



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

MINUTES
LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2024; 7:00 PM
HYBRID FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

DRAFT

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 7:06 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 –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location
April Brunelle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Town Councilor	Excused	
Kevin Dombrowski	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Gary Paul	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tony Saccone	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Gary St. Vil	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person

- IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS – None.

- V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

Ms. Anne Roberts-Pierson, 4 Anderson Drive, Gales Ferry, thanked the members serving on the Town Council, noting that they all know that it was a tremendous job and that they appreciated it. She stated that she was present this evening to provide an update regarding her July 16, 2024 letter to the Town Planner on which the Town Council was copied (cc’d). She stated in her letter she had a lengthy request for the town to hire Experts for the third iteration of the Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI) Quarry Application; and that the Town Council also received a slew of letters from other residents on the same topic around that same time. She stated since then that she has repeatedly asked the same question. She stated that she received a response from Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick today, and that she wanted to share Ms. Burdick’s response with the Town Council. Ms. Roberts-Pierson read the following:

“Good Afternoon, this Office is making progress in retaining various experts for an Independent Review of Application 24-8-SUP-24-9CAN with GFI, LLC; as submitted. I will post the Staff Report updating my progress soon.”

Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated that although she was pleased to hear that progress was being made, that it was now August 14, 2024, and a month later. She stated in response to her question about where she should look for the Staff Report, Ms. Burdick stated that the Report would be included on the Application Exhibit List, on the meeting portal. Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated that she hoped Ms. Burdick would provide her Staff Report by Monday, August 19; or Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated the first Public Hearing for the third iteration of the Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI) Quarry Application would be held on September 12, 2024. She stated that she was glad to hear that progress has been made. However, she stated that she was looking forward to hearing that Experts have been retained, and which ones they were, and that they had the Application in their hands and were working on them.

Ms. Roberts-Pierson noted the Town Council July 24, 2024 Draft Minutes, stating that she hoped to receive clarification regarding a statement Councilor St. Vil made during his Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison Report. She noted that she did not want to think ill of the statement; or ill of Councilor St. Vil, without offering him a chance clarify the following statement:

“He stated our resources, (Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated meaning the Land Use Office) were going to get overwhelmed by the community; and therefore, he questioned how the Town could support the Land Use Department”.

Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated that she was glad Councilor St. Vil asked that question, however, she asked if Councilor St. Vil could expand upon how the Land Use Office’s resources were going to get overwhelmed by the community.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that Ms. Roberts-Pierson’s time was up, and she asked if she would mind if Councilor St. Vil sent her a letter. Ms. Roberts-Pierson noted that the Town Council had her email address from her July 16, 2024 correspondence; and she thanked Councilor St. Vil.

Mr. Kevin Davis, 7 Ramblewood Drive, Gales Ferry, stated he was present this evening to obtain clarification regarding the following question:

Zoning Regulations – Mr. Davis questioned if the Zoning Regulations have changed in the Military Highway area to allow for the construction of buildings taller than thirty-five-feet to include a 350-unit Apartment Complex; or whether this was being considered, and whether a Wastewater Treatment Facility was being considered in that general area of Gales Ferry or Gales Ferry District?

Councilor Dombrowski replied to Mr. Davis stating that the Town Council had nothing to do with Zoning, noting that they would have neither the expertise nor the knowledge to answer his question. Councilor Ryan suggested Mr. Davis attend the next Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Mr. Davis replied, stating that the response was fair.

Mr. Davis continued by stating that he was interested in knowing, in writing, what their thoughts would be as members of the Town Council, pertaining to the rezoning of that location, for those purposes.

Councilor Dombrowski stated per State Statute members of the Town Council can have no influence, or comment on zoning matters. Mr. Davis stated that he would like to know their personal opinions pertaining to the establishment of 350 housing units in that area and a wastewater treatment facility in that area, so that the town would have a better understanding of what the Town Council believes of that establishment. He stated that he would also like to understand if the Town Council has been approached regarding any of following things pertaining to that potential project: traffic, safety, parks, green areas, schools, additional congestion, ability to access affordable groceries that were not from a Dollar Store, and safety along Route 12. He stated 350 housing units would have 500 cars, and 1,000 people, noting that it sounded dangerous for kids to be in that area and crossing any of those roads. He stated that he looked forward to hearing from the members of the Town Council about their personal opinions. Thank you.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked the residents for their comments.

IV. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

VI. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Chairman Rodriguez announced that the Ledyard Senior Citizens Center was having a Prom on Friday, September 13, 2024, noting that Tickets were On-Sale for \$10.00.

Councilor Brunelle stated that she was happy they were getting to the end of August, noting it was an exciting time for the children who were getting ready to go back to school. She encouraged them to enjoy the next couple of weeks of their summer vacation.

Councilor Brunelle continued by stating that members of the Town Council may have opinions on many things that they cannot say, because they want to perform their roles as professionally and honestly as they can. She stated as elected officials that there were many times when they cannot express their personal opinions, because they were not here for their own personal lives, they were here to serve the community. Therefore, she stated that there were times when they cannot speak their minds, stating that it was not because they do not care, and it was not because they do not feel things, it was because they were here to serve the community. She concluded by stating that the Town Council was listening, so keep talking.

Councilor Ryan stated while he was at the Farmers Market earlier this evening he talked with Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Director Scott Johnson, Jr. Councilor Ryan noted that his daughters participated in the Summer Camp Program, noting that the Program was expertly run. He stated this year they added a seventh week, which helped parents. He stated that Mr. Johnson and his Team put together an amazing Program every year, and that all the kids come away smiling. He stated it was an incredible Program for a reasonable price, and he thanked Mr. Johnson and his Team.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she attended a meeting this morning at the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Center Facility, noting that all the Staff were there and actively participating in planning the Senior's Prom. She stated they wanted this event to be special for the Seniors. She gave kudos to the Staff at the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Department.

Councilor Saccone stated he recently visited the State of Alaska, noting that the sites and resources were amazing. He stated as citizens of the United States of America that we all own the 6.2-million-acre Denali National Park. He stated many people like to visit other countries, including himself, however, he stated the opportunity to visit other states in our own country was incredible, and he urged folks to visit our country including Alaska, noting that it was well worth it.

Councilor Buhle noted Councilor Ryan's comments regarding the Parks & Recreation Department; and she stated that she also wanted to give a full hearted *Thank You* to the Parks & Recreation Department. She stated this year the Department added Adults to provide Behavioral Support beyond the teenage Counselors at their Summer Camp Program. She stated this was exceptionally wonderful for a family who may have a child with special needs and required additional behavioral support, which was not provided outside of the school year. She noted her son absolutely loved Summer Camp and that he was disappointed that it was now over.

