TOWN OF LEDYARD

CONNECTICUT

TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman Gary St. Vil

MINUTES
LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025; 7:00 PM
HYBRID FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

DRAFT

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman St. Vil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building.

Chairman St. Vil welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He 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
William Barnes	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
April Brunelle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Ty (Earl) Lamb	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Adrienne Parad	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Excused	
James Thompson	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Gary St. Vil	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS

Special Election for State Representative 139th Assembly District January 13, 2026
(Only District #3 in Ledyard)

Councilor Parad read information provided by the Registrars regarding the January 13, 2026 Special Election as follows:

Four Days of Early Voting:
Location: Register's Office - 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway in the Registrar's Office, lower level.

- 1/8/2026 - Thursday 10am- 6pm
- 1/9//2026 - Friday 10am- 6pm
- 1/10/2026 Saturday 10am- 6pm
- 1/11/2026 Sunday 10am- 6pm

Election Day
Tuesday, January 13, 2026

Time:
6am-8pm

Location:
District #3 - Voter Polling Location will be at the ***Juliet Long School Gymnasium***, 1854 Route 12, Gales Ferry

Absentee Ballots:
Absentee Ballots available starting on Monday December 15, 2025.

Absentee Ballots would be handled by Town Clerk, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Town Hall, upper level.

V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

Mr. M. Dave Schroeder, Jr., 290 Whalehead Road, Gales Ferry, congratulated the members of the Town Council that were reelection and members that were the newly elected.

Mr. Schroeder stated that he was present this evening to urge the Town Council to begin the process to restore the Planning Commission and the Zoning Commission as two separate bodies. He noted that historically these Commissions had distinct roles: the Planning Commission created the town's long-term vision through the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), and the Zoning Commission wrote and enforced the regulations needed to implement that vision. He stated that division created a natural check and balance.

Mr. Schroeder went on to state as many on the Town Council know, the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) was a state-mandated document that sets out the long-term goals and most desirable land uses for a town. It was meant to guide decisions about housing, infrastructure, conservation, economic development, and community character. Under Connecticut law—specifically CGS 83(a)-all zoning regulation changes and map amendments must be evaluated for consistency with the POCD; and the subdivision rules must advance its objectives.

Mr. Schroeder continued by stating that this only worked as a safeguard if the body that rewrites the POCD was not the same body that rewrites the Zoning Regulations. He stated when the commissions were merged in 2012, that safeguard disappeared, noting that this was not a theoretical concern. He stated that they saw the consequences in the very first rewrite cycle after the two commissions were combined; starting around 2020, when the combined Planning & Zoning Commission rewrote roughly 70% of the Zoning Regulations and used changes they had just made to the POCD as the pretext to justify the zoning changes.

Mr. Schroeder noted that one of the most troubling outcomes was the large expansion of *By-Right Development* —because the new POCD now called for it. However, he stated the problem was that the protections residents rely on such as: Standards for neighborhood character, density, building design, traffic safety, environmental impacts, noise, odor, dust were activated only when a project required a Special Permit. He stated in expanding *By-Right Development*, that those safeguards were no longer triggered for many proposals (e.g. high density multi-family housing, an extremely contentious issue). He stated that the result was that many of the safeguards residents believed were protecting their neighborhoods no longer applied; noting that this was only one of the many far-reaching changes that were made in the last regulatory update.

Mr. Schroeder commented that the merger also allowed the commission to make decisions based on subjective or speculative economic arguments under its "*planning*" role, rather than applying the zoning regulations strictly and consistently. He stated that this broad interpretive latitude undermined predictability for residents and applicants; and was a formula for litigation. He noted as an example that they have already seen the current litigated case regarding PZ#24-2RESUB 96, 97, and 100 Stoddards Wharf Road, noting that the Planning & Zoning Commission took it upon themselves to approve a housing development in a public watershed, and now Ledyard was being sued by the Town of Groton.

Mr. Schroeder concluded his comments by stating that this situation should concern everyone, noting that too much policy-making authority was now concentrated in one body with no internal counterbalance, and their current regulations that were adopted under this merged structure, no longer reflected the protective intent people assumed were in place. Mr. Schroeder stated that these were only two of the many reasons to separate the two commissions. He stated during the recent General Election Campaign that many candidates expressed a willingness to revisit how and why the two commissions were merged; and how other towns avoid these problems. He stated that he also heard members of the Town Council say that Zoning Regulations were supposed to protect residents, noting that was true in principal, but as illustrated since the 2022 Zoning Regulations rewrite took affect that was no longer happening. He asked the Town Council to consider the points he presented this evening and that they decide for themselves: (1) Whether the combined planning & zoning commission holds too much policy making authority; and (2) Whether that authority promotes the values and visions of the majority of Ledyard's residents rightly expect. He stated that he urged the Town Council take the steps needed to restore the checks and

balances that once existed to ensure that their Plan of Conservation (POCD) and their Zoning Regulations promote and protect the future they all want for the good of their town.

Mr. Eric Treaster, 10 Huntington Way, Ledyard, stated that his comments would take about 7 minutes and he asked Chairman St. Vil to allow him the additional time this evening. Chairman St. Vil responded stating that he would allow Mr. Treaster the requested 7 minutes this evening.

Mr. Treaster stated that he was present this evening to suggest reasons why the Planning and Zoning Commission should be restored as separate commissions. He stated that he served on the Ledyard Zoning Commission from 1985 to the end of 2012, noting that he served as the Zoning Commission Chairman from 2011-2012, when in 2012 the Town Council combined the Zoning and Planning Commissions into a single commission.

Mr. Treaster provided some background noting that Ledyard adopted its first set of zoning regulations in 1963. The Town Council served as a combined Planning and Zoning Commission until about 1971, when it split the Commission into a separate Planning Commission and Zoning Commission. At the end of 2012, to encourage commercial development, the Town Council recombined the Commissions into the current Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Treaster stated that the 1963 Zoning Regulations originally consisted of ***29 pages***. He noted between 1985 and 2011, while he was serving on the Commission, the Zoning Regulations underwent a series of revisions, including adopting Regulations around 1998. He stated as suggested by Mayor Susan Mendenhall, the Zoning Regulations were written to provide for Age-Restricted Mobile Manufactured Home Land Lease Communities, noting that he wrote those Zonign Regulations, which resulted in the Stonegate Village, which was currently Ledyard's seventeennth largest taxpayer.

Mr. Treaster went on to explain that the Zoning Rewrites also contained Regulations suggested by former Town Planners Bill Haase and Brian Palaia, that designated areas of Gales Ferry and Ledyard Center as "*Village Districts*" and "*Design Districts*" as allowed under the land use statutes, noting that these statutes still exist; and that Gales Ferry and Ledyard Center could be made "*Village Districts*" again, if they so choose to. He stated the Village District Regulations included architectural standards, design requirements, and formal reviews by an Architectural Review Board for commercial developments. He stated by mid-2011, the Zoning Regulations had grown to ***206 pages***.

Mr. Treaster stated in 2012, the Zoning Commission condensed the Regulations to ***139 pages***, which included Regulations for the Village and Design Districts*;* and the Regulations for Age Restricted Affordable Mobile-Manufactured Home Land-Lease Communities, which, in the early 2000s, guided the development of Stonegate Village on Flintlock Road. The Regulations continued to require special permits for most commercial developments, which were necessary to ensure quality development and to avoid risking the preservation of our Town's character. The last vote of the Zoning Commission, before it permanently adjourned on October 11, 2012, was to approve the condensed set of Zoning Regulations.

Mr. Treaster went on to explained for about 14 years, had a history of success with the Zoning Regulations that were in effect between about 1998 and the end of 2012. He stated that they guided the development of the Stonecroft Country Inn on Pumpkin Hill Road, the Pumpkin Hill Convenience Store near the Highlands, and the Two Trees Inn Hotel on Lantern Hill just east of the reservation. Later versions resulted in the development of the Village Market in Ledyard Center, Dime Bank, the Emergency Services Building, the condominiums on Fairway Drive, CVS in Gales Ferry, and the brick building on the Southwest corner of Route117 and Route 214, which at the time was owned by Southern New England Telephone (SNET). He stated that each of these developments required a special permit, noting that they were all quality developments that did not affect the preservation of their Town's rural character or harm property values.

Mr. Treaster continued by stating that after the Planning Commission and Zoning Commission were combined in late 2012, the combined Planning & Zoning Commission relaxed the regulations to encourage more commercial development. It deleted many special permit requirements, replaced the Village and Design Districts with Development Districts,

deleted the design guidelines, deleted the Architectural Review Board, increased the height limits, and deleted regulations for affordable age-restricted land-lease communities. He noted that later in about 2020, the Planning & Zoning Commission removed most of the remaining special permit requirements, and to improve economies of scale and to make the development of multifamily and mixed-use developments more profitable, they increased the height limit to 65 feet for multifamily and mixed use developments in Gales Ferry and Ledyard Center.

Mr. Treaster stated the Zoning Regulations now consist of ***191 pages***. They allow most commercial uses *As-of Right*, including multi-hundred-unit multifamily and mixed-use developments in the Gales Ferry Development District and the Ledyard Center Development District, if the setback and height limits were satisfied; and the development conformed with the building and health codes. He noted as an example, the current Regulations would allow, A*s-of-Right*, the 308-unit four- and five story Trident Square Apartment Complex, which was located behind the Chinese Restaurant on Route 12 in Groton, to be built in Gales Ferry and in Ledyard Center.

Mr. Treaster went on to note that there were fewer high-quality commercial developments during the 14 years after 2012, when the commissions were combined, than during the 14 years before 2012, when the two commissions were separate. He stated the 32-unit Ledyard Meadows Estates located at 807 Colonel Ledyard Highway, which was built in 2018, was the only example of quality development between 2012 and today that he was aware of.

