total General Government Increase:				\$32,248

In addition, Adjust the following Accounts:

Account #	Title		Reduction	(New Amount 6/11/2025)
10110101-5879	Contingency-Town Council	\$4,000	\$ 3,000	
10110201-58790	Contingency- Mayor	\$5,000	\$ 1,000	
10110201-51305	Town Hall Floater	\$9,692	\$ 19,000	

10120301-5611	Fire Marshall Oper	\$2,000	\$ 6,000
10140107-56301	Sand and Salt	<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>\$125,000</u>
Total General Government Operating Decrease			\$30,692

Board of Education Capital

Title		Reduction
Board of Education Capital	\$45,000	
Total Board of Education Decrease	\$45,000	

Moved by Chairman Rodriguez seconded by Councilor Buhle

MOTION to amend the motion to reduce the Board of Education's proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Operating Budget by \$500,000.

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Barnes

VOTE Motion Failed (Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Saccone, St. Vil, not in favor)

Chairman Rodriguez called for a vote on the Motion.

VOTE Approved and so declared (Barnes, Dombrowski, not in favor)

:

General Business

3. * MOTION to set Fiscal Year 2025/2026 a Real Estate and Personal Property Mil Rate of 37.14; and a Motor Vehicle Mil Rate of 32.46.

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Buhle

VOTE Approved and so declared (Barnes, Dombrowski, not in favor)

*****POST MEETING NOTE*****: 6/18/2025 Town Council Meeting: Real Estate and Personal Property Mil Rate was corrected to **37.14**.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 9:37 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 June 11, 2025.

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.