Councilor Buhle went on to report at their April 10, 2024 meeting the Town Council authorized the Mayor to submit a *COPS Law Enforcement Technology and Equipment Grant* in the amount of up-to \$240,000 through the Congressionally Directed Spending initiative, to replace the Ledyard Dispatch Emergency Communications CAD/RMS System. She stated that Congressman Courtney's Office notified the town that Ledyard's Application has passed through the Appropriations Committee and that it had one more step to obtain final approval. She stated obtaining this Grant Funding would be a huge help because it would remove this much needed equipment upgrade from the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Councilor St. Vil stated as the Town Council Liaison to the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission that he has attended a few passionate meetings over the last few weeks. He stated that he appreciated the Rules of Decorum that were posted in the Council Chambers, and in the Annex Meeting Room, noting that they were an appropriate reminder during a time of passion. He stated although he thought passion was good, that debate and discussion was better, noting that was how they collectively raise the bar in their community for the better. He stated that Groton issued Rules for Decorum, however, he stated that he did not think that Ledyard would need to do something similar. He stated prior to the start of the Planning & Zoning Commission's August 8, 2024 meeting Chairman Capon reminded everyone what was appropriate in Town Hall, and in the forum of their meetings in the Council Chambers. Councilor St. Vil stated that he thought it was a good reminder.

VII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following:
Special Meeting Minutes of July 24, 2024
Regular Meeting Minutes of July 24, 2024
Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Buhle

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

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

X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee

Chairman Rodriguez stated Councilor Garcia-Irizarry was visiting family in Puerto Rico, where they were having a hurricane.

Community Relations Committee for Diversity Equity & Inclusion

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion has not met since the last Town Council meeting. She noted the Committee's next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, August 21, 2024.

Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee met earlier this evening and they have a number of items on tonight's agenda.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil stated the LUPPW Committee met on August 5, 2024, and they discussed items related to Blight Properties in town. He stated those items, where necessary, were elevated to the Planning Director.

Conservation Commission

Councilor Paul stated the Conservation Commission met on August 13, 2024, and discussed the following: (1) Avalonia Land Conservancy was awarded a Grant to purchase the Rowling Property on Stoddards Wharf Road. The property would be preserved as Open Space; and (2) Continued to work on the draft Regional Open Space Plan from Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG).

Housing Authority

Councilor Paul stated the Ledyard Housing Authority met on August 5, 2024, and addressed the following: (1) Rules & Regulations for the 2025 Leases; (2) Contentious Issues – Councilor Paul noted earlier this year there had been some contentious issues at the Kings Corner Manor. However, he stated the Tenant Member of the Housing Authority commented that since the improvements/renovation work has been completed, and through meetings, that the community was coming together. He noted that the tenants were smiling and talking to each other again. He stated a lot of work was done to the Apartments, noting that Director Colleen Lauer did a great job managing the project with the grant funding they received. He stated the Kings Corner Manor Senior Citizens Housing Facility looked great and he encouraged folks to stop by. He stated the Board had a good, short meeting.

Gales Ferry Fire Department

Councilor Saccone stated the Gales Ferry Fire Department's generator was out of service. He stated they were currently renting an emergency backup generator at a cost of \$1,300 per month, noting that the Fire Station served as a Cooling Center and Heating Center when the area loses power. He stated the Fire Department was working to consider how to address replacing the generator, which would cost about \$100,000. He stated the Fire Chief had requested funding in the Department's Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget to replace the generator.

Retirement Board

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Retirement Board would be meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

Farmers Market Committee

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Farmers Market Committee met on August 12, 2024, and went into executive session. She noted the Farmers Market was being held on Wednesdays from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. at the Lower Town Green, noting that it was a lot of fun; and she encouraged residents who have not yet visited the Farmers Market to stop by.

Chairman Rodriguez noted in her absence that Councilor Garcia-Irizarry provided two Liaison Reports, and she asked Councilor Buhle to read the Reports this evening.

Library Commission

Councilor Buhle read the following report:

The Library Commission canceled their August 19, 2024 meeting. She stated their next meeting was scheduled for September 16, 2024.

Board of Education

Councilor Buhle read the following report:

The Board of Education met on August 13, 2024, and that while everything discussed during the meeting was important that **items #5 & #6 noted in bold italic font** were especially noteworthy: (1) Chromebooks – Starting this School Year the Sixth Grade Students will not be receiving Chromebooks. Students would now begin to receive the Chromebooks in Seventh Grade. One of the reasons for this change was because there was significant physical damage to the Chromebooks that were being used by the sixth-grade students. Also, the New Policy took into consideration the parents feedback regarding the use of technology by the students; (2) New Committee Assignments - The Board of Education made some New Assignments to include Ms. DiPalma-Herb who was recently appointed to fill the vacancy left by Mr. Rode; (3) Juliet W. Long School Heating Ventilation & Air Condition (HVAC) Replacement - The Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) approved the Plans for the Juliet W. Long School HVAC project. The Plans need to be approved by the State before the PMBC could solicit Bids for contractors; (4) Reduced Lunch Program - Students who qualify for the reduced lunch program would get free breakfast and lunch during the school year; (5) ***New Proposed Housing Developments & Potential Impact on Schools – Their Agenda included a discussion regarding the impact that the new proposed housing developments would have on the schools. During the meeting, it was mentioned that several hundred units were proposed for Ledyard Center by the person that purchased the Ledyard Center School building. In addition, 120-units were expected to be constructed behind the Holdridge's Property; and that 350-units (this number was mentioned during the meeting) in Gales Ferry (Sweet Hill Farm property). During the meeting, Superintendent of Schools Mr. Hartling mentioned the number of students enrolled in Ledyard Public Schools (LPS) that reside in Fox Run Apartments, Pheasant Run Apartments, and Lakeside Apartments. The Board of Education was concerned about the influx of new students that could result from these housing developments. One Board Member mentioned that she attended the last Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting and that during the meeting the overall message was that the schools have a responsibility to absorb the new student population from those projects. While the BOE was aware of this, there were several concerns such as space. It was noted that space in Ledyard's School Facilities, with the present enrollment, was very limited at the Gallup Hill School and Ledyard Middle School. Also, additional services and staff would be needed and right now Ledyard was one of the lowest Per Pupil funded School Districts. This would increase the school budget. The Board of Education agreed that a study needed to be done to understand what the impact from these housing developments would put on the schools and/or the Town Council should***