Mr. Treaster continued by stating without design guidelines, an architectural review board, parking, a reasonable height limit, and special permit requirements, that it was his opinion that the applications that were likely expected for Sweet Hill Farm, the Cartway property, and properties in Ledyard Center would be for lower quality developments, because special permits were no longer required, that this could place the preservation of the character of their Town at risk. He noted that it was his opinion that the Regulations should not have been relaxed after 2012 for the sake of development. He stated that quality developments encourage the development of more quality projects, which improve their town, and that it was His Opinion that conversely, low-quality developments encourage more low-quality similar projects, ultimately diminishing the character and appeal of their Town.

Mr. Treaster noted that it was His Opinion that by nature, volunteers on Planning Commissions tend to favor economic growth and support recommendations from the Economic Development Commission. They tend to be concerned with growth, water and sewer, affordable housing, open space, subdivisions, and the avoidance of urban sprawl. They were also more likely to support growth for the sake of growth to increase the tax base. He went on to note that it was His Opinion that the volunteer members of Zoning Commissions, on the other hand, were more responsive to concerns regarding the quality of life, traffic, protecting the character of their Town, improving and protecting safety and health, and protecting property values and natural resources. Members of Zoning Commissions tend not to support growth for its own sake. Mr. Treaster noted the following example, the Zoning Commission once spent hours deliberating on Regulations regarding whether chickens and miniature horses should be allowed in residential districts. He stated that he would suspect that most volunteers on a Planning Commission would prefer to work on the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and on long-term planning for their Town's future.

Mr. Treaster went on to note that between 1971 and 2012, while the Commissions were separate, the Zoning Commission met for about 3 hours twice a month. The Planning Commission also met for about 2-3 hours, once a month. After they were combined, the Commission continued to meet for only about 2 or 3 hours, usually once each month. He rhetorically questioned *"How can the combined Commission do a good job in about 3 hours per month, when it previously required about 9 hours per month when they were separate*?; stating that "*It cannot, unless it outsources some of its zoning or planning responsibilities".* Mr. Treaster stated that this was demonstrated by the Commission's recent failure to address the omissions and ambiguities in the current zoning regulations and the conflicting goals in the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). He noted the following example: The costly Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI) Litigation was at least partially caused by a deficient definition of excavation as a major land use, which Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI) interpreted as allowing the quarrying of Mount. Decatur. He stated because of the amount of work and effort required to be knowledgeable in both Zoning and Planning that volunteer commissioners on combined planning and zoning commissions, due to lack of knowledge and

time, often have no choice but to accept guidance from the town planner, who does not live in their Town and may not care about its future. He stated that the Town Planner may also be biased in-favor of or opposed to a development or policy, or may present conflicting information without the Commission's knowledge. He stated that separate commissions would also save money, noting if the two were separate, the Zoning Commission would have more time to prepare and review its Zoning Regulations, and the Planning Commission would have more time to update its Plan of Conservation and Development. He noted as an example; that the Town Planner recently asked the Town Council for funds to hire a consultant to help her update the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), even though the commission has not yet had time to resolve the conflicts in the current Plan of Conservation and Development, and the update was not due for another four years. He noted that the town planner also asked for $2,500 to hire a consultant to prepare a Zoning Regulation change to address the parking deficiencies in the current regulations for multifamily and mixed-use developments. He stated that these types of expenses would be reduced if the Town had separate Zoning Commission and Planning Commissions noting that separate Commissions would help free-up time for the Town Planner to focus on planning rather than administrative duties. He went on to comment that it was His Opinion that separate commissions also help to create a check-and balance that would be good for the Town. They would also result in better regulations and development, as was the case until 2012, when the commissions were combined.

Mr. Treaster concluded his comments by urging that the Planning and Zoning Commission revert to separate commissions, as it did in 1971. He stated that it would be good for their Town and it was worth considering.

Mr. Brandon Sabbag, 16 Nutmeg Drive, Gales Ferry, began his comments by stating that they should listen to what Mr. Treaster was saying, noting that he has been doing this for 41 years. Mr. Sabbag continued by congratulating the members of the Town Council who were reelected and newly elected for the first time. He addressed the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget preparation. He stated after the voters turned down the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget twice that the residents did not have a lot of confidence in their local government. He stated this was a turning point for their town, noting that the Town Council had the opportunity to fight for a 0% budget increase. He noted the new property reevaluation assessments that residents received, and he thanked Councilor Buhle and Councilor Garcia-Irizarry for responding to residents' concerns on social media. He stated the best way to restore residents' confidence was to do their best not to have a huge increase in taxes for the upcoming the Fiscal Year 2026/2027. Thank you.

Mr. Mike Cherry, 5 Whippoorwill Drive, Gales Ferry, attending remotely via Zoom, stated he attended last night's Special Finance Committee meeting and he congratulated the Committee for putting together an excellent draft Budget Letter of Directive for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget Preparation. He stated during the meeting a comment was made that last year's (fy 25/26) Budget Letter of Directive was not followed because when the budget was presented to the Town Council there were a lot of reasons that money needed to be spent. He asked for the upcoming year that they follow the Budget Letter of Directive for Fiscal Year 2026/2027. He stated as Mr. Sabbag mentioned that the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget was not approved by Referendum, noting that the Town Council had to approve a budget. He stated that he would like to see a Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget that was fair, funded the needs of the town, and would get approved in the first Referendum, because everybody agreed that was what they needed to do. Thank you.

Chairman St. Vil thanked the residents for their comments.

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Barnes stated tonight was his first Administration Committee meeting serving as a member of the Committee. He stated based on their discussion that he was optimistic that there was a path forward for the proposed "*An Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission",* that would have bipartisan support. He thanked Councilor Garcia-Irizarry for facilitating the discussion and being open to his suggestions.

Councilor Brunelle cautioned everyone to look out for the deer. She encouraged residents to read the Events Magazine Volume 6, 2025 that was recently delivered to every household. She noted the many Parks & Recreation Programs available for both kids and adults to participate in this winter.

Councilor Thompson thanked the residents for their comments this evening, noting that he appreciated their interest in their town and the he would take their concerns to heart. He stated he enjoyed seeing civic engagement and hoped to see more of the seats filled at future Town Council meetings.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated after a decade Ledyard's High School Football Team played in their second playoff game on Monday, December 8, 2025. She stated their first playoff game was against Jonathan Law High School noting it was an exciting game with a score of Ledyard 32 and Jonathan Law 29. She stated unfortunately Ledyard's second playoff game was against the State Champion Killingly High School, noting that Killingly would be going to the State Championship for the second consecutive year. She commended Ledyard High School Football Coach Mr. Mike Serricchio and all of the coaches for their work with the students, noting that they were amazing. She stated that her son has been playing football since he was a High School Sophomore and that she has not seen him as happy as he has been playing for Coach Serricchio.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry concluded her comments by wishing everyone a good Holiday and a Happy New Year, noting that she looked forward to starting their work on the annual budget and on new clean energy initiatives.

Councilor Lamb commented on the following: (1) December 7, 2025 Nathan Lester House – Yuletide Event – Councilor Lamb recognized the Ledyard Garden Club, Ledyard Historic District Commission, the Historical Society, and others that made the event a great success, noting that the parking lot was overflowing; (2) High School Civic Group – Councilor Lamb stated the Program was another avenue to get the Students involved in the Board of Education, and to build-up their Student Government, and to have a voice; (3) Potential to Build Bridges with the Board of Education and through the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Councilor Lamb stated it would be great to make a connection with the Board of Education, and he suggested the Committee include a discussion regarding this initiative on their agenda; (4) Finance Committee – Councilor Lamb stated as the former Board of Education Finance Committee Chairman that he hoped Councilor Buhle would build a relationship with the Board of Education's Finance Committee and that they would schedule joint meetings and get the conversation going; (5) Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee December 8, 2025 meeting – (a) Historic Designation of the Spicer Homestead Ruins - Councilor Lamb noted that the work to seek a Historic Designation for the Spicer Homestead Ruins had stalled, but that he believed they had a good path and general agreement to move the initiative forward; (b) Strategic Plan for Town Property- Councilor Lamb stated the Board of Education had a very good prioritized Capital Plan. He stated that the Town needed to work with Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin on a Capital Plan for the Town. He went on to state that they needed to develop a strategy, and he questioned whether they were going to build new schools; or refit existing schools, questioning what's the strategy? He stated they needed to have a joint team working with the Board of Education to come up with a strategy, noting that the Board of Education's Capital Plan may have a $600,000 Project; however, he stated they may have a $45 Million problem the following year. Therefore, he stated they needed to have a long-term plan. He stated if they had a vision that he could help the Town Council work together with the Board of Education; (6) Town Committees – Liaison Assignments – Councilor Lamb stated that he attended the Economic Development Commission's December 2, 2025 meeting, the Inland Wetland & Watercourses Commission's December 2, 2025 meeting, the America 250 Planning Committee's December 9, 2025 meeting, the Special Finance Committee December 9, 2025 meeting, and the Conservation Commission's December 9, 2025 meeting. He stated all the volunteers who serve the town had great ideas, and he encouraged them to attend the Town Council meetings to report on what they were working on. He stated that he hoped that the Town Council Liaison's would be involved with their assignments.

Councilor Parad commented on the following: (1) Ledyard High School Civic Day – Councilor Parad stated this year was the first time she had the opportunity to attend the High School Civic Day that Councilor Lamb mentioned. She stated they spoke with six groups of tenth graders about their Civic Engagement Projects; and the things that they were interested in; and how they would like their future to look. She noted the students wanted to see safe roads, more sidewalks, less dependence on fashion, more accessibility to clean air and renewable energy, free lunch for all students and not just for those who qualify. She stated that she asked the students what was getting in the way to make all those things happen, noting that they had to look back to look forward; (2) Hanukkah – December 15, 2025 – Councilor Parad noted that everyone knows when Christmas was, so she wanted to acknowledge the Hanukkah Holidays that would take place over eight nights; (3) Ledyard Education Advanced Foundation (LEAF) will debut a Mini-Documentary on December 18, 2025 – Councilor Parad noted a Ledyard High School Sophomore made a Documentary on former Ledyard Teacher Lance Rockefeller. She stated the Documentary will be airing at the High School during their Coffee House time; and she encourage folks to attend.

