



# TOWN OF LEDYARD

## Community Relations Committee

### Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway  
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman  
Kevin J. Dombrowski

---

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

---

#### REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION

In -Person Council Chambers -Town Hall Annex Building

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

**[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88631399976?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88631399976?pwd=RVBpcEw3YUlvVXdkYXgyL2NtRHpEUT09)**

**pwd=RVBpcEw3YUlvVXdkYXgyL2NtRHpEUT09**

**Or by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; +Meeting ID: 886 3139 9976; Passcode: 113374**

#### I CALL TO ORDER

the Meeting was called to order by Councilor Paul at 6:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers - Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Paul welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He stated for the Town Council Community Relations Committee and members of 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-Insite Meeting Portal.

#### II. ROLL CALL

**Present:** Bill Saums  
Gary Paul  
John Marshall

In addition, the following were in attendance:

Kevin Dombrowski Chairman  
Mary McGrattan Town Council  
S. Naomi Rodriguez Town Council  
Steve Masalin Public Works Director  
Roxanne Maher Administrative Assistant  
3 Residents

#### III. CITIZENS COMMENTS

None.

## IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

This was Completed.

Public Works Director Steve Masalin Presentation

**Attachments:** [PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION-2022-11-16ons Presentation.pdf](#)

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin reviewed a PowerPoint presentation outlining the services the Public Works Department provides to the town (see Agenda attachment).

Mr. Masalin concluded his presentation by stating that he would be happy to answer questions.

The Group discussed the following:

- Removal of Hazardous Trees - The town would remove hazardous trees in the right-of-way. Residents should contact the Highway Superintendent Joe Tilman at (860) 464-9060 Extension 1. Homeowners would be responsible to remove trees that were within the 10-foot fall zone.
- Evaluate hazardous and damaged trees for removal - Highway Superintendent Joe Tilman continuously monitors and evaluates trees for removal. When trees come down in areas where there were overhead wires the Public Works Department has to wait for Eversource to clear the power lines before they could remove the tree.
- Leaves that accumulate along the roadside become slippery and dangerous - Although the Public Works Department does not have a program to clean the sides of the roads, that before the first snowstorm they do try to clean the leaves from the sides of the roads in areas where they know that slippery leaves were a problem, such as the Glenwoods areas and Sherwood Trace.

Before the Spring street sweeping the Public Works Department does work to pick up the heavy debris on the shoulder of the roads.

- New Roadside Kubota mower would include a side mounted sickle.
- Snow Removal Operations and broken curbing - Throughout the winter season the Public Works Department collects the broken curbing. They keep a list and evaluate the areas that need to be addressed in the Spring. The Highway Superintendent maintains an on-going list and looks at every spot before they begin to repair curbing. Residents should contact the Highway Superintendent Joe Tilman at (860) 464-9060 Extension 1 to report damaged curbing.
- Guiderail Replacement as a result of a car accident - The Public Works Department obtains a direct quote for the guiderail repair. The Town submits the Police Report to the Insurance Company to replace damaged guiderails. The replacement of the guiderails was done by a contractor. Guiderails was a road maintenance item.

Councilor Paul thanked Mr. Masalin for his informative presentation. He stated Ledyard's Public Works Department does a great job. He stated tonight's presentation was video recorded and he encouraged residents to visit the town's meeting portal to view the presentation at:

[http://ledyardct.granicus.com/player/clip/192?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=bd23ab972a0e24b535507656ebf47292](http://ledyardct.granicus.com/player/clip/192?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=bd23ab972a0e24b535507656ebf47292)

**RESULT:** COMPLETED

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Community Relations Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of October 19, 2022.

**Attachments:** [COMM REL-MIN-2022-10-19.pdf](#)

Moved by Councilor Marshall, seconded by Councilor Saums

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

**RESULT:** APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

**MOVER:** John Marshall

**SECONDER:** Bill Saums

**AYE:** 3 Saums, Paul and Marshall

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Continued discussion regarding Black History Month and update on the 2023 Black History Activity/Contest.