do a study to determine the impact, not just on the schools, but on all town services; (6) Additional Impact Aid and ASTE Funding Received for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 – The Board of Education discussed Town Council Chairman Rodriguez’s July 30, 2024 letter regarding the additional funding and its intended use. There was quite a bit of discussion as the Board of Education mentioned that the use of the funding falls under the Board of Education’s responsibility and that it should not be under the Town Council’s responsibility. Board of Education Chairman Anthony Favry mentioned that while this was the first time they have received a letter such as this one, that it was under the Town Council purview to make such a request. Board members asked what would happen if a higher priority item suddenly made the top of the list and it was not one of the projects mentioned in Chairman Rodriguez’s letter. The Board of Education considered the following options: (a) Not to take any action and wait to receive a mandate from the Town Council; or (b) Send a letter to the Town Council with the details of what they would use the money for. The Board of Education approved a motion to include the word “use” and not “committed” regarding how the funds would be used. After the Board of Education’s meeting, Chairman Favry sent an email to Chairman Rodriguez with the specifics of how the Board of Education intended to use the additional money.

Councilor Buhle continued to read the report in which Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that after the Board of Education’s meeting, she sent an email to the Board of Education, in which she copied (cc’d) the Town Council, to provide clarification regarding the additional revenues that were received for Fiscal Year 2023/2024; and to mention that the Finance Committee included a discussion regarding the additional ASTE Funding and Impact Aid funding on their August 14, 2024 Agenda.

Ledyard Center Fire Department

Councilor Saccone stated three new members joined the Ledyard Center Fire Department last month. He noted that the new members were Ledyard residents, which was good for the Department because they would be staying in-town. He explained the reason he mentioned that the new members were Ledyard residents, was because the Gales Ferry Fire Department often has members who were active-duty members from the subbase, which was super. However, he stated they lose their Navy volunteers when they were transferred to a new assignment.

Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission

Councilor St. Vil stated the IWWC met on August 6, 2024, and addressed the Military Highway (Sweet Hill Farm Property) Application. He stated the IWWC scheduled a Site Walk of the Property to be held on August 24, 2024; and he noted that a Public Hearing would be scheduled at a later date.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Councilor St. Vil stated the Planning & Zoning Commission met on August 8, 2024, and continued to keep the Public Hearing open regarding an Application that was before them. He stated the Commission scheduled a Special Meeting for August 22, 2024.

Councilor St. Vil went on to state there has been a lot of attention and care from the community regarding these Land Use Applications; as well as a desire to provide their input to the Commissions. He stated that there was a common theme and opportunity in both Commission Meetings (IWWC & P&Z) which he spoke to Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick about. He stated at the upcoming Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion’s August 21, 2024 meeting that they planned to develop a forum and/or program/mechanism to share with the community what was allowed and what was not allowed to be taken under consideration by these various Commissions, what data points were relevant, what data points were irrelevant, and to provide the community an opportunity ask their open questions, which would not delay the nature and purpose of these on-going meetings. He concluded by noting the Town Council would be working to develop some type of public relations to share what was allowed with these pending Applications.

Agricultural Commission

Councilor Dombrowski stated the Agricultural Commission cancelled their August 20, 2024 meeting.

Water Pollution Control Authority

Councilor Dombrowski stated the WPCA's next meeting was scheduled for August 27, 2024.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN) Sale \$5.5 million for School/Central Office Roof/Solar/HVAC Projects – Mayor Allyn stated the Town received a 3.5% interest rate on one-year BANS for the Various Board of Education Projects that were initially approved by the voters on February 22, 2022; and approved again on October 17, 2023 to increase the funding for the Projects to provide for the redesign of the Heating Ventilation and Air Condition System (HVAC) for the Juliet W. Long School; (2) Gov.Deals Sale – Mayor Allyn stated that they were continuing to sell the Board of Education's surplus equipment using the on-line auction site and to put those funds back into the Board of Education's Capital Accounts to be used toward new equipment purchases; (3) Hurricane Preparedness – Mayor Allyn urged residents to be prepared for Hurricane Season by having batteries, emergency back-up power such as a generator for those who may be on oxygen machines, or dialysis machines, to have non-perishable foods, and fresh/drinking water on hand for those who were on private wells. He stated should the area lose electricity those with wells would not have water. He also mentioned that it was not the town's responsibility to provide generators to residents who required medical equipment; (4) School Roof Projects – Mayor Allyn stated although the Gales Ferry School Roof was water tight that the work might not be completed before the first day of school (August 29, 2024); (5) State Audit - School Improvement/Consolidation Project(s) (Middle School & Gallup Hill School) – Mayor Allyn stated the State Audit was scheduled for mid-November, 2024, explaining that the Auditors would be at the Town Hall Annex for about a week, where they would go through Banker Boxes full of documentation and sample the work that was done. He stated once the State Audit was completed that they would finalize the Projects and release the final Grant Payment to the Town. He stated thereafter the Town would Bond (borrow) funding for the two “*Renovate as New School Projects*”; (6) Human Resources Director Position – Mayor Allyn stated unfortunately Human Resources Director Marisa Iannella-Rodriguez, who was with Ledyard for just one year, has taken a job closer to home and with better pay. He stated Ledyard received 26 Applications for the position and that interviews were scheduled for next week. He stated earlier this evening during the Finance Committee meeting that he mentioned that two-years ago he had a conversation with the Finance Committee and the Town Council about making the pay for Ledyard's Department Heads more competitive, noting that they were currently at the bottom of the Market Pay Scale. He stated he obtained a Salary Study that was recently conducted by ten towns. He stated they were working through the data to see how it impacted some of Ledyard's salaries, understanding that some of their Department Heads wear many hats, which played a role in setting the appropriate salary; (7) Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA) Equity Distribution – Mayor Allyn explained that 163 of the 169 Connecticut Municipalities were part of CIRMA (Insurance Provider). He stated when they have a good year the Municipalities receive an equity distribution, noting that this year Ledyard received a \$17,929 distribution check from CIRMA. However, he stated when they do not have a good year, such as last year, Ledyard did not receive a CIRMA Distribution Check because of a \$20 million claim against a school roof for one of the Member Towns; (8) Multi-Use Pathway- Mayor Allyn stated the project was moving along. However, he stated they had to bring in a very large machine because they ran into an incredible amount of ledge in the area at by the Board of Education Central Office on Colonel Ledyard Highway. Therefore, he stated that they were working in the area of the High School so there would not be any interruptions at the driveways when school opened on August 29, 2024. He stated within the next 7-10-days they would put down the process gravel and then begin paving at the Trail Head, which was located by the Congregational Church in Ledyard Center; (9) Route 12 Corridor Study Bid #2025-01 – Mayor Allyn stated the Bid Opening for the Route 12/Gales Ferry Corridor Study was scheduled for August 15, 2024, noting that the town has received interest from a number of Design and Engineering Companies, and

therefore, he hoped that they would receive multiple proposals. He stated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding would be used to pay for the Corridor Study; explaining the importance of having an updated Study to be eligible to apply for and receive Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) Grant Funding to be used for the construction work to provide improvements on Route 12. He stated currently the Governor has not proposed any STEAP Grants for this year; (10) First Day of School On August 29, 2024 - Mayor Allyn urged motorists to be mindful that students and school buses would be on the roads.