Councilor Buhle announced that the Ledyard High School Music Holiday Specular would be held on December 12 & 13, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. She stated tickets were $5.00 and she noted that this was one of her favorite events of the holiday season. She continued by stating that she looked forward to everything that this Town Council would be able to accomplish together this term. She stated this was a great group of people with a lot of ambition on how to make and keep their community a better place to live.

Chairman St. Vil stated he wanted to echo the sentiment of his fellow Town Councilors, noting that there was a sense of collaboration, brainstorming, and idea generation. He stated that he would like to harness that; therefore, he would be including an item on the Agenda for each member of the Town Council to have the opportunity to identify one priority for them to accomplish during 2026. He stated it was important for each of them to understand and appreciate the initiatives of their fellow Councilors, so they could focus their energies and support to help improve their Ledyard community.

Chairman St. Vil stated that this was the last Town Council meeting for 2025, and he thanked Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher, his fellow Town Councilors and their Residents. He stated that he hoped all would have a safe and enjoyable holiday season. He encouraged folks to check on a neighbor or friend, noting that there were a lot of people who could use a short visit this time year. He wished all a Safe and Happy Holiday!

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following Town Council Minutes:

- Special Town Council Minutes of October 29, 2025
- Public Hearing Minutes of November 10, 2025
- Public Hearing Minutes of November 12, 2025
- Regular Meeting Minutes of November 12, 2025
- Organizational Meeting Minutes of December 1, 2025

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman St. Vil stated a Communications List has been provided on the meeting portal for tonight's meeting, and he noted there were referrals were listed.

X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening with their Organizational Meeting at 5:15 p.m. noting that the Committee approved their 2026 Meeting Schedule; and agreed to continue to work on the outstanding items of business that were forwarded by the previous Committee. She noted that the Committee also had their first Regular Meeting at 5:30 p.m. and addressed the following: (1) Draft "*Resolution to Establish*

Ad Hoc Committee to Develop Process for Capital Improvement Building Projects; (2) Proposed "*An Ordinance Establishing a Town of Ledyard Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission";* and (3) Several new Appointments reappointments.

Community Relations Committee for Diversity Equity & Inclusion
Councilor Brunelle stated the Committee would be meeting on December 17, 2025, noting that they would have both their Organizational Meeting and Regular Meeting at that time.

Finance Committee
Councilor Buhle stated the Finance Committee met on December 3, 2025 and also held a Special Meeting on December 9, 2025 to draft the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget Letter of Directive. She noted the Finance Committee had ten items on tonight's agenda that she would address later this evening.

Councilor Buhle went on to state that the recent Property Revaluation Notices have been mailed to residents; and she noted a lot of people were upset. She stated a new budget season was coming and she reminded residents that with the new Property Revaluations that the Mil Rate would not stay at 37 mils.

Chairman St. Vil that Mayor Allyn, III, was aware of some of the residents questions and that he has asked the Tax Assessor to develop a Question and Answer Fact Sheet. Mayor Allyn, III stated that Chairman St. Vil was correct; and that he would report on the Property Revaluations later this evening.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee
Councilor Thompson stated the LUPPW Committee met on December 8, 2025 noting that they held both their Organizational Meeting and a Special Meeting that evening. He stated the LUPPW Committee addressed the following items: (1) Set their 2026 Meeting Schedule – The Committee will continue to meet on the first Monday of the Month at 6:00 p.m; (2) Historic Preservation of the Spicer Homestead Ruins - Historic District Commission Vice-Chairman Karen Parkinson provided some history regarding the Spicer Homestead Ruins; and (3) Town-Owned Land – Agricultural Commission Chairman Bruce Gartska presented a draft *List of Criteria for the Leasing of Town-Owned Land* such as Clark Farm to encourage the properties continue to be used for Agricultural purposes. He stated that he looked forward to working with Councilor Buhle and Councilor Lamb.

Chairman St. Vil stated there was a lot of history regarding the Spicer Homestead Ruins and he suggested Councilor Thompson contact Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher, noting that she was the keeper of the records and was a great resource. He also noted that Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick had some information regarding the process to seek a Historic Designation; and that former members of the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee could also share information regarding the work to-date. He stated the Clark Farm was a beautiful property and he encouraged the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee hike the property this spring.

Liaison Reports

Library Commission
Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated she attended the Library Commission's December 17, 2025 meeting noting that she met the new Library Director Jessica Franco, who was a Ledyard Resident.

Board of Education
Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Board of Education met on November 18, 2025 and addressed the following: (1) Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN) attended the meeting. The Group discussed changes to policies, however, the polices were not approved. Also the MPTN requested they have a Representative attend the Board's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee meetings; (2) Ledyard Middle School False Fire Alarm this fall was due to a faulty smoke detector; (3) 99% of the Impact Aide Forms have been returned to the Central Office; (4) Gallup Hill School Bathroom Fire preliminary Cost Estimate for damages was about $300,000 which included smoke damage throughout the building. The Insurance deductible would be paid from the Board of Education's Operating Budget; (5) Ledyard High

School Juniors Field Trip; (6) Impact Aide – The additional $157,133 received for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 would be used as follows, with the Town Council's approval: (a) $40,000 High School Replacement of Fire Doors; (b) $90,000 Middle School to install system for Hearing Impaired students; (c) $27,000 High School Music Room Renovations; (7) High School Capital Needs. The school was constructed in the 1960's and most of the classrooms were outdated and do not have air conditioning, the boilers needed to be replaced, etc. The Board of Education discussed commissioning a Study which was estimated to cost $75,000 to determine how to implement the capital needs; or whether they should consider a Renovate as New Project, as was done for the Gallup Hill School and the Middle School.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry went on to note the Board of Education held their Organizational Meeting on December 1, 2025 at which time the Members took the Oath of Office.

Chairman St. Vil questioned the funding source for the $75,000 for the High School Study. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Board did not mention the funding source; and she noted that the discussion regarding the Study was on-going.

Councilor Lamb stated that it was time for the Town Council to step-up to be part of the equation regarding a long-term plan.

Economic Development Commission

Councilor Buhle stated the EDC met on December 2, 2025 and she reported that they would be working to create a Small Business Owners Mailing List to share information regarding events and to promote businesses within the town. She stated the List would also be helpful to notify Small Business Owners about upcoming grant opportunities available through organizations such as Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (seCTer); and Woman's Business Development Counsel, etc.

Councilor Lamb noted that the Economic Development Commission also published their Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

Chairman St. Vil stated in reviewing the Economic Development Commission Rotue 12 Corridor Study that was published on the town's website that he had some questions. He asked Councilor Buhle whether the EDC would be willing to attend a Town Council meeting to answer questions; or whether Councilor Buhle could convey their questions to the EDC to help folks understand the overarching plan in Gales Ferry; and how the EDC fits into it. Councilor Buhle stated that she would be happy to pass questions along to the EDC.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Annual Convention on December 2, 2025 - Mohegan Sun Casino – Mayor Allyn stated he along with about 160 Municipal Leaders and Staff attended the event; (2) December 2, 2025 Frozen Fog – Mayor Allyn stated due to frozen fog on the roads Public Works Crews were called out at 3:00 a.m. to treat the roads. He stated due to the timing this would be an overtime event. He stated although the High School trucks were ready that they were inoperable, so Public Works handled the schools that morning as well; (3) Pension Plan – Defined Benefit Plan was 90.7% funded - Mayor Allyn stated the Town had eight years left on the "*tail*"; explaining because the Defined Benefit Plan closed in 2012 they had an eight year window to finish fulfilling the payments so that those who were in the Defined Benefit Plan would have their pension benefits. He stated employees hired after 2012 participate in a Defined Contribution Plan. He thanked the Retirement Board for their work and diligence; (4) Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (seCTer) Annual Meeting – Mayor Allyn stated he attended the Annual Meeting today at the Norwich Inn and Spa noting that Electric Boat- General Dynamics provided a fascinating video on how they previously constructed submarines and how they currently constructed submarines today. He stated although he has attended the Commissioning of the Submarines that he had not seen how the submarines were constructed; (5) Deer Strikes – Mayor Allyn stated Ledyard has had 65 deer strikes this year; as Councilor Brunelle mentioned this evening. He also urged motorists to be careful; (6) Special Election 139 District – January 13, 2026 – Mayor Allyn stated Election Day Voting will be held on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at the Juliet W. Long School from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Early Voting will be held at the Registrar's Office located in the Lower Level of the Town Hall as follows: January 8, 9, 10, 11, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; (7)

Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (seCTer) Rise Grants for Small Businesses – Mayor Allyn the Rise Grants were small amounts of money for capital needs, noting that the grant amounts ranged from $10,000 - $25,000 based on their revenues. He stated the grant funding could not be used for staffing. He stated for a point of contact that interested Small Businesses could contact his Office or the Economic Development Commission; (7) Property Revaluations – Mayor Allyn stated as Chairman St. Vil mentioned the Tax Assessor would be providing a one-two page summary tomorrow that would include a data set, noting that the summary would include some high level assessor calculations. He noted the following: (a) Single Family Homes average increase was 58%; (b) Condominium average increase was 112%; (c) Mobile Home average increase was 86%. He stated that he did not have the data for Commercial & Industrial Property, noting that it was his understanding that the average revaluation was generally flat. He also noted that he did not have the revaluation data for the Motor Vehicles List yet. He stated based on the Revaluation that the Mil Rate would come down significantly, noting that the Mil Rate would be something below 26 Mils or even lower based on how the Motor Vehicles List comes in. He stated the adjusted Mil Rate starting point would be 25.9 Mils assuming all other things being equal. He stated the Town Council should have the Tax Assessors Worksheet tomorrow that they could share; (8) America 250 Planning Committee December 9, 2025 Meeting – Mayor Allyn stated they have had some activities and events, noting on December 17, 2025 they would be having Colonial Baking Contest through the Bill Library. He stated contestants would be making recipes from a 1796 Cookbook, noting that there would be Judges evaluating the entrees. He stated that America 250 Events were planned for February, March, April, May, June, and July, with a culmination of a Big Event on July 4, 2026 (rain date July 5, 2026) at the Historic Nathan Lester House. He stated the Committee would be looking for donations, noting they have a shoestring budget; (9) Open Space – 51 Acres – Mayor Allyn stated he would present a proposal at the Finance Committee's January 7, 2026 meeting to secure an additional 51-acres of Open Space with their partnership with Avalonia Land Conservancy. He stated that Avalonia Land Conservancy has identified and contracted to obtain two more parcels in town to preserve as open space. He stated that he hoped the Town could once again partner with Avalonia Land Conservancy and use some funding from the Town's Open Space Fund, which had a $476,702 Balance to proceed with the proposal. He stated once the Finance Committee and the Town Council agreed with the proposal that Avalonia Land Conservancy would move forward.

