



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Chairman S. Naomi
Rodriguez

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

5:00 PM

Town Hall Annex Building - Hybrid
Format

In -Person: Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building

Remote Participation Information Noted Below:

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

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88095022854?pwd=KFOWCeOuaRYyKD8EfoagsbY47FxyyG.1>

by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 880 9502 2854; Passcode789723

I CALL TO ORDER

the Meeting was called to order by Committee Chairman Councilor Saccone at 5:00 p.m. at the Council Chambers Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Saccone welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He stated for the Town Council Finance 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-Legistar Meeting Portal.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Tony Saccone
Jessica Buhle
Tim Ryan

In addition, the following were present:

S. Naomi Rodriguez Town Council Chairman
April Brunell Town Councilor
Fred Allyn, II Mayor
Matthew Bonin Finance Director
Steve Masalin Public Works Director/Town Engineer
Eric Treaster Resident & Board of Appeals Committee Member
Roxanne Maher Administrative Assistant

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

Mr. Eric Treaster, 10 Huntington Way, Ledyard, noted about 25 - 30 years ago the townspeople voted at a Referendum to turn down adding a swimming pool at the High School. He questioned if residents formed a committee and raised the money to construct a swimming pool at the High School, whether the town would be willing to take on such an undertaking.

Mr. Treaster continued by addressing the upcoming Property Revaluation scheduled for 2025. He noted as a member of the Board of Assessment Appeals that he would urge the Town to hire a Revaluation Vendor who would contact residents to allow them to enter their homes. He stated for the last Revaluation there appeared to be a lot of assumptions made because the Vendor did not take the time to contact homeowners to schedule time to enter the homes.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated that Mr. Treaster was correct in that the next Property Revaluation was scheduled for 2025, noting that state statute required Municipalities to conduct full Revaluation every 10-years. However, he explained that the State was looking to get all of the Municipalities on the same Property Revaluation schedule, therefore, he stated that Ledyard may be looking at a Revaluation in 2025 and again in 2029. He went on to note that Vendor the town used for the last Revaluation was no longer in business.

Councilor Ryan commented on the challenge for all the towns to be on the same Property Revaluation on schedule, questioning whether there were enough Appraisal Companies in the area to handle the Property Revaluations if all the towns were on the same schedule.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Board of Education ltr dated February 2, 15, 2024 regarding Budget Transfers.

Board of Education ltr dated 2/15/2024 re: Budget Transfers dated 2/15/2024

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Finance Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2024

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

VI. Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Matthew Bonin reported on the following: (1) Journal Entries - Mr. Bonin stated that Fiscal Assistant Nancy Michard was doing a great job with getting

caught up on the posting of receipts and outstanding billing. He noted the revenues were currently updated through January, 2024; (2) Board of Education Capital Account - Mr. Bonin stated with the Town Council's February 14, 2024 action to set-up a Board of Education Capital Fund for Non-Bonded Board of Education Capital Items to reside outside of the Town's Capital Non-recurring Fund (CNR Fund 210) that both the General Government and Board of Education's Finance Departments have been busy, explaining that they were working to close all of the Purchase Orders for the Board of Education's capital expenses and opening new Purchase Orders from the new Board of Education Capital Accounts.

RESULT: CONTINUE

VII. Financial Reports

Finance Director Matthew Bonin provided an overview of the following Financial Reports:

- Expenditure Year-to Date Report- February 29, 2024

Mr. Bonin noted that the expenditures were tracking as budgeted with the exception of the following:

- ✓ Specially Approved Counsel was trending over budget. Mr. Bonin noted at their January 10, 2024 meeting the Town Council approved to overspend Account #10110205-53610 (Specialty Approved Counsel) through June, 30, 2023 at their January 10, 2024 meeting.
- ✓ Defined Contribution Plan which was for the town's contribution that matches employees contributions was projected to fall short.
- Revenue Year-to Date Report- January 31, 2024
 - ✓ Tax Collection was currently at 96% for the year.
 - ✓ Nursing Fee Revenues were continuing to fall short of the projected budget.
 - ✓ Interest Earned was currently at \$525,000. Mr. Bonin noted that the town received another \$10,000 in interest earnings during the month of February, 2024; noting it was not reflected in this report.