Questions to the Mayor

Councilor Ryan noted the Route 12/Gales Ferry Corridor Study, and he stated that this was one of many opportunities to obligate the remaining American Rescue Plan Act Funding (ARPA). He stated that they were coming into the home stretch and that they needed to ensure the town has obligated all of the Funds by December 31, 2024 ARPA Deadline.

Councilor Buhle addressed the Department Heads Salary Study, and she questioned whether the salaries would take into consideration the Town Hall's 4-day work week. She stated the 4-day work week was a benefit, noting that some Department Heads have chosen to work for Ledyard knowing that their salaries were lower because of the 4-day work week. Mayor Allyn stated Town Hall employees work a forty-hour work week, noting that they work 10-hour days; and often longer because of attending night meetings. He stated in addition to the Salary Study that was conducted by ten-towns, that he was also going to obtain the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Salary Study. He stated Councilor Buhle's comments was something that he would consider.

Chairman Rodriguez addressed the school Roof Projects questioning the contingency plan if the projects were not completed before the first day of school on August 29, 2024. Mayor Allyn stated the Juliet W. Long School, and the Gales Ferry School had different contractors because the style of roofs and materials were different. He stated the Schools could consider waiving the "*No Overhead Work Policy when the Building was Occupied*" for the period of time it would take to complete the roof. He noted because the students were in the buildings until 3:30 p.m. and with the days getting shorter, that there would not be enough time to complete the work. However, he stated that this was a Board of Education and Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) matter, noting that although he provided comments to Chairman Rodriguez's question, that the decision would need to be made by the Board of Education. Chairman Rodriguez stated she attended the PMBC August 12, 2024 meeting, noting it was disturbing to hear that the Roof Projects would not be completed before the start of school. Mayor Allyn agreed that it was disturbing, and disappointing because they received a number of bids for the projects, and they were doing all the right things with having an Owners Representative. However, he stated they could not have possibly known that the Contractor was not paying their bills, which caused the Subcontractors to pull back.

Councilor Buhle expressed concern with having work done overhead during the school day, especially at the Juliet W. Long School, noting that it would be disruptive for the students because they did not have air-conditioning, and therefore, they would have their windows open. Mayor Allyn stated the Juliet W. Long School Roof should be completed before the first day of school (August 29, 2024). However, he stated the Gales Ferry School had a pitched roof that used steel materials.

XII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- MOTION to amend the Agenda to add the following two Items:

- (1) MOTION to authorize the town to proceed with the supplemental engineering services for the Colonel Ledyard Multi-Use Pathway for additional geotechnical services (\$15,300) and additional construction design services (\$15,000) per the August 12, 2024 Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. Amendment to Bid No. 2021-03.

In addition, transfer and appropriate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the total amount of \$30,300 for said purpose. Source of ARPA funding transfer to be determined.

- (2) MOTION to appropriate \$90,888 to the Child and Family Agency to provide Clinicians

at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School for one year, from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding designated for Youth Mental Health Clinicians.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

Chairman Rodriguez noted that these two items would be added to the Agenda as Items #10 & #11.

Administration Committee

1. MOTION to set a Hybrid (In-Person & Video Conference) Public Hearing date on September 11, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. to be held in the Council Chambers, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, to receive comments and recommendations regarding the following:

- Proposed “*An Ordinance Providing Tax Relief for Gold Star Families in the Town of Ledyard*” as presented in the draft dated May 14, 2024.
- Proposed amendments to Ordinance #100-011 “*An Ordinance Establishing ~~A Youth & Social Services Board for the Town of Ledyard~~*” as presented in the draft dated June 4, 2024.

Moved by Councilor Brunelle, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski

Discussion: Councilor Dombrowski stated in accordance with Chapter III; Section 5 of the Town Charter that “.....one public hearing shall be held by the Town Council before any ordinance shall be passed. This motion was only to set the Public Hearing date.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	April Brunelle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Kevin Dombrowski, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

Finance Committee

2. MOTION to add Courville’s Garage to the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Standing Bid Waiver List.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained that the Gales Ferry Fire Company had been using Bulldog Fire Apparatus for their fire truck repairs, because they were familiar with the town’s apparatus, and because of the confidence they had with their lead mechanic, who had been working on their equipment for well over ten-years. However, he stated the lead mechanic was now working for Courville’s Garage and although the Fire Department had requested Courville’s Garage be added to the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Standing Bid Waiver List that it was overlooked. Therefore, he stated this item would add the Vendor to the Standing Bid Waiver List.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

3. MOTION to transfer additional revenues received for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 as follows:

- \$39,502 received from the ASTE Program to Account #22570101 (BOE ASTE CNR) to be used as requested in the Board of Education’s email dated August 8, 2024 as follows.
 - ✓ \$27,000 Ag-Classroom multimedia equipment and interactive projector replacements
 - ✓ \$12,500 Update to the lightening system in the classrooms to LED

- \$304,635 received from Impact Aid to Account #22570101 (BOE CNR Reserve Fund) to be used for the following in accordance with the Board of Education’s Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):
 - ✓ \$210,000 Ledyard High School Existing Elevator Replacement
 - ✓ \$73,300 Gallup Hill School Recommissioning
 - ✓ \$21,335 Juliet W. Long School-Gales Ferry School Playground

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Background: The Town received more grant revenue for the Agri-Science Program and for the Impact Aid Program, than the dollar amount that had been projected in the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget. Therefore, this request would pass the funds through from the General Government ledger to the Board of Education’s ledger. In a letter dated July 30, 2024, Chairman Rodriguez provided some suggestions for the use of the additional revenues and requested the Board of Education provide a Plan on how they would like to spend the funds. In an email dated August 13, 2024, Board of Education Chairman Favry forwarded the Board of Education’s Plan on how they would use the additional funding, which included two of the Town Council’s suggestions, as noted in the motion above.