Questions to the Mayor

Councilor Barnes noted the Property Revaluations and residents comments on Social Media. He stated although they do not know what the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget would be that it would be helpful if they could provide an assumption so that residents could do a calculation for themselves; particularly because they know that Single Family Homes average increase was 58%; and Condominium average increase was 112%; Mobile Home average increase was 86%. Mayor Allyn, III, stated that although the adjusted starting point of 25.9 mils was not a fixed number; that this was the number residents could use, noting that there were still some unknowns such as the Motor Vehicles. He stated those who were contesting their revaluations were meeting with the Vision Appraisal now, stating that the 25.9 mils was not set in stone, stating the mil rate would not be set until the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget was approved in May, 2026.

Councilor Buhle addressed the Property Revaluations, noting in 2021 624 Shewville Road claimed a farming exemption, but no longer does. She stated in one-year the property saw an increase in their assessed value in the amount of $760,000. She stated the assessed value in 2023 was $19,000; and with the 2025 Assessment it was valued at $788,000 a 3,900% increase, noting the use code on the Vision Appraisal Form was currently not listed as farming related. Mayor Allyn stated 624 Shewville Road was recently purchased by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe (MPTN) for $1.1 million. He stated the property was previously an approved subdivision. Councilor Buhle stated that the Town would receive Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) from the State for the property owned by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe (MPTN). Mayor Allyn stated if the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe (MPTN) took the property "*In Trust*" the town would lose the property as "Taxable Property" and hopefully the Town could regain some of those tax dollars through the PILOT Program; understanding that the State has not fully funded the town for PILOT Properties.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in reading the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Budget that it was proposed that 889 Colonel Ledyard Highway be used for a 1.2 megawatt solar array project. She noted at that time the passive electrical power initiative would be virtually net metered back into the Town Hall, General Government Complex and the Schools. She stated because she did not see anything regarding this green energy project in subsequent budgets she wanted to know what happened. Mayor Allyn, III, noted that 889 Colonel Ledyard Highway was the capped former landfill that was about 15-acres of south slopping land, which was ideal for a solar project. He stated the Solar Company that they were engaged with at that time wanted to sink steel monopoles into the ground. However, he stated that the Department of Energy and Environment Protection (DEEP) was not inclined to do that because there was probably about 20-feet of spongy garbage, and would not be a truly secure mount to the ground. He stated based on the State's concern the town proposed a project that would use balusters that would sit on top of the ground. However, he stated the Solar Company at that time was not confident that they could install a solar array that would stay put without penetrating the ground. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in July, 2025 she read an article in the New London Day Newspaper about Groton entering into a contract with Verogy Solar Development. She stated that Verogy Solar Development was going to pay Groton about $230,000 a year to operate and maintain a solar array on their closed landfill. Therefore, she questioned whether Ledyard could reexplore using the capped landfill again for a solar array project to bring money into the town. Mayor Allyn stated they could absolutely reexplore to see if there were new options, noting that since 2017 there has been some new technology that may afford them to put the solar array on top and not have to penetrate the ground to secure the arrays. He stated some solar companies have contracts through the state with State Bid Contacts and also through Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG), noting the town could seek proposals. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry questioned who would handle this type of initiative Mayor Allyn stated in the past he had handled some of the solar initiatives, however, he stated because this would be on the capped landfill that he would engage Public Works Director /Town Engineer Steve Masalin to look into possible options.

XII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

Finance Committee

1. MOTION to add Flock Group DBA Flock Safety to the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Standing Bid Waiver List.
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
Discussion: Councilor Buhle deferred to Police Chief Rich to provide some background regarding this request to include Flock Group on the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Standing Bid Waiver List.

Police Chief John Rich attending remotely via Zoom, explained that funding was included in the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget to purchase and install four Automated License Plate Readers Devices (ALPR) on the State roadways in Ledyard along Route 12 in Gales Ferry, Route 117 in Ledyard Center, and Route 214. He stated the License Plate Readers were cameras that watch the traffic and make images of the license plates. He provided the following examples of how the License Plate Readers would be used:

- Track Stolen Vehicles – Chief Rich explained that law enforcement had the ability to match the records with the Department of Motor Vehicles records and the on-line processing system to track stolen cars. He stated when a vehicle has been reported stolen that the Police Departments would receive an alert from the License Plate Readers if the vehicle has passed by.
- Investigative Resource – Chief Rich stated the License Plate Readers were also helpful as an investigative resource if a vehicle has been involved in a crime. He stated that Police Officers could obtain a printout of the description of the vehicles that went by the License Plate Reader to see if there were any vehicles that matched the description, included the license plate.
- Locate Missing or Endangered People - Chief Rich stated that the License Plate Readers were also helpful in Amber Alerts and Silver Alerts

Chief Rich went on to explain the License Plate Readers would not be used to:

- Measuer Speed
- Automatically send Tickets
- Do not have facial recognition software

Chief Rich noted that the License Plate Readers do not have some of the other misinformation that has been circulating in cyberspace about these devices.

Chief Rich stated the Ledyard Police Depart and the Ledyard Emergency Communications Dispatch Center reviewed Center Flock Safety and another provider, noting that Flock Safety was the sole provider of this service in their region. He stated that surrounding agencies including the Connecticut State Police, Groton Town, Groton City, Mashantucket Police, Norwich Police, and Stonington Police were all Flock Safety clients. He stated to use the system most effectively for crime prevention and investigation, that it was critical for Ledyard to be able to share and receive ALPR data from their local and state law enforcement partners. He stated because the cost was $12,000 for the current fiscal year, which was above the purchasing threshold, he has requested Flock Safety be included on the Standing Bid Waiver List.

Councilor Barnes noted when venders were included on the Standing Bid Waiver List that he has consistently asked that the expected annual dollar amount be identified, which Chief Rich has done in the commentary and this evening. Therefore, he had no concerns with tonight's request. He noted the importance to know the amount that they were authorizing for each vendor on the Standing Bid Waiver List to ensure they were not bypassing the bid process and the town's financial controls.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Carman Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

2. MOTION to grant a Bid Waiver to Ransome Attachments, 106 Ark Road, Lumberton, NJ 08048, in the amount of $19,500 for a used 2020 Cobra Model S3-90/XS25 screening bucket attachment.
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated that Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin attended the December 3, 2025 Finance Committee meeting noting that the Public Works Department has been researching various attachment options that would leverage the use of their Volvo Excavator that was purchased in 2023 to screen materials such as rocks and roots and would allow them to reuse soil or fill and/or to transport or dispose of the other materials. She stated that Public Works found a *used* screening bucket that would meet their needs for $19,500. She stated the 2020 Cobra Model S3-90/XS25 screening bucket was a lightly *used* unit explaining that it has been sitting in the showroom and was only used once locally last month for a demonstration. She stated for a price comparison that in researching options Mr. Masalin noted that one quote for a comparable *new* screening bucket said the cost would be around $60K and a *refurbished used* screening budget would cost around $46K. She stated that Mr. Maslin explained that if they had a screening device it would result in significant cost savings in materials and in transportation.

Mayor Allyn, III, explained that the piece of equipment the Public Works Department was looking to purchase was a screening bucket that would be attached to the front of the Volvo Excavator. He stated that Public Works gets a lot of materials from various sites and the screening bucket would be used to separate the scrub from the good soil, and the stumps and rocks could then be disposed. He stated that the Public Works Large Equipment Capital Account had the funding for this purchase. He noted as Councilor Buhle mentioned, the screening bucket unit was only used one time for a demo here in Ledyard and that it has been sitting in the showroom, noting that it was *like new*. Councilor Buhle stated the Company shipped the screening bucket from New Jersey to Connecticut to give a demonstration for

someone else who chose not to purchase the unit because it did not suit their needs. Therefore, she stated Ledyard would not have to pay to have the unit transported from New Jersey.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

3. MOTION to grant a Bid Waiver to Schneider Geospatial of Indianapolis, Indiana, in the amount of up-to $15,000 to engage in the Simplistic City Fleet Portal subscription - Vehicle Maintenance and Management Program.
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated that Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin attended the December 3, 2025 Finance Committee meeting noting that Schneider Geospatial was a unique integrated digital asset management software capable of managing fleet, streets sewer, water and more. She stated that the Public Works Department would be transitioning to the Fleet Management Module in Fiscal Year 2026/2027 for all town-owned and the town of Preston's fleet management needs. The reporting capabilities and integration that would occur at the fuel pumps would increase efficiency and extend the longevity of the fleet. She stated the annual hosting cost of $7,500 was nearly half the cost of the current fleet management program contract that would be ending on July 1, 2026. The new Fleet Management Module would provide a more robust fleet management system with additional integration capabilities and reporting features. She stated that Mr. Masalin noted that this was a needed improvement in their maintenance tracking process, because it included the automated insertion of the data collected at the fuel station, and automatically generated and sent the work orders to the mechanics.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

4. MOTION to approve appropriations from the receipt of sales of vehicles through GovDeals in the total amount of $12,994.00 to the following capital accounts as follows:

- $5,300 to Public Works Large Truck CNR Account #21040101-57312;
- $4,194 to Public Works Light Equipment CNR Account #21040101-56314;
- $3,500 to Polce Vehicle CNR Account # 21020101-57510