Councilor Rodriguez provided an update regarding the status of planning for the Black History Month 2023 Activity/Contest, and she noted the following:

- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Organization - Councilor Rodriguez stated that she spoke with NAACP President Jean Jordan and Secretary Juliet Parker and Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Councilor Crystal Whipple. She stated they have all agreed to help with the program. She stated they planned to meet after the holidays to discuss the program.
- Superintendent of Schools Jason Hartling - Councilor Rodriguez stated as a follow-up to the Community Relations Committee October 19, 2022 meeting that she spoke with Mr. Hartling about transitioning the Black History Month Essay and Poster Activities to the Board of Education. She noted that Mr. Hartling stated the Schools did not have the time or resources to take on the initiative.

Chairman Dombrowski suggested Councilor Rodriguez talk with the Board of Education about transitioning the Black History Month Essay and Poster Activities to them. Councilor Rodriguez stated that she would forward the suggestion to the Board of Education as well.

- February 1, 2023 Black History Month Ceremony - Councilor Rodriguez stated she spoke with Mayor Allyn, III about the town having a short ceremony for Black History Month. She stated that she would keep Mayor Allyn updated on the planning of the ceremony.

Councilor Paul stated he liked the idea of the Board of Education being involved with Black History Month Essay and Poster Activities. He stated he had hoped the Board of Education would agree to take the lead on the Black History Poster Activity and Essay Contest, noting that he believed the schools would be able to do more with the students by focusing additional programs on Black History Month with things like school assemblies, etc. He stated as the Community Relations Committee discussed at their October 19, 2022 meeting that perhaps the Essay Contest winner could read their essay at a Town Council meeting; and as they did last year, the winning posters could be displayed.

**RESULT: CONTINUE**

2. Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Councilor Paul stated he learned a lot from Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin's presentation this evening. He stated that he yearned for more residents to attend the Community Relations Committee's meetings and their Informational Forums because they provide a lot of great information regarding the services to the community.

Chairman Dombrowski noted at their November 7, 2022 meeting the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee discussed working with the Land Use Departments to put together a presentation to help residents understand the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, etc. He noted the complexities of Land Use stating that it involved Regulatory, the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc., He stated Land Use matters were not discretionary, explaining that an Application either met the Regulations or it did not meet the Regulations.

Councilor Paul stated in-light of some of new developments in Gales Ferry such as the Dollar General Store and the Cashman Marine Dredging at the former Dow Chemical property, that residents have been questioning the Land Use process and approvals. He noted the LUPPW Committee discussed ways to provide information to residents pertaining to the structure and

operations of the Town's Land Use process which included posting a *Frequently Asked Question* (FAQ) Sheet and/or uploading short videos on the town's website which would answer land use questions and that could be linked to social media pages. He suggested the Community Relations Committee invite Land Use Director Juliet Hodge to give a presentation regarding the Land Use Departments in February or March, 2023.

Councilor Saums thanked the residents who attended tonight's meeting in-person at the Council Chambers to see the Public Works Department Presentation, noting that there were no residents in attendance on-line. He stated it was very informative and that he wished more residents could have seen the presentation.

**RESULT: CONTINUE**

- Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “Informal Conversations in the Park” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Councilor Paul noted at their Community Relations Committee October 19, 2022 meeting the Committee agreed that they would put conversations in the park off until the spring, noting with the shorter daylight hours and colder weather that it would be difficult to gather people outside.

**RESULT: NO ACTION**

- Continued discussion regarding the possibility to schedule joint meetings with the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation to discuss items of mutual interest.

Councilor Saums stated he did not have an update, noting that it was unfortunate that the previously scheduled had to be cancelled due to illness. He stated that he would continue to work with MPTN Council Member Crystal Whipple to discuss possible dates to reschedule their Informal Gathering.

Councilor Paul stated it was great to see all of the area First Responders from Ledyard, Gales Ferry and the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation come together at the October 9, 2022 *First Responders Clam Chowder Fish Fry Community Event*.