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained the School Recommissioning was an analysis of the electrical systems, and other Building Maintenance Systems (BMS) such as the Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system. He stated Eversource would conduct an analysis to provide adjustments to have all the equipment operating more efficiently. He stated that Eversource indicated that the cost to conduct the Recommissioning would pay for itself in a couple of years because of the savings they would see by having the equipment operating efficiently.

Councilor Buhle stated the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) included \$24,840 to conduct the Recommissioning of the Ledyard Middle School. Therefore, she stated she was pleased to see they were moving forward to fund the Recommissioning of the Juliet W. Long School, noting that they could cross this expense off the Capital Plan Projects (CIP) List.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

4. MOTION to grant a bid waiver to Vision Government Solutions in the amount of \$257,000 for Revaluation Services. due to receiving fewer than the required three bids in response to Bid 2024-04 (Revaluation) 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 in accordance with State Statutes Ledyard was required to conduct a full Revaluation this year. He stated in preparation for the Revaluation they had been allocating funding to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the past few years. He stated based on an estimated cost for the Revaluation they had a total budget of \$187,000 to conduct this work. He stated in soliciting bids they thought they had three bids, however, he explained that one envelope was only a letter stating that the company was not going to submit a bid. Therefore, he stated they only received two bids, and the numbers came in substantially higher than the amount that was budgeted.

Mayor Allyn went on to state Vision Government Solutions was both the better value and lower cost, noting that they were a good vendor. He stated this work would include door to door home

inspections including sheds, decks, finished basements, etc. He stated the town used a different contractor the last time they conducted a full Revaluation and that they were not confident that the company got inside many houses. He stated Vision Government Solutions would begin their work this fall, and the new property valuations would take effect for the October 2025 Grand List.

Councilor Ryan noted that they were going to be about \$100,000 short, therefore, he questioned whether they could pay Vision Government Solutions for half of the contract in Fiscal Year 2024/2025 and the other half of the contract in Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Mayor Allyn explained because all the work would be completed before the end of May 2025, that they would not be able to span the payment over two budget cycles.

Councilor Buhle addressed homeowners fear of allowing the Assessment Company into their homes. However, she explained when everyone's house was being assessed for the true value, they would be on a level playing field. She stated by ensuring that their assessed values matched up that it would result in everyone paying their fair share. She stated that this was something they needed to make clear to homeowners, when the Assessment Company was conducting their work.

Councilor Ryan noted when New London conducted their full Revaluation that although the Mil Rate went down, that the property owners' taxes dramatically increased. Therefore, he stated that this would be on the minds of residents, noting that he agreed with Councilor Buhle, in-that more communication would be beneficial.

Councilor St. Vil stated the background information noted that there may be a savings of about \$10,000. Mayor Allyn explained because Vision Government Solutions charged on a per photo basis; and because Ledyard already had a lot of updated property photos that there would be some savings. He also noted that should they pick-up on sheds, decks or finished basements for work that may or may not have had permits; and/or were not picked-up during the last Revaluation, that those things would be taxed. Therefore, he stated what they find in the full Revaluation could offset increase in the cost of the Revaluation.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

5. MOTION to appropriate from the receipt of sales of vehicles through GovDeals in the total amount of \$7,250 to the following capital accounts:

- \$2,575 to Public Works Small Trucks (21040101-57313);
- \$3,610 to Pooled Vehicles (21040101-57315);
- \$1,065 to Building Upgrade Reserve (21040111-58240).

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated the town has significantly increased their revenues by selling their surplus equipment using the on-line auction site Gov.Deals instead of the sealed bid process they previously used to sell surplus equipment. He stated this sale included the following: retired Parks & Recreation truck; former Fire Chief's Explorer that was inoperable; and Solar Panels that were removed from the Senior Citizens Center, when the roof was replaced. He explained rather than reinstall the Solar Panels, which had less than 50% of their useful life remaining, the Solar Panels were sold.

Mayor Allyn went on to state as he mentioned during his Report earlier this evening, he has been working to help the Board of Education sell their surplus equipment using the Gov.Deals on-line auction site. Therefore, he the Town Council would also be seeing a request from the Board of Education to allocate the revenues received from the sale of their equipment to capital accounts.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

6. MOTION to approve the purchase of a new Elgin Pelican Sweeper through the Sourcewell Lease/Purchase provider over a term of five (5) years at \$66,467.49 per year.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained that Municipalities were required to sweep their streets each year. He stated Ledyard and Preston would be sharing the cost (2/3- Ledyard; and 1/3 Preston) to purchase a new Elgin Pelican Sweeper. He deferred to Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin to provide more details regarding the arrangement.

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin provided some background explaining the Town of Ledyard sold its 22-year-old Street Sweeper in 2022 with the thought that the Department could better and more economically cover the Town's annual sweeping needs through a rental. He stated the Town rented a Street Sweeper in 2023 and 2024, using the Beverage ("Nip") Container Surcharges Revenue, which by Legislation was an explicit use of the funding. However, he stated the results substantially failed to meet their expectations for a number of reasons. He stated that they also learned that the availability of rental units to sweep roads has declined significantly, with no prospects of increasing.

Mr. Masalin went on to state in-light of this predicament, they now felt that owning a Street Sweeper would be the best, and most economical way to meet their needs. He continued by explaining that the Town of Preston was coincidentally in need of replacing its Street Sweeper, which has reached the end of its service life. He stated this has offered the opportunity to purchase a shared unit that would cover the annual scope of work for each town, and that the Street Sweeper would also be available for spot needs throughout the year. He stated the cost share would be allocated proportionally based on paved road mileage which would result in 2/3 for Ledyard and 1/3 for Preston.

Mr. Masalin stated prior to the Special Finance Committee meeting that was held earlier this evening he had a telephone conversation with Preston First Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gothier to follow-up with Preston's interest regarding a shared arrangement between Ledyard and Preston. He reported that Selectwoman Allyn-Gothier stated that Preston was on-board with the shared arrangement. He stated the Five-Year Lease/Purchase Annual Payment would be \$66,000 which included about a 4.7% annual interest rate. He stated the Town of Preston would pay approximately \$22,000 toward the annual lease payment; and Ledyard would pay about \$44,000. He noted the Beverage ("Nip") Container Surcharge Account had a current balance of about \$44,000 and by the time the first payment was due, which would be when the Street Sweeper was delivered (March, 2025) that the Beverage ("Nip") Container Surcharges Account would have an approximate balance of \$75,000; which would most likely cover their payment for the first two years. He stated going forward, that in addition to using the Beverage ("Nip") Container Surcharges Revenue that some funds could be drawn from Account 21040101-57311 (Public Works Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve), which has been funded at \$85,000 annually.