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle
Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated that periodically the town sells surplus equipment that was at the end of its useful life using the Gov Deals on-line auction site. She stated that $12,994.00 was received from the October/November 2025 sale of surplus equipment as noted above. She stated that it has been the Town's practice to appropriate the revenues to the respective capital reserve fund to supplement/offset direct budgetary appropriations in meeting the lifecycle replacement costs and other needs.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

5. MOTION to appropriate and transfer $11,284.20 from #Account 10110107-56100 (Undesignated) to Account 10114301-51800 (Part-time Wages/Fiscal Assistant II) to increase the hours of Land Use Department Fiscal Assistant II from 20-hours to 35-hours per week to support a demanding workload.
Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Lamb
Discussion: Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick provided some background explaining in October, 2024 the full-time Land Use Fiscal Assistant, II took 12-weeks of maternity leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). She stated to provide coverage during that time the Town temporarily hired Rosanne Kotowasky, who had recently retired from Ledyard's Land Use Department, for 20-hours per week. She stated subsequently, the full-time Land Use Fiscal Assistant II decided not to return to work and resigned on February 6, 2025 to stay home with her child. She stated in an effort to reduce costs, a permanent part-time 20-hour per week Fiscal Assistant, II was hired to replace the full-time 35-hour per week position. However, she explained that the Land Use Department has been overwhelmed with a backload of work noting that during the months of August and September alone they received 237 permits. She noted although the new part-time Fiscal Assistant II has tried to continue to manage to the best of her ability all of her responsibilities, which included all fiscal matters related to the Department, telephone calls, purchase orders and payment of invoices, process permits and collects permit fees, assist with managing the budget, as well as assisting the in-person public requesting information about building, zoning, wetlands & blight matters. Therefore, she stated that it was the professional opinion of the Building Official and herself that to ensure the job was being done efficiently that the Fiscal Assistant II position needed to return to a full-time status. She stated that the part-time 20-hour per week Fiscal Assistant II was already receiving benefits, explaining that the transfer of the $11,284.20 would be to cover the salary for the remainder of this fiscal year through June 30, 2026. She stated that she would be including the full-time Fiscal Assistant II position in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.

Ms. Burdick concluded by noting as of December 3, 2025 Building Department Account Contributions that go into the General Fund were as follows:

- State Fee Account 21225A $ 6,481.79
- Town Retainage $ 266.37
- Building Permit Account 47040 $ 349,179.98
- TOTAL: $ 355,928.14

Ms. Burdick also provided the following data regarding the Land Use Department's activities:

Permit Data Month	Building	Electric	Mechanical	Plumbing	Fees Collected
Dec-24 Jan-25	31	30	10	6	24,875.34
	31	27	14	6	21,600.00
Total	**62**	**57**	**24**	**12**	**46,475.34**
Aug-25 sep-25	51	35	13	7	26,888.64
	62	41	16	10	37,302.00
Total	113	76	29	17	64,190.64

2025 Totals as of 12/03/25 Number of Permits	
Building	556
Electrical	202
Mechanical	100
Plumbing	1,119
TOTAL FEES	$355,704.76

Ms. Burdick concluded by stating that both Land Use Fiscal Assistant II; and Land Use Clerical Assistant were cross-trained; so they can cover for each other, noting that all of the Land Use Staff was cross-trained. She also noted that Building Official Seamus Quinn would be taking Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for paternity leave, noting that he was expecting a child in February, 2026. She stated during the time Mr. Quinn would be out of

the Land Use Office they would be hiring two Building Officials to provide coverage, noting that the Fiscal Assistant II would be coordinating inspections and providing the perinate paperwork for the two of the Building Officials during Mr. Quinn's absence. She stated that historically the Fiscal Assistant II has been a full-time position, and unfortunately their experiment to save money by reducing the position to part-time did not work.

Councilor Parad stated the person currently working as the Fiscal Assistant II seemed to be doing a good job and that she wanted to move to full-time to get the work done, noting that it made sense. Ms. Burdick stated the young Land Use Department Staff that she has been training all worked together well and she hoped that they would be with Ledyard for a long time.

Councilor Lamb recognized that the Land Use Department was overburdened and that increasing the Fiscal Assistant II to a full-time 35-hour per week position was a need; not a want.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Ty (Earl) Lamb, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

6. MOTION to authorize the Mayor to sign a contract for the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) to engage Arcadis Engineering Consultants, East Greenwich, Rhode Island, to verify Service Lines and prepare a cost estimate for Lead Survey.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle
Discussion: Mr. Ed Lynch, 11 Red Brook Lane, Ledyard, Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) Chairman, noted the lead issue that occurred in Flint, Michigan several years ago; and he explained that the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) was making all utilities find out where they have lead piping. Therefore, he stated to comply with the Lead Survey required by the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) for all water systems in Connecticut, that the Ledyard Water Pollution Control Authority solicited Requests for Qualifications (RFQ #2026-02 *Lead and Copper Rules Revisions Compliance*).

Mr. Lynch went on to explain that because the Ledyard Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) had a legacy water (inherited) system, all service lines have not been documented in terms of material of construction, and therefore, they were being required, in some cases, to physically verify the material of construction by digging them up, noting that they were actually calling this a "pot hole". Therefore, this was going to be a significant cost project, noting that besides the physical verification of the service lines that were documented, that they needed to be verified by an inspection at the curb stop, meter pit, and/or basement which involved significant time, noting that they can only do about two or three a day.

Mr. Lynch continued by explaining that the Ledyard WPCA contracts with Groton Utilities, and he noted during the past two-years that Groton Utilities has been working to find out where the 539 "*unknowns*" in Ledyard's water system were located.

Mr. Lynch stated the DPH was providing grants to both economically stressed and non-stressed communities. He stated that the WPCA has followed the Department of Public Health's (DPH) Guidelines, which were attached to the Agenda packet on the meeting portal (***Ledyard Lead and Copper Rules Revisions Compliance RFQ 2026-02***); and they solicited and received three proposals that provided capabilities - not costs. He stated the WPCA conducted a review and have selected Arcadis Engineering Consultants, East Greenwich, Rhode Island, as the Engineering Firm to manage and conduct the surveys. He stated the results of the WPCA's work to evaluate the proposals received were included in the spreadsheet titled "***Clean Lead Survey Spreadsheet Final Tally"*** and was attached to the Agenda on the meeting portal. He noted that Arcadis Engineering Consultants was doing the work in New London stating that they had resources in the local area and they had experience

with the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), noting that the other two firms were out of state and they did not have experience with Connecticut's DPH.

Mr. Lynch explained that the Department of Public Health (DPH) process stated that once they have identified the Engineering Firm, they would then need a quote from them in order to enter into a contract for the Lead Survey work. Therefore, he stated that tonight's request was for the Mayor to sign a contract with Arcadis Engineering Consultants to provide a cost estimate; and then the WPCA would negotiate the cost. He stated the cost to do the work could be as much as $300,000 - $400,000 to physically verify the construction material of the water system and document the locations. He stated the WPCA would qualify for a grant in the amount of 25% of the cost and that they would also be eligible for a no-interest loan to cover the rest of the cost.

Mr. Lynch went on to note that today Waste Water Supervisor Steve Banks went into the archives and found documentation regarding both the Highlands Water System and the Gales Ferry Water Systems. He stated that the WPCA would still have to contract with Arcadis Engineering Consultants because the documentation had to be reviewed and signed-off by an independent agency. However, he stated with the documentation they found today, that they may not have 539 "*unknowns*" as they had originally thought. He stated if they do not have to dig up the roads and sidewalks to verify location and construction materials that there would be some cost savings. He stated that he planned to provide the documentation regarding the Highlands Water System and the Gales Ferry Water Systems to Groton Utilities to review, noting that he did not know if they already had these documents.

Councilor Buhle explained that this was not an optional "*yes*", noting that the State Department of Public Health (DPH) was requiring them to conduct the Lead Survey, and this was the process the DPH has laid out. She went on to explain that the funding for the Lead Survey work would not come from the town's taxpayers, noting that the Lead Survey would be paid from the WPCA Water Operations Budget, which would affect the WPCA Ratepayers. Mr. Lynch stated if the WPCA did not have the funding to conduct the required DPH Lead Survey that the cost could impact the town's taxpayers.

Councilor Buhle questioned whether Mr. Lynch knew how Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA) was meeting the DPH's requirement to conduct the Lead Survey. Mr. Lynch stated that he did not know what the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA) was doing relative to the DPH's requirement to conduct the Lead Survey. He stated that SCWA may have the documents regarding the construction of their water system; or they could declare bankruptcy. He stated if that were to occur, the Ledyard WPCA would assume their water system, per state statute. He stated that he would talk with Leydard's SCWA Representative Mike Cherry to ask how SCWA was proceeding with regard to DPH's Lead Survey requirement.

Mr. Lynch concluded his comments by stating that if the Ledyard WPCA does not have the Lead Survey completed by December, 2027 that the penalties could impact the town's ability to receive grant funding and many other things. He stated that they do not have a choice, noting that they have to conduct the Lead Survey, as prescribed by the Department of Public Health.

Chairman St. Vil stated that based on what they know today which was 539 unknowns and working at a rate of 2 – 3 potholes a day whether Ledyard wold be able to meet the December, 2027 timeline. Mr. Lynch stated that the work would take about 200 days; therefore, he if they get started now they would make the deadline to have the Lead Survey completed by the end of 2027.

Chairman St. Vil stated to receive the State Grant Funding they were required to:

- Identify the Engineering Firm to conduct the Lead Survey
- The scope of the work had to be quasi-defined, which they have done.

Chairman St. Vil asked Mr. Lynch to expand on the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA) system.