**RESULT: CONTINUE**

- Continued discussion to present information to bring awareness to October being “Depression and Mental Health Month”.

Councilor Paul stated October was “*Depression and Mental Health Month*” and he noted Brian’s Healing Hearts Foundation Ann Dagle attended the Town Council’s October 26, 2022 meeting to provide information regarding depression, suicide prevention and the support services the Foundation provided. He stated the presentation was video recorded and he encouraged residents to visit the town’s meeting portal to view the presentation at: [http://ledyardct.granicus.com/player/clip/165?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=894724b1ff5232685bb383f743e8b7eb](http://ledyardct.granicus.com/player/clip/165?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=894724b1ff5232685bb383f743e8b7eb).

Councilor Paul concluded by stating 211 was available for those suffering from depression to call 211 to obtain counseling. He also noted the new Mental Health Hotline number was 988, noting that people could call or text the Hotline number.

**RESULT: COMPLETED**

- Review comments received at the July 20, 2022 Informal Conversation with residents at the Park on East Drive.

Councilor Rodriguez stated she spoke to a woman who lived on a street close to East Drive.

She stated the woman noted that she was a lifetime Ledyard resident and that she provided positive comments regarding the improvements to the Park on East Drive.

Chairman Dombrowski stated Mr. Jamison has reached out to him a few times and he noted that Mr. Jamison had positive comments regarding the work that Parks & Recreation has done with the new lights, and the wood chips for the playscape areas, etc.

Councilor Paul stated he visited the Park on East Drive (Christy Hill Park), and he noted the lights and other improvements looked great. He thanked Parks & Recreation Director Scott Johnson, Jr. and the Parks & Recreation Department for the work they have done in the Park. He stated during the July 20, 2022 gathering members of the Town Council had discussed following-up with residents and revisiting the Park once the improvements were completed. However, he stated with the shorter day light hours that they may need to wait until spring. He noted because some of the work took some time, that he wanted to also thank the residents for their patience.

Councilor Saums suggested inviting the residents in the East Drive Park area to a Community Relations Committee to follow up with them on the progress of the improvements and security issues.

Councilor Paul stated the Committee could invite the East Park Drive residents to their January or February, 2023 meeting.

**RESULT:** CONTINUE

7. Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee  
None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Review and discuss the National League of Cities “Responding to Racial Tension in your Municipality”

<<https://www.nlc.org/resource/responding-to-racial-tension-in-your-city-a-municipal-action-guide/>>

**Attachments:** [National League of Cities- Responding to Racial Tension-2022-06-22..pdf](#)  
[National League of Cities- Responding to Racial Tension--28 Pages- 2022-06-22..pdf](#)  
[CCM Guide Racial Tension-Grabner E-mail-2022-06-23.pdf](#)  
[National League of Cities Guide Racial Tensions-2022-06-22-e-mail Mayor & Police dated 2022-11-17.pdf](#)

Councilor Paul noted the National League of Cities “*Responding to Racial Tension in your Municipality*” was included in the Agenda packet on the meeting portal. He stated the Community Relations Committee briefly discussed the Guide at their October 19, 2022

meeting and that they kept it on their agenda for discussion this evening to answer questions.

Councilor Paul went on to note that the Guide was an interesting read, noting that it provided the following:

- How to respond and defuse to racial tension in the community; and
- Offered checklists and ideas to the town's administration and to local law enforcement.

Councilor Saums noted the Guide suggested establishing a Chief Spokesman and that it included a specific Checklist for Police Departments. He offered to forward the Guide to Police Chief John Rich and the Mayor.

The Committee agreed to keep this on the December 21, 2022 Agenda to follow-up with the Police Department and the Mayor.

**RESULT:** CONTINUE

2. Any other New Business proper to come before the Committee.

None.

IV ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Marshall moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Saums

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Paul  
Committee Chairman

Community Relations Committee

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