RESULT: CONTINUE

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. MOTION to authorize a bid waiver for W. R. Allen & Co., Inc. of Uncasville, CT, in the amount of \$28,250 for Bid No. 2024-02 (Food Pantry Siding Improvements) due to lack of three bids, in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "An Ordinance for Purchasing".

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin explained that the town solicited bids to re-side the Linda C. Davis Food Pantry. However, he noted only two bids were received as follows: (1) W. R. Allen & Co., Inc. \$28,250; and (2) Turner Home Improvement \$38,160.

Councilor Ryan questioned the siding material. Mayor Allyn noted that the building was currently sided with an older generation of vinyl that was well over 25 years old. He stated the product would be a newer generation of vinyl siding. He went on to explain that this work would include repairing some damage that was caused by someone who drove into the building some time ago. He stated a double door would be removed and would be replaced with a single door; and that a covered entry area would be added to the building to shelter the Volunteers out of the weather when handing out supplies to guests. This project was being paid for by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Tim Ryan

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 3 Saccone, Buhle and Ryan

2. MOTION to authorize a bid waiver for Guaranteed Roofing of Canterbury, CT, in the amount of \$38,477 for Bid No. 2024-01 (Senior Center Re-shingling) due to lack of three bids, in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "An Ordinance for Purchasing".

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin explained that the town solicited bids to re-shingle the Senior Citizens Center roof located at 12 Van Tassel Drive, Gales Ferry. He explained that they had expected more bids to come in, noting that the town sent the Requests for Proposals (RFP) to roofing contractors who had previously done work in the town. However, he stated because only one bid was received that a bid waiver was being requested in accordance with the town's procedures.

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Tim Ryan

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 3 Saccone, Buhle and Ryan

3. MOTION to approve six tax refunds in the combined total amount of \$22,426.00 with each exceeding \$2,400.00 in accordance with tax collector departmental procedures.

· Allen, Lisa &/or John	\$2,811.11
· Arthur, Barbara	\$3,256.25

· Esposito, Charles &/or Mary	\$4,197.31
· Kineo Properties LLC	\$3,602.19
· Nerurkar, Sheela	\$4,254.17
· Opalenik, Matthew &/or Holly	\$4,304.97
TOTAL:	\$22,426.00

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: It was noted that in accordance policies established for the Tax Collection Department, refunds to taxpayers exceeding \$2,400 are to be approved by the Town Council. The paperwork was in order for each of these refunds, noting that a double payment was made, noting that both the property owners and the mortgage escrow companies paid the taxes.

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Tim Ryan

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 3 Saccone, Buhle and Ryan

4. MOTION to approve the following two tax refunds in the combined total amount of \$5,874.55 with each exceeding \$2,400.00 in accordance with tax collector departmental procedures.

· Helming, John C.	\$3,033.20
· MPTN Finance Department	\$2,841.35
TOTAL:	\$5,874.55

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: It was noted that the tax refunds were a regular occurrence as noted in Item #3 above.

Councilor Ryan questioned the reason there were two separate motions for the tax refunds on tonight's agenda. Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher explained that this was an administrative issue, noting that the Legislative File was submitted for the first group tax refunds and then some additional tax refunds were received, which was the reason the second Legislative File was submitted. She noted that the Mayor approved tax refunds that were under \$2,400.

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

MOVER: Tim Ryan

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE: 3 Saccone, Buhle and Ryan

5. Any other New Business proper to come before the Committee.
None.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

1. Continued discussion regarding the status and possible changes to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Capital Non-Recurring (CNR) Fund based on the American Rescue Act Funding (ARPA) and the process to approve ARPA Projects and expend ARPA Funding.

The Finance Committee, Mayor Allyn, III, Finance Director Matthew Bonin, and Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin discussed the status of the ARPA Projects relative to the allocation of surplus funds from completed projects and to consider and prioritize remaining needs. The Group reviewed the Updated ARPA List spreadsheet dated March 6, 2024 (see attached) .