Mr. Lynch stated that Groton Utilities spent $120 million to rebuild their Water Plant, noting that they have a very advanced plant and their water was absolutely clean, noting that they

have no Per-and-Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, (PFA) in their water because they use turbidity treatment. He stated the Department of Public Health (DPH) told Groton Utilities that they would give them a low interest loan if Groton Unities would do cross-connections in Ledyard. Therefore, Mr. Lynch stated that Ledyard was tied into the SCWA System, explaining that they have a valve and a meter. He explained when SCWA lost a pump they open the valve, and he stated the water that went into the SCWA System was metered so the WPCA could charge SCWA for the water they used. Therefore, he stated that the Ledyard WPCA could provide water to the SCWA System, noting that no construction was required to do that. He stated if SCWA was to go bankrupt that the Ledyard WPCA would have to run that water system.

Mr. Lynch stated that the WPCA would need to inform the DPH of their selection - and that Arcadis Engineers could help them with notifying the State Department of Health (DEP).

Councilor Lamb questioned whether there was a contract with a dollar amount that the Mayor would be signing. Mayor Allyn, III explained that there was not a contract with a dollar amount, explaining that the State Department of Public Health (DPH) has dictated that they had to enter into an Agreement with an Organization, and then they determine the value. He stated this was not how the town normally operated. However, he stated as Chairman Lynch has explained, their hands were tied with regard to the Department of Public Heath's (DPH) requirements and the process they have prescribed.

Councilor Lamb noted that he was looking for clarification regarding the wording of the Motion. Councilor Buhle explained that the WPCA solicited and received three proposals for Qualifications, noting that they have selected Arcadis Engineering Consultants, based on their Qualifications, not price. Mr. Lynch stated that they were contracting with an Engineering Firm to satisfy the Department of Public Health's (DPH)requirements to identify the type of construction materials that were used for their water system. He stated that he knew that there was no lead in Ledyard's water system, noting that the systems were built in the late 1970's and beyond, when nobody was installing lead or galvanized pipe at that time. Mayor Allyn stated they first had to engage with Arcadis Engineering Consultants, at which time a number would be presented, and he explained that they would then attempt to negotiate that Agreement. Councilor Lamb stated that they would engage with a firm to define the scope of the work and cost and then they would enter into a contract. He stated the Motion does not capture this understanding. Councilor Buhle stated that they were agreeing that Arcadis Engineering Consultants was going to be the company they were working with going forward, which was the reason the Motion was worded to sign a contract. She explained that they could not start negotiating with Arcadis Engineering Consultants and then go to another company. Councilor Lamb stated that he now understood that they solicited Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) and down selected Arcadis Engineering Consultants.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

7. MOTION to approve a revised Appendix A- Qualifying Income Schedule in accordance with Ordinance #200-005 (rev. 1) "An Ordinance to Provide Property Tax Relief for Certain Homeowners Age Sixty-Five or Over or Permanently and Totally Disabled" for the filing period of February 1, 2026 – May 15, 2026.

DRAFT: 12/1/2025 Ordinance # 200-005 (rev.1)

Appendix A
Qualifying Income Schedule
Filing Period
February 1, 2026 – May 15, 2026
8.

Qualifying Income	Tax	Tax Reduction

Over	Not Exceeding	Reduction As Percentage Of Property Tax	For Any Year	
Married Homeowners			Maximum	Minimum
$ 0	***23,300*** ~~$22,700~~	50%	$1,250	$400
$23,300 ~~$22,700~~-	***$31,200*** ~~$30,400~~	40 %	$1,000	$350
$31,200 ~~$30,400~~	***$38,800*** ~~$37,900~~	30 %	$750	$250
$38,800 ~~$37,900~~	***$46,300*** ~~$45,200~~	20%	$500	$150
$46,300 ~~$45,200~~	***$56,500*** ~~$55,100~~	10%	$250	$150
Unmarried Homeowners				
$ 0	***23,300*** ~~$22,700~~	40%	$1,000	$350
$23,300 ~~$22,700~~-	***$31,200*** ~~$30,400~~	30%	$750	$250
$31,200 ~~$30,400~~	***$38,800*** ~~$37,900~~	20%	$500	$150
$38,800 ~~$37,900~~	***$46,300*** ~~$45,200~~	10%	$250	$150
$46,300 ~~$45,200~~	***$56,500*** ~~$55,100~~	None	-0-	-0-

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on: _____

_____
Chairman

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated that updating the *Qualifying Income Scheule* was a housekeeping item that they do annually. She explained that each year the State of Connecticut updates the Qualifying Income Levels and to comply with the state that the town was updating their schedule as well.

Mayor Allyn, III explained that in addition to the State, the town provides tax relief to qualifying homeowners thru the adoption of Ordinance #200-005 (rev. 1) *"An Ordinance to Provide Property Tax Relief for Certain Homeowners Age Sixty-Five or Over or Permanently and Totally Disabled.*

Provisions of the Ordinance required the town to annually update the "*Qualifying Income Schedule"* to be consistent with the State's Qualifying Income, which was based on the United States Social Security Administration Program.

In accordance with Ordinance #200-005 (rev.1) Paragraph 3 *"Qualifications*"; paragraph (e) *"Persons qualified for tax credit or deferment benefits under this Ordinance are those whose maximum income during the calendar year preceding the year in which application is made for the tax credit does not exceed the Qualifying Income Schedule, as hereby incorporated in the ordinance as though fully set forth herein. A copy of the approved Qualifying Income Schedule shall be filed with the Town Clerk when established and when amended.* ***The income guidelines provided in the Qualifying Income Schedule (Appendix A) shall be adjusted to reflect a cost of living increase issued by the United States Social Security Administration, pending the approval of the Town Council prior to the first of January of the year of application.****"*

Because the "*Qualifying Income Schedule"* was an Appendix to the Ordinance, and because they were not changing the Ordinance itself, a public hearing was not required.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

9. MOTION to approve a Budget Letter of Directive to the Mayor and Board of Education for the preparation of the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget as presented in the draft dated ~~November 24, 2025~~ ***December ~~9~~ 10, 2025*** (as amended at tonight's meeting 12/10/2025- see below)***.***
Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle
Discussion: Councilor Buhle noted the Finance Committee held a Special Meeting on December 9, 2025 to finish their work on the Budget Letter of Directive. Therefore, she suggested a "*Friendly Amendment*" to change the draft to "***December 9, 2025".*** The Town Council agreed to the "*Friendly Amendment"*

Councilor Buhle went on to explain that the Finance Committee made the following language adjustments to the proposed Budget Letter of Directive for Fiscal Year 2026/2027 noting that ~~red font strike out~~ – ***blue bold italic font add in***:

- Second Paragraph:
~~It is the Town Council's intention to limit the mil rate increase to _____ if possible.~~ ***With the implementation of the 2025 revaluation, it is the Town Council's intention to reduce the mill rate substantially, so residents experience the full benefit of updated assessments while continuing to receive high-quality, efficient services***.

- Fifth Paragraph:
~~In working to provide a responsible and reasonable budget the Town Council encourages you to look for reductions where possible in areas such as contractual expenses through renegotiation, and corresponding decreases in operating budgets where contractual increases exist. Also, the Town Council asks that increases in specific line items and new expenditures be explained/justified; and be offset with corresponding reductions in other line items. An increase in revenue for any services provided should also be considered.~~

For this year's budget submissions, the Town Council is requesting a clear presentation of departmental needs and priorities. Each department should include a narrative ranking its top ten budget priorities, with an explanation of the operational significance of each item. Submissions should also describe the department's "excellence gap," identifying what level of funding would allow the department to operate at an excellent standard, compared with the amount actually being requested, and explaining the practical differences between the two. Departments are strongly encouraged to limit overall requested increases ~~*to below three percent unless*~~ ***essential needs*** ~~*cannot be met within this guideline; any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification.*~~ ***Increases in line items or new expenditures should be explained fully and, when possible, offset by reductions in other areas. Funding opportunities through increased revenue for services should also be considered. Budget submissions must identify the number of staff supported by each grouped salary line; Board of Education budget must separate group salary lines by school and delineate supplies, services, and utilities by school where possible.***

Budget submissions must identify any services provided that could be shared between other towns or shared between the Board of Education and the Town to reduce taxpayer expenses.

Councilor Buhle addressed the importance to include the following language:

(1). "*For each department should include a narrative ranking its top ten budget priorities, with an explanation of the operational significance of each item.*

(2) *Submissions should also describe the department's "excellence gap," identifying what level of funding would allow the department to operate at an excellent standard, compared with the amount actually being requested, and explaining the practical differences between the two."*

Councilor Buhle commented on the pressure to flat fund or cut the budget wherever they could, noting that was prudent for their taxpayers. However, she stated that it was important for residents to understand the difference between what it would look like for Departments to be fully funded to meet all of their goals, noting as an example that the Police Department might feel better with two more police officers; or the Library might need a second full-time

Children's Librarian. She stated that she would like the residents to see different ideas that would make town services and experiences for their residents as best as possible. She noted that she was not saying that they would do those things, however, she stated that putting an idea and a number of what that would look like for the future goals for their town would be helpful; and would give them an idea of the Department's future priorities.

Councilor Buhle went on to note during the December 9, 2025 Special Finance Committee meeting that Councilor Garcia-Irizarry was passionate about including the following language "*Budget submissions must identify the number of staff supported by each grouped salary line; Board of Education budget must separate group salary lines by school and delineate supplies, services, and utilities by school where possible. Budget submissions must identify any services provided that could be shared between other towns or shared between the Board of Education and the Town to reduce taxpayer expenses."*

Councilor Buhle also noted that the Finance Committee included the following language: "*Departments are strongly encouraged to limit overall requested increases to below three percent unless essential needs cannot be met within this guideline; any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification".*

Councilor Buhle continued by noting that she would like to amend the draft Letter of Directive for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027.

❖ MOTION to amend the to remove the following language from the fifth paragraph:

".....to below three percent unless essential needs cannot be met within this guideline; any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification."
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Thompson
Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated she spoke to a Department Head today, noting at this point in the process that their proposed budget was flat-funded. She stated by removing the language as noted above that it would take away the invitation for Department Heads to go up to 3%; and it still expressed the expectation that budget increases were being limited to essential needs. She went on to note that the paragraph already included the following language:

"Departments are <u>strongly encouraged</u> to limit overall requested essential needs. Increases in line items or new expenditures should be explained fully…."
Councilor Buhle stated that she thought this was fair and reasonable.