Mr. Masalin stated in parallel with the purchase of the Street Sweeper that he would be working to secure a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Preston outlining the details of the shared arrangement. He stated the Street Sweeper would last about fifteen years; noting that would provide about ten years during which time the town could accumulate funding from the Beverage ("Nip") Container Surcharge Revenues in anticipation of having to replace the piece of equipment.

Councilor Ryan stated although some may believe that a Street Sweeper was a luxury, that to maintain its MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Permit Certifications, that the town had to sweep the streets, even if they did not own a Street Sweeper.

Councilor Ryan went on to state understanding that Mr. Masalin had a verbal commitment from Preston, that the Town Council was considering the purchase of a new Elgin Pelican Street Sweeper ahead of having an official Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place with Preston. Therefore, he questioned the following:

- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** – Councilor Ryan asked whether Mr. Masalin was comfortable with proceeding with the purchase based on Preston’s verbal commitment. Mr. Masalin stated that he was comfortable with moving forward at this time, noting that Preston was also in need of a new Street Sweeper; and they did not want to bear the full cost to purchase a new piece of equipment. Therefore, he stated it was a favorable opportunity for Preston.
- **Maintenance Costs** - Councilor Ryan questioned whether the town would be responsible for the maintenance costs during the time of the five-year lease; and how the maintenance costs would be shared with Preston. Mr. Masalin explained although there would be some things covered by the warranty, that the town would be responsible for the maintenance of wear items such as replacing the brushes, consumable parts, and routine maintenance, etc., which would cost a few thousand dollars each year. He stated the town has been involved with two lease/purchase agreements in the past; and by the end of the lease the equipment would be paid for/purchased. He went on to explain that Ledyard’s Public Works was maintaining (mechanic services) Preston’s Fleet, stating they currently have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place to provide those services to Preston.
- **Revenue Source** – Councilor Ryan questioned whether Mr. Masalin has considered using the Street Sweeper as a revenue source by leasing it out for private events. Mr. Masalin stated the Street Sweeper was not the type of equipment they would want to rent out, noting that they would not send it out without one of their operators. He explained the Street Sweeper was the type of equipment that consumes itself; however, he stated that they could leave the door open.

Councilor Ryan stated once the Street Sweeper was paid off in five years, and assuming the Legislation would not make any changes to the Beverage (“Nip”) Container Surcharge Program, that this revenue source should pay to maintain the Street Sweeper. He stated that he was pleased to see the town was purchasing a Street Sweeper, but at the same time, disappointed to see that it would use all the Nip Bottle Revenues. He thanked Mr. Masalin for all the work he has done to facilitate the lease/purchase of the Street Sweeper and the shared costs with Preston.

Mr. Masalin addressed the MS4 Program (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) relative to the need for a Street Sweeper, explaining that there were technical requirements for stormwater enforcement and stormwater protection. He noted that this was the second year the town successfully completed contracting services for catch basin cleaning, noting that it has worked well. He went on to state although both towns (Ledyard and Preston) have shifted to treated salt for winter operations, that with the elimination of the sand that was previously used to accompany their road treatment, that there still remained a considerable amount of debris that collected along the road edges from other sources. He stated for the 2024 sweeping season, thirty-two (32) large dump truck loads (about 100 tons) of debris were collected off our roads. Also, annual sweeping was a requirement of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program.

Councilor St. Vil stated partnering with and an adjacent town to share the cost to purchase the Street Sweeper was a great idea. However, he questioned the exit strategy with Preston, noting as an example how they would proceed should Ledyard feel that the Street Sweeper was at the end of its useful life, but Preston still wanted to hold on to the Street Sweeper. Mr. Masalin stated the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would include an explicit term noting that they would prorate the value that was left. He stated the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would cover everything.

Councilor Buhle stated one of the benefits of owning a Street Sweeper was that they could use the equipment anytime during the year should they have a special environmental issue or specific need. Mr. Masalin stated in years past they have deployed the Street Sweeper when specific events (storms, etc.) have happened.

Councilor Saccone addressed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding, and he questioned if they had ARPA funding that was not committed whether they could use those funds to pay off the Street Sweeper, noting that they would save the interest costs. Mr. Masalin stated the town could pay in-full at any time, with no penalty.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

7. No Action on the Discussion and possible action on the MOTION to authorize the town to proceed with the engineering design of sewer mains along Fairway/Colby Drives (\$108,000) and Route 117 (\$137,500), respectively, per Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. Bid No. 2021-03 Amendments 3 and 4.

In addition, transfer and appropriate ARPA and/or other funding in the total amount of \$245,500 for said purpose. Source of ARPA funding transfer and other funding to be determined.

Councilor Saccone noted that the Finance Committee tabled Item #7 earlier this evening. Therefore, he asked that the Town Council not act on the Motion; noting that the Committee was not prepared to move the request.

RESULT: NO ACTION

8. MOTION to approve the following Salary Adjustments effective July 1, 2024:

- \$80,217 Account #1010101-51602 (Administrative Assistant)
- \$56,952 Account #1010201-51607 (Executive Assistant)

In addition, authorize retroactive payments in the total amount of \$2,692; and appropriate \$20,000 from #Account 10110107-56100 (Undesignated) to the respective accounts.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained as he mentioned during his Report earlier this evening, the town had a number of Department Heads whose salaries were behind where they should be. He stated these two positions warranted attention right-a-way; those being the Town Council Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher; and the Mayor’s Executive Assistant Kristen Chapman. He stated this Motion was the first step in working to adjust the Department Head Salaries, noting that he has obtained a Salary Survey that was done by ten area towns; and that he planned to obtain a Salary Study from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM). He stated providing the Department Heads with fair wages for the work that they do would cost about \$80,000 - \$90,000 per year, which was not a lot in their overall budget. He stated he valued all their Department Heads, noting that these two positions were certainly worthy of these salary adjustments.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she agreed with Mayor Allyn’s comments, noting that she could attest that both of these two employees were committed, professional, hardworking, and loyal to this town. She stated that she supported these two salary adjustments.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

9. MOTION to appropriate \$3,000 to Account #10114301-51610 (Land Use Supervisors) in connection with \$3,000 received from fines assessed in accordance with Ordinance #300-012 (rev.2) “*An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard*”.
- Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle
- Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated the Blight Enforcement Officer had been working to address a blighted property on Crestview Drive, Gales Ferry. He stated the goal of Ordinance #300-012 (rev.2) “*An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard*” was to bring blighted properties into voluntary compliance, and not to fine property owners. Therefore, he stated the Blight Enforcement Officer tries to work with property owners so that homes were respectable for the neighbors, the neighborhood, and for the town as a whole. He stated the fine was substantially more than the dollar amount that was settled on, explaining that through the Town Attorney they worked to find a solution that both the property owner and the town could work with, noting that this was the source of the \$3,000.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain allocating these funds to the Land Use Department would be useful because they were working to contract with consultants for different projects, and to assist with Plan Reviews, because there were some large Plans that could be coming their way, that would require additional assistance. He also noted that there may be some additional Blight Fees collected for one other property.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

10. MOTION to authorize the town to proceed with the supplemental engineering services for the Colonel Ledyard Multi-Use Pathway for additional geotechnical services (\$15,300) and additional construction design services (\$15,000) per the August 12, 2024 Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. Amendment to Bid No. 2021-03.