The Group continued by discussing the following in further detail:

- ***Sandy Hollow Guiderail Replacement Project \$335,857.50*** - Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated that he and Highway Superintendent Joe Tillman met with Atlas Industrial Services Representative Daniel Boone last week and walked the 1.5 mile stretch of Sandy Hollow Road. He noted that Atlas Industrial Services was on the State's Contracts Bid List and has provided a proposal in the amount of \$335,857 to replace the guiderails on the west side of the road with Oxidizing Weathering Steel Guiderails, noting that the galvanized guiderails would remain on east side of the road. He explained that because Atlas Industrial Services was willing to allow the Public Works Crew to work with them on removing the existing guiderails and for traffic control that they were able to realize some savings there. He continued to explain they the town would also receive some revenue for the sale of the old steel cable (approximately \$1,500), noting that these funds could either be allocated to the Undesignated Fund or be used to off-set the cost of the guiderail replacement.

Mr. Masalin went on to state if the Town Council approved the use of \$300,000 from the ARPA Funding that he could use some funding from the Town Aid Road grant (TAR) as well as funding from other Public Works Accounts such as road maintenance, etc. to provide the \$35,875.50 balance needed for the replacement of the Sandy Hollow Guiderail project. He explained that although he has been including the Sandy Hollow Guiderail Replacement Project in the Public Works Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for several years, that due to budget constraints and other competing projects taking priority the Guiderail Replacement Project has not been funded.

Councilor Ryan stated they had an *Uncommitted ARPA Balance in the amount of \$225,962.49*. Therefore, he stated if they wanted to move forward with the replacement of the Sandy Hollow Guiderails this year that they would need to include the project in the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Budget with \$225,962.49 coming from ARPA and the balance in the amount of \$109,895.01 coming from the tax levy. He stated another option would be to replace as much of the guiderail as they could with the \$225,962 ARPA Funding. Mayor Allyn, III, noted that the proposal in the amount of \$335,857 was already based on a reduction of 575 liner feet of guiderail.

Councilor Ryan stated that he was not opposed to the replacement of the Sandy Hollow guiderails, however, he stated before they made a decision regarding the Guiderail Replacement Project, that they needed to know the costs of the Sewer Line

Extension Project (Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III).

- ***Sewer Line Extension Project Phase I \$1,200,000-*** Mayor Allyn stated Phase I of the Sewer Line Extension was currently in-process. He explained as been discussed at previous Finance Committee meetings, there has been some savings because they coordinated this work with the construction of the Multi-Use Pathway (pedestrian and bicycle) along Colonel Ledyard Highway, which was being paid for by the by \$2,540,000 LoTCIP Grant funding (Local Transportation Capital Improvement Plan).

Mayor Allyn noted projected cost estimates as follows:

- ✓ ***Phase I: \$1,200,000*** ARPA funding allocated; Expended to Date: \$104,100; Current Balance \$731,668.43.

Mayor Allyn stated as discussed at the Finance Committee's February 21, 2024 meeting, \$50,000 was needed to hire a Clerk of the Works, who would be in the field on a daily basis to witness and oversee that work the was being done properly and that the pipes/connections etc.

- ✓ ***Phase II: \$950,000*** ARPA Funding allocated and would bring the sewer line from the High School to Pennywise Lane.

Mayor Allyn noted an email from Water Pollution Control Authority Chairman Ed Lynch in which he stated that Weston & Sampson Engineers provided a cost of \$381,900 for the engineering work for Phase II. The Group noted that this dollar amount seemed to be high compared to the engineering costs for Phase II.

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated although he agreed that \$318,900 seemed high for the Phase II engineering work, that because the Multi-Use Pathway and Phase I of the sewer line extension project were being done simultaneously that there may have been some savings in the engineering costs for both projects. Mayor Allyn noted that he would ask Mr. Lynch to clarify whether the \$381,900 included more work than just the engineering portion for Phase II.

Mayor Allyn suggested while they were installing the sewer line that they amend the contract to run the pipe up Fairway Drive to the Colby Drive intersection, noting that this would bring the sewer line halfway to the Habitat for Humanity house and halfway to the proposed Apartment Development and noting that it that it would require about 740 linear feet of pipe.

Finance Director Matthew Bonin stated that currently the ARPA Uncommitted Balance was \$225,962.49, noting with the addition of the \$300,000 for the Sandy Hollow Guiderail Replacement Project that the ARPA funds would be over committed by \$74,038.

Councilor Saccone addressed the need to replace the dilapidated Guiderails on Sandy Hollow Road. He commented on the safety/protection for motorists stating that it would not take much to push through the current guiderails.