Chairman St. Vil stated he agreed with the proposed amendment to the Letter of Directive, noting that Mayor Allyn, III; and School Superintendent Mr. Hartling were responsible for developing their budgets and they understand what goes into the General Government and Board of Education Budgets. He stated as responsible leaders of their organizations that they should grant them the latitude to develop the budgets that they felt were appropriate. He stated that he was aligned with the draft *Letter of Directive* and the proposed amendments, noting that the *Letter of Directive* identified the data needed to provide the oversight the Town Council was responsible to do; without the overreach of dictating what the budgetary number was going to be.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted during the December 9, 2025 Special Finance Committee meeting that she expressed concerns about including a budget increase of 4%; or in providing an amount for a budget increase, because some Departments may be able to operate with a 2% budget increase, while others may require less; or more of a budget increase. She stated in the private industry that if they have money remaining in their budget at the end of the year that supervisors encourage them to spend the money because if they do not use the money they would lose that amount in the next year's budget. Therefore, she stated that she wanted the town to avoid that type of situation, because she wanted them to be cost conscience. She stated that she thought that it was easier to cut the budget then to add to the budget.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry went on to address the Board of Education's Budget, stating that it was not clearcut. She stated with the Board of Education's current budget layout that it was hard to understand all of their expenses. She stated although they could all read the Munis Report Printouts, that it takes a lot of time to read those Reports because they have to look at every single code and which school they were associated with. She noted the Board of

Education's Priority Tables noting that the **Green Table** was new expenses that they included in the budget, the **Yellow Table** was expenses that they would like to include in the budget, but could wait; and the **Red Table** was expenses that they would not be able to do. She noted the wrestling matts were a good example of the types of items on the *Red Table*. She stated based on the format that was being requested in the *Letter of Directive* for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget that they would receive a clearer picture of what was in the Board of Education's budget noting that it would be a benefit for the residents and for the Board of Education. She stated that the format would be detailed and transparent and would be a win-win for everyone, because when the Board of Education asked for something that everyone would be able to see that there was a valid reason for the request.

Councilor Barnes stated he agreed with removing the 3% increase from the *Letter of Directive* for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 because it set an artificial number that people would move to. However, he stated that they have not provided sufficient guidance as to where they expect the upcoming budget to come in. He noted "*essential*" was in the eye of the beholder, noting that the Mayor and the School Superintendent would present compelling reasons whey they would need something. He stated that he realized that requesting a flat budget was challenging particularly when they had contractual requirements for salary increases. However, he stated the Town Council could direct the General Government and the Board of Education to deliver a budget that was zero percent increase with the exception of contractual increases, as a baseline; as well as supplemental instruction (rank priority) or requests for additional funding above that, which would allow the Town Council to make a determination of what they could afford; and what mil rate they want to deliver to the townspeople. Councilor Barnes concluded his comments by stating that he disagreed with Councilor Garcia-Irizzary's comment that it was easier to cut than to add back to the budget. He stated that it was easier to add back to the budget.

Councilor Buhle stated the word "*essential*" means different things to different people. She stated the Annual Budget Process involved attending the Budget Work Sessions, attending the Board of Education's Work Sessions and Public Hearing, reading the Budget Narratives, noting that the budget increases should be explained fully and when possible off-set by reductions in other areas, and hearing the Department's rationale for their budget requests. She stated there was an opportunity to ask questions from every Department that was presenting their budget to the Town Council's Finance Committee.

Councilor Buhle addressed the request for the *Ranking of Needs and Priorities*; and allowing Departments to go above and beyond by suggesting things that they would have funded. She stated by using this format that Departments would be less likely to put "*wants*" into their requested budget if they could still make themselves heard on a "*want*" by putting those items on the "*Excellence Gap List"* . She stated the draft *Letter of Directive* for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 provided Department Heads the opportunity to say: (1) These were their essential needs and why; and (2) These were the things they really want, and they understand that they cannot have them this year.

Councilor Brunelle stated that she understood the need for a zero percent budget increase. However, she provided the following example: Requiring a zero percent increase would be like telling a mother of four children that they had a zero percent increase for their grocery list next week. She stated that they all know that groceries have increased, noting that they could not expect a mother to buy the same amount of groceries this year as they did last year with a zero percent increase, noting that she would have to cut back, and the kids would not get the proper nutrition. Therefore, she stated that it was unwise and unfair to ask for a zero percent budget increase when the Department Heads were looking out for the best interest of the town and the students. She stated the Town and the Board of Education should be afforded the ability to present their budget and that hopefully they could work together to hopefully get it to a zero percent increase.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the many "*unknowns*" that could influence their upcoming budget. She stated by asking that budgets be kept of a zero percent increase may set Departments up for failure. She stated that she appreciated the Annual Budget Process because the Finance Committee had the opportunity to meet with Departments and to tailor their budgets to their needs. She stated by not asking that the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget be kept to a zero percent increase does not mean that they would not achieve that.

Councilor Barnes stated that they would not achieve a zero percent budget increase; and that they should not allude to the fact that they could achieve a zero percent budget increase if they know that they cannot achieve that. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that she agreed it was nearly impossible to keep their personal home budgets at a zero percent increase. She noted the many additional meetings that take place during the months of March and April and Councilor Lamb's push for the Town Council and the Board of Education to have joint meetings, stating that they would have the opportunity to communicate, work together and to educate each other on their budgets.

Councilor Buhle stated that she knew that they cannot achieve zero percent budget increase for Fiscal Year 2026/2027. She stated in an inflationary environment that flat funding was a cut, noting that she was not going to flat-fund and cut programs. She stated unless Ledyard's state revenue massively increased there was not going to be situation where they could flat-fund the taxpayers levy.

Councilor Lamb stated that he agreed with the proposed amendment to delete the following sentence *"…..to below three percent unless essential needs cannot be met within this guideline; any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification"* because no one has done the analysis of the contractual obligations and the inflationary costs. He stated factoring in these increases could result a 4% budget increase, noting that including an arbitrary number could actually be a cut.

Chairman St. Vil stated in accordance with the Town Charter the intent of the Budget *Letter of Directive* was to request the format of the budget data; not to dictate the content of the data. He stated they could continue to debate whether the budget increase should be 0%; 3% or 4%. However, he stated they had astute leaders on both sides of their town that would represent what was required to execute the operations of their business. He stated the Town Council's role was to provide oversight and review the budget data presented and provide a thumbs up or thumbs down. He stated both Mayor Allyn and School Superintendent Hartling have been working on their budgets and they already have an idea of where their budgets were going to come in. He stated that they could try to appease the Town Council; however, he questioned whether they should do that at the disservice of running their portions of their local government, noting that he would not expect them to do that.

Councilor Barnes provided clarification noting that he does not expect a zero percent budget increase, noting that he trusted the Mayor, the School Superintendent, and their Staff producing the budget, that if the Town Council gave them fair planning of the worst case scenarios; and the ability to provide and prioritize their "*adds"* that it was a lot easier to give back, then to take away. He stated based on the proposed *Letter of Directive that* it would force the Finance Committee to do all of the hard analysis to decide where to cut and where not to cut. He stated that he would rather afford the Mayor, the School Superintendent, and their Staff to produce their budget starting point which would be zero plus contractual increases, and the additional things in their priority order. He stated that they were mobilizing very smart teams of people to do the work so that the Town Council could then best refine the product. He stated otherwise, the Town Council would end up doing a lot of work that could have already been done by those who would be working within their budgets. He stated when the Town Council does not give them the guidance of where their budget should be and they use the word "*essential*" that they have not said anything.

Chairman St. Vill called for a vote on the proposed amendment as follows:

❖ MOTION to amend the to remove the following language from the fifth paragraph:

"…..to below three percent unless essential needs cannot be met within this guideline; any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification."
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Thompson

VOTE: **7 – 1 Approved and so declared** (Barnes not in favor)

RESULT:	APPROVED 7 – 1
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	James Thompson, Town Councilor
AYES:	Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
NAYES:	Barnes
EXCUSED:	Ryan

Chairman St. Vil asked for additional discussion regarding the Main Motion as amended this evening.

Councilor Lamb stated that he thought that the following language in the *Letter of Directive* was actually asking the Departments to provide their Strategic Plan:

"….requesting a clear presentation of departmental needs and priorities. ……ranking its top ten budget priorities, with an explanation of the operational significance of each item. Submissions should also describe the department's "excellence gap," identifying what level of funding would allow the department to operate at an excellent standard".

Councilor Buhle stated that Councilor Lamb's understanding of the language was fair. She noted that the Board of Education has done a good job explaining what they would pay for if they had additional funding with their **Green Table** was new expenses that they included in the budget, the **Yellow Table** was expenses that they would like to include in the budget, but could wait; and the **Red Table** was expenses that they would not be able to do. She stated part of this language was to see this type of planning from other Departments, noting that the *Letter of Directive* also included language asking Departments to provide Priority Rankings as well. She stated even with the Board of Educations colored tables that it was difficult to determine which items within the tables were the most important when it comes time to cut things from the budget.

Councilor Lamb noted in their Annual Budget submission that the Board of Education included a list of items that they would cut should the State Revenues not come in as expected, noting that he thought this was required by the Town Charter. He noted every year that list says that they were going to cut teachers. However, he stated that this was not true when the Town Council reduced the Board of Education's Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget, noting they did not cut teachers. He stated the Board of Education reviewed their budget and then decided what they would change in the budget. Therefore, he suggested during their Joint Finance Committee Meetings between the Town Council and the Board of Education that they ask for a realistic list of items the Board of Education would actually cut, noting that it would be nice to be transparent for the town to know what they would really cut from their budget if they cannot come through with the requested budget amount, for the townspeople to be better informed.