In addition, transfer and appropriate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the total amount of \$30,300 for said purpose. Source of ARPA funding transfer to be determined.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin provided some background evening, explaining the Finance Committee tabled Item #7 (see above) at their meeting earlier this because more information was needed in considering the appropriate funding source to pay the \$245,000 for engineering design of the sewer mains along Fairway/Colby Drives (\$108,000) and Route 117 (\$137,500), noting that there would not be enough American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to pay for this work.

Mr. Masalin continued by explaining that during the construction of the Multi-Use Pathway they discovered that additional geotechnical validation was needed in the area of the large retaining wall at the intersection of Gallup Hill Road and Colonel Ledyard Highway. Therefore, he stated the construction work in this location has been halted pending the results of the geotechnical work and the associated design. He stated Weston & Sampson has submitted a proposal for the geotechnical validation services for a lump sum fee of \$15,300 and a proposal in the amount of an additional \$15,000 to cover the balance of the construction effort.

Mr. Masalin went on to explain that the balance for the original construction design engineering for the Multi-Use Pathway has been exhausted, because of various construction eventualities. He stated because the Multi-Use Pathway (LoTCIP Funding) and Phase I of the Sewer Extension Project (ARPA Funding) were running along the same path and were being done simultaneously, that there was some savings in the engineering design work that could be used to pay for the additional \$30,300 needed for the geotechnical validation and to cover the balance of the construction effort.

Mr. Masalin reviewed the Multi-Use Pathway and the Sewer Extension Project noting the following:

- Phase I – Sewer Extension Project – Ledyard Center to the High School (currently under way).
- Phase II -Sewer Extension Project – Ledyard Center Commercial District
- Phase III- Sewer Extension Project – Mr. Masalin noted Phase III would replace the inadequate sewer line from the High School to Pennywise Lane and would tie into the service lines that go to the Wastewater Sewer Treatment Facility. He stated the engineering design work has been funded; and the drawings were ready to go to the Contractor within the next couple of weeks for them to prepare cost estimates for the construction. He stated this would allow the town to hopefully keep the Contractor on-board and have a favorable contract in place by the December 31, 2024 ARPA Deadline, and weather permitting they would be able to work through the winter.

Mr. Masalin presented an analysis of the Multi-Use Pathway and the Sewer Extension Project as follows:

Project	ARPA Allocation	Balance
Sewer Extension Projects	\$2.15 Million	\$90,000.
Other ARPA Projects		<u>(\$55,000)</u>
Total ARPA Balance:		\$30,000

Mr. Masalin stated that the ARPA Balance in the amount of \$30,000 could be used to pay for the geotechnical validation and to cover the balance of the Multi-Use Pathway construction effort and keep Phase I of the Sewer Extension Project moving forward. He stated because the geotechnical work would take about three weeks that this funding was an urgent need. He stated the reason they were seeking the use of these ARPA funds was because the engineering expenses during the Multi-Use Pathway construction was not eligible for LoTCIP Grant reimbursement, and because this work was needed to keep Phase I - Sewer Extension Projects moving forward.

Councilor Ryan noted the ARPA Funding Analysis Mr. Masalin provided this evening only addressed the Sewer Extension Projects. However, he stated within the whole of the ARPA Projects List that there was actually \$1.5 million at-risk, which included projects that were not yet fully expended, and projects not started yet (Phase III of the Sewer Extension Project). Mr. Masalin responded noting as he previously stated, the engineering work would be done soon, and they could have a contract in-place for Phase III Sewer Extension Project before the December 31, 2024 ARPA Deadline.

Councilor Ryan asked Mayor Allyn whether there was any in-progress ARPA Projects that currently had ARPA Funding remaining; or projects that would be returning unused ARPA Funding. Mayor Allyn, III, noted the following ARPA Projects:

- LED Message Sign in Ledyard Center \$35,000 – Mayor Allyn stated the digital sign and installation may come in \$4,000 under the amount allocated.
- Erickson Park Improvements \$55,000 – Mayor Allyn stated the Contractor would be starting on the project soon.
- Ledyard Center Sidewalk In-Fill \$35,000 – Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated they were working to have the engineering design for the sidewalk and permit in-place. However, he stated he did not believe that the ARPA Funding allocation would be enough to do any meaningful work.

Councilor Buhle noted during the Finance Committee meeting earlier this evening they determined that the source of \$30,300 to pay for the geotechnical validation work and to pay the balance of the construction effort for the Multi-Use Pathway, would be drawn from the ARPA Funding for Phase I of the Sewer Extension Project.

Mayor Allyn explained the geotechnical work was to validate that the base of a massive retaining wall was structurally sound. He stated if it was not structurally sound it would fail, which they do not want to happen.

Councilor St. Vil asked who was questioning the structure of the retaining wall, the construction contractor or the engineer. Mr. Masalin stated the construction contractor questioned the soundness and the placement of the toe of the wall, based on what they were seeing when they cleared the vegetation. He stated that there were some areas that needed to be realigned, independent of the geotechnical analysis. He stated he met with the engineer and several agents of the construction contractor on-site last week, noting that this was the result of that on-site effort. Councilor St. Vil questioned the cost of the baseline design contract. Mr. Masalin stated the baseline engineering contract cost was \$85,950; however, he stated there were additional changes that came along and were authorized for various reasons. He stated in response to a pointed conversation he had with the Engineer, that the Engineer explained this work was for services that were not included in the original design because they made some assumptions, noting that they did borings in the road; however, the borings were not on the outside of the guiderails, where the shoulder of the Multi-Use Pathway would go. Therefore, the Engineer wanted to know that when they put the walls in and the fill that what was there would remain structurally sound; and that he did not expect the wall design to change.