Councilor Buhle addressed the ARPA Funding timeline noting that they needed to have contracts in place by December 31, 2024 and fully completed by December 31, 2026. She stated that she believed there would be some additional surplus funds

remaining from other completed projects to make up the \$74,038 difference for the replacement of the Sandy Hollow Guiderails.

- MOTION to recommend the Town Council update the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects List and allocations as follows:

- (1). Add the \$300,000 Sandy Hollow Road Guardrail Replacement Project.
- (2). Transfer \$35,000 from the Gales Ferry Sidewalk Project (remove from spreadsheet line 45) to the Gales Ferry Corridor Study (add to spreadsheet line 25) for an updated total allocation of \$50,000.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle
Discussion: (See above).

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

The Finance Committee continued to discuss the Capital Projects relative to the use of the *American Rescue Act* Funding (ARPA).

Councilor Ryan thanked Mayor Allyn, III, for providing a list of some of the smaller Capital Projects that were included on the upcoming Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Capital Improvement List (CIP). He noted that during the Finance Committee’s February 21, 2024 meeting they discussed possibly using some ARPA funding to facilitate some of the smaller quick turnaround capital projects where they could get contracts in place (obligate the funds) before December 31, 2024 ARPA requirements, and to also help bring projected mil rate increase down. The Finance Committee reviewed the attached List

POSSIBLE ARPA CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Department	Description	Priority	Request	Mayor	Notes
Public Works	Light Equipment	SR, IOE(M)	16,000	16,000	Chainsaws, trimmers, blowers, etc
Library	Computers	SR	4,000	4,000	
Police	Cruisers	SR	114,055	114,055	2 cruisers
	Office chairs	SR	12,904	12,904	
Ledyard Fire Co.	Auto locking system	DF	23,000	23,000	Existing system failed, 23 years old
Gales Ferry Fire Co.	Protective clothing	RPH	13,000	13,000	Buys one set of turnout gear
Public Schools	LHS Boiler repairs	DF/SR	22,500	22,500	
	JWL Nurses cabs	DF/EPS	8,000	8,000	
	LHS Area of refuge	RPH/NEF	15,000	15,000	

Mayor Allyn noted that several of these capital items were allocations for long-term replacement costs for items such as fire and rescue apparatus, public works equipment, etc. He also stated that the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget in the amount of \$67,082,148 that he delivered to the Town Council on March 4, 2024, included these projects, was calling for a 0.38 mil rate increase, with these projects. Therefore, he stated the proposed budget was very lean, noting that he did not believe that paying for these capital expenses with ARPA funding would provide much value.

Councilor Buhle excused herself from the meeting, noting that she had another commitment to attend. Councilor Buhle left the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

RESULT: CONTINUE

2. Continued discussion regarding potential uses of the revenue received from Public Act No.21-58 “An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management” in accordance with “Resolution Regarding Revenues Received from Beverage Container Surcharges” (Nip Bottle Revenue) adopted on June 8, 2022.

Councilor Ryan stated that he drafted a spreadsheet similar to the American Rescue Plan Act Projects List/Funding to track the revenues and expenditures of the Surcharge Revenues (Nip Bottles) and to plan for recurring expenses such as the street sweeper, the maintenance of Solar Powered Trash Compactors, as well as new purchases, etc. He noted that the challenge in maintaining the Surcharge Revenues (Nip Bottles) spreadsheet was that they did not know how much revenue the town would receive from the State each year because it was based on the number of nip bottles sold in Ledyard. He stated because Councilor Buhle suggested they use some of the Surcharge Revenues to purchase solar powered trash compactors that he would defer reviewing the details of the spreadsheet to their March 20, 2024 meeting, so Councilor Buhle could participate in their discussion.

The Finance Committee and Mayor Allyn briefly discussed the proposed Legislation which would allow Municipalities to ban the sale of nip bottles in their towns. They agreed that even if a town banned the sale of nip bottles that it would not prevent people from purchasing the nip bottles in other towns and throwing the bottles out their car windows in Ledyard.

RESULT: CONTINUE

3. Discussion regarding potential uses for the funding received from the National Opioid Settlement Payments.

RESULT: NO ACTION

4. Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee.

None.

X ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Saccone moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Ryan.
VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

	Anthony Saccone, Sr.	
	Committee Chairman	Finance
Committee		

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