It was noted that paragraph 7 in the draft Budget Letter of Directive stated:

> *"As identified in Section 5 of the Town Charter, your budget submission must include plans for dealing with any reductions in State funding that might occur after the General Government and Board of Education budget are approved at referendum. Plans will include reduction in services, use of Town surplus or an increase in the tax levy. Such contingency plans shall be available at the time of the referendum. The charter requires the Board of Education to include any steps taken to address changing enrollment as part of the budget submission. The Board of Education is required to continue to provide its own Capital Improvement Plan showing the proposed source of revenue for each expenditure."*

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that she agreed with Councilor Lamb, noting that although the Board of Education did include a list of items they would cut in their Budget submission that when the budget failed twice at Referendum that the Board of Education did not cut the items that were listed in their letter, such as Teachers, as they initially presented. Therefore, she stated with the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget preparation and submission that the Town Council should push for the Board of Education to provide a realistic list of the things they would cut should the budget fail; or should the state revenues not come in as projected.

Chairman St. Vil stated the *Letter of Directive* goes to the Board of Education and he noted that it was a fair expectation for them to be held to the format prescribed in the letter. He stated subsequent to the Town Council issuing the *Letter of Directive* to the Board of Education that he could follow up with an email to the Board of Education Chairman Jennifer Reguin asking whether they had an issues with meeting the expectations.

Councilor Lamb stated that his suggestion for the Board of Education to provide a realistic list of the items they would cut from their budget could be addressed during the Joint Finance Committees between the Town Council and Board of Education, noting that it did not need to be included in a letter. He stated that it was important for the taxpayers to know that if they vote a budget down how it would impact the schools.

Councilor Buhle commented on the importance to know the Board of Education's Ranking Priorities, noting that if they needed to cut $47,000 from the Board of Education Budget and Item #10 on their Priority List cost $47,000 that a rationale person would think that Item #10 would be cut from the budget, however, she stated that the Board of Education could decide to cut the Special Education Para-Professionals. She stated that the Town Council did not have the authority to dictate what the Board of Education does with their approved budget, but that it would be nice to know, which was the reason for requesting their "*Ranking Priorities"*. She went on to explain that the Town Council only had the authority to change the Board of Education's budget bottom line.

Councilor Lamb stated that it would have been nice if the Town Council had been having conversations with the community; and for them to have an understanding of their revenue flow for the current year so that they would have an idea of what the Town could and/or could not afford. He stated by doing this type of homework that it would have supported Councilor Barnes' suggestion to set an expectation. Chairman St. Vil asked what expectation Councilor Lamb would propose. Councilor Lamb stated because he has done the analysis that he could not propose an expectation this evening.

Councilor Barnes stated that he trusted the Mayor, School Superintendent and their Staff to make good decisions. He stated that they could make better decisions than the Finance Committee or the Town Council could make after the fact. He stated if the Town Council set the expectation to start with a zero percent increase, plus contractual obligations, that the budget would increase from the current year. He stated the Finance Committee and the Town Council could then review those budget proposals and be in a position to fund their priorities to the level that they believe the taxpayers could afford, noting that he did not know what that line was. However, he stated the Budget Building Block would be to use the opportunity and the insight of the Mayor, School Superintendent, and their Staff to say what they would do in the worst case budget.

Chairman St. Vil stated that he viewed "*essential"* to mean contractual plus zero. Therefore, he questioned what it meant to Councilor Barnes. Councilor Barnes stated that maybe they needed to define the word "*essential*", noting that maybe "*essential*" was contractually obligated as the starting point. Councilor Lamb noted as the former Chairman of the Board of Education's Finance Committee that he could tell them that the Board of Education provided that type of information in their budget proposal. He stated the Board of Education told them that 1.6% of their proposed budget was essential expenses, and then they went on to delineate the over and above of what their essential expenses were. Councilor Barnes noted that he disagreed with Councilor Lamb's statement, noting that there were a number of expenses in the Board of Education's Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget that were beyond the essential costs even before they got to the items in the **Green Table,** noting that the Finance Committee then had to fight to figure it out. Therefore, he stated that he was asking that the Town Council give them guidance so that the General Government and the Board of Education do not bring something forward that was not a starting point, noting that inflation was not a contractual obligation. He stated labor contracts were the only things that were contractually obligated, noting that they needed to force the people who best know their expenses to do their homework to deliver the absolute minimum budget, explaining that this would afford the best dialogue in the event the budget was not approved at the Referendum. He stated that they would have the basic costs that they could not go any lower, in the event they needed to go back and make adjustments. Chairman St. Vil asked Councilor Barnes for a proposed amendment.

MOTION to amend the Letter of Directive for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to provide the following language to paragraph 5:

"……Departments are strongly encouraged to deliver a budget at zero percent increase over the current year's budget with the addition of contractual obligations. ~~*limit overall requested increases to essential needs."*~~
Moved by Councilor Barnes, seconded by Councilor Lamb
Discussion: Councilor Buhle suggested the following "*Friendly Amendment*" ***Departments are strongly encouraged to limit overall requested increases*** ~~*deliver a budget at zero percent increase over the current year's budget with the addition of*~~ ***to contractual obligations".***
Councilor Barnes stated that he would agree to the "*Friendly Amendment*".

Councilor Lamb requested clarification regarding "*contractual obligations*" questioning whether it would include labor contracts, utilities, etc. Councilor Barnes stated that "*contractual obligations"* meant labor contracts and not other contracts such as utilities. Councilor Buhle stated if they have a contract regardless of whether it was labor or utilities that they were bound to the contract, noting that they could not just not pay the contract. Councilor Barnes stated if it was a signed agreement that it was a "*contract*".

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that the Board of Education knows better than any of them what the kids need, and what to do should specific a situation arise. Therefore, she stated that she was not questioning the Board of Education, explaining that she wanted to see in writing everything the Board of Education was thinking about, so that they would know what the Board of Education would do in specific situations, and what they could cut, or what they could add to the budget, so they do not find themselves in the same situation as last year, when the Board of Education was brainstorming about what they were going to change in their budget after the townspeople voted the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget down; noting that they did not follow the initial list of cuts that were presented with their budget.

Chairman St. Vil asked for the proposed amendment to be read including the "*Friendly Amendment*", so they were all clear on what they were voting on.

Councilor Buhle read the following:

MOTION to amend the *Letter of Directive* for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to provide the following language to paragraph 5:

"……Departments are strongly encouraged to limit overall requested increases to contractual obligations……".

Councilor Barnes asked that the amendment to paragraph 5 be as follows:

MOTION to amend the Letter of Directive for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to provide the following language to paragraph 5:

"……Departments are required to limit overall requested increases to contractual obligations. Any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification in priority order……".

Chairman St. Vil called for a vote on the amendment as follows:

- MOTION to amend the Letter of Directive for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to revise the following language in paragraph 5:

"……Departments are required to limit overall requested increases to contractual obligations. Any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification in priority order……".
Moved by Councilor Barnes, seconded by Councilor Lamb
Discussion: Councilor Brunelle stated the proposed amendment would increase untrust; and it was not logical in today's fiscal environment.

Councilor Buhle stated that flat-funding in an inflationary environment was a cut. She stated that this amendment was aimed at the Board of Education, as the largest portion of Ledyard's

overall budget. She stated as a champion for their students noting that Ledyard's Per Pupil Expenditures were still the lowest funded School District in the region. She stated that she was open to seeing what the Board of Education would put forward with the amended language in the *Letter of Directive* they approved earlier this evening.

Councilor Lamb stated this proposed amendment would not hamper the Board of Education from providing over and above what Councilor Barnes' has suggested noting that they would just have to prioritize and justify their budget requests.

Chairman St. Vil stated the Budget *Letter of Directive* was the Town Council's official instruction document that defines how the Mayor and the Board of Education must prepare their Annual Budget so that the Town Council could perform its legal responsibilities to review, adjust, and adopt a fiscally responsible spending plan. He stated the specificity added by the proposed amendment goes above and beyond. He stated the intent of the proposed amendment has already been met in the baseline *Letter of Directive*, noting that they have had signification discussion regarding the proposal. He proceeded to call a vote on the proposed amendment.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher read the proposed amendment as follows:

MOTION to amend the Letter of Directive for the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to revise the following language in paragraph 5:

"……Departments are required to limit overall requested increases to contractual obligations. Any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification in priority order…….".

VOTE: **4 –4 Motion Failed** (Buhle, Brunelle, St. Vil, Thompson not in-favor)

RESULT:	MOTION FAILED 4 - 4
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad
NAYES:	Buhle, Brunelle, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

Chairman St. Vil stated they were setting expectations and he noted that based on Councilor Lamb's comments this evening that they would be meeting with their counterparts and would be setting those expectations. He stated when the Annual Budget was presented to the Town Council for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026/2027 that they would all know that there would be a different set of expectations.

Councilor Lamb noted Councilor Garcia-Irzarry's comments regarding the need for more detail from the Board of Education to allow the town to have more insight on what the Board of Education was proposing for each of the schools, etc. However, he questioned whether the Town Council would really care about having all that detail after the Finance Committees of the Town Council and Board of Education had their joint meetings to negotiate things and they were all communicating. He stated once the Town Council conducted an analysis to determine what the town could afford, based on their revenue stream; that they may make budget adjustments to either reduce budgets or increase budgets.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the reason she was in-favor of providing the budget detail was for the benefit of their residents. She stated because the residents do not have all the budget information the Town Council and Board of Education had access to, that providing the budget detail for the residents was about transparency. She noted that during the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget that she continued to hear comments that the residents do not understand where all of their tax dollars were going to. Councilor Lamb stated that he now understood Councilor Garcia-Irizarry's reason to provide the budget detail; and therefore, he would not object to providing more budget detail.

Chairman St. Vil called for a vote on the Main Motion as amended.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher read the language that the Town Council approved earlier this evening to remove the following language from the fifth paragraph of the *Letter of Directive* as follows:

"…..to below three percent unless essential needs cannot be met within this guideline; any request above this threshold must be accompanied by a clear and compelling justification."

❖ MOTION to approve a Budget Letter of Directive to the Mayor and Board of Education for the preparation