Councilor St. Vil stated the additional engineering work was costing about 20% of the original contract; and he questioned whether there were any other risk areas. Mr. Masalin stated the subsurface work was mostly done, which was where they had the uncertainties of ledge, and rock. He stated once they get to the surface work there would be very little uncertainty. He stated this was the biggest issue remaining, noting that everything else was moving along well. He stated the digging for the sewer main was going well, noting that this was all part of Phase I of the Sewer Extension Project.

Mayor Allyn stated the good news was that Phase III of the Sewer Extension Project was going to follow the existing sewer line path. He stated assuming they did not backfill the trench with bad fill when they put in the existing line, that it should be an easy dig. Mr. Masalin stated that there would be some departure from the footprint of the current sewer line, because they were going to have to keep the sewer in-service while they were running the new sewer line.

Councilor Ryan stated if they moved forward with appropriating \$30,300 from the ARPA Funding for Phase I of the Sewer Extension Project to pay for the geotechnical validation work and the balance of the construction work for the Multi-Use Pathway, that the ARPA Funding would be running at a negative of \$100,000; with the intention, as Mr. Masalin mentioned, that the ARPA Funding would be in a positive position by the time projects come to close.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

11. MOTION to appropriate \$90,888 to the Child and Family Agency to provide Clinicians at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School for one year, from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding designated for Youth Mental Health Clinicians.
 Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan
 Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects status review the Finance Committee has been discussing the \$190,000 that had been earmarked to provide mental health services to the youth in our community. She stated the Finance Committee questioned the reason the funding was not being used at rate for it to be fully committed by the December 31, 2024 ARPA Deadline, because there was a need for mental health services. She noted the Clinicians at the elementary schools had full caseloads of ten students, and there were kids on a waiting list for services.

Councilor Buhle went on to state in speaking with School Superintendent Jason Hartling, at the Finance Committee’s July 17, 2024 meeting they learned that Clinician Pat Frost, who took over from Kate Sikorski-Maynard, was providing services for both the High School

and Middle School students, but that she was not comfortable with administering services to younger age children. She stated they also learned that although the State of Connecticut Child and Family Agency provided funding to support the School Based Health Program, which included Mental Health Services, for the upcoming school year (2024/2025) at the High School, Middle School, and Gallup Hill School, that the State did not provide funding to continue the same level of mental health services at the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School.

Councilor Buhle stated based on their discussion Mr. Hartling contacted the Child and Family Agency to find out how much it would cost to provide a Clinician at the Juliet W. Long School and Gales Ferry School for the upcoming school year. She stated the cost for the salaries including fringe benefits was \$90,885. She stated the Board of Education also discussed the need to provide mental health services at the Juliet W. Long School and Gallup Hill School. She noted in his July 18, 2024 email Board of Education Chairman Anthony Favry encouraged the Town Council to consider providing funding to support mental health services in these two schools.

Councilor Buhle continued by addressing the importance to provide equitable services at all their schools. She also noted for full disclosure that her son received services from the Child and Family Agency at the Juliet W. Long School, noting that he was one of the children impacted by this disparity, but that he was certainly not the only child. She stated this was a worthwhile use of the ARPA Funds for the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 School year, while Ledyard continued to work to secure funding going forward to ensure all Ledyard Schools would have the School Based Health Program, which included Mental Health Services, through the Child and Family Agency.

Councilor Dombrowski stated these ARPA Funds were provided specifically for mental health. However, he stated because the Town was not going to be able to fully expend these ARPA funds; and because there was a need at the schools for mental health services; that the Board of Education could use the funds for their intended purpose.

Councilor Ryan stated when the Finance Committee began discussing the use of the \$4,327,093.49 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding that Ledyard received that he clearly stated that he would not support programs that created jobs. He explained because the ARPA Funding was only available for a certain amount of time, that if they used the funding to create jobs that once the funding was fully expended, the town would have an unfunded liability; or that person would be out of a job.

Councilor Buhle addressed Councilor Ryan's comment about using ARPA Funding to support Mental Health Clinicians at the Juliet W. Long School and Gales Ferry School. She stated in this particular arrangement that the Clinicians would not be Town of Ledyard employees, noting that they were Child and Family Agency Employees, who the Town would be contracting with.

Councilor Ryan questioned how the Mental Health Clinicians would not be Town employees. Mayor Allyn, III, explained that Superintendent of Schools Mr. Hartling contacted the Child and Family Agency and found out that it would cost \$90,885 (salary and fringe benefits). He stated that Mr. Hartling asked Child and Family Agency if they would be willing to invoice the Town of Ledyard directly for those services; and that Child and Family Agency stated that they could. Therefore, he stated that the Child and Family Agency would invoice the Town of Ledyard for \$90,885 for one school year (one-time) to provide services for the upcoming school year. He stated what ever happens next year would be strictly between the Board of Education and the Child and Family Agency.

Councilor Buhle noted last year was the first year the Child and Family Agency provided the School Based Health Program. Therefore, she stated that she could not understand how after only one-year the State could decide that the program should not be funded at certain schools. She stated one year was not enough data to determine that services were not needed.

Councilor Ryan questioned whether the Board of Education discussed how they would proceed if the State did not provide funding to Ledyard to support the services next year. Councilor Buhle stated that she did not know if the Board of Education has discussed that. However, she stated the Board of Education did not provide any notice to parents that the Child and Family Agency services were not going to be provided at the Juliet W. Long and Gales Ferry School next year.

Councilor Ryan stated the only reason he agreed to appropriate the \$190,000 ARPA Funds for the Youth Mental Health Clinician was because it included a Sunset Plan. He stated that he was not hearing that they had a Sunset Plan for contracting with the Child and Family Agency to provide services. Mayor Allyn and Councilor Buhle both stated that there was a Sunset Plan, noting that they were only providing funding for one-school year. Councilor Buhle stated the Board of Education would be very clear in telling the Child and Family Agency that they would not be able to fund the program in future years, but that they would like to have them at all of Ledyard's Schools. Councilor Ryan commented that it should be the Board of Education fighting for the funding to facilitate the Child and Family Agency services at all the schools. Mayor Allyn stated the Board of Education invested money in each of the schools to set up the School Based Health Program/Clinician Pods, noting that they were stunned to learn that some of the funding had been pulled. Therefore, he stated that he believed Superintendent Hartling was actively working with Senator Osten to get those funds restored.

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Garcia-Irizarry

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Paul.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 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 August 14, 2024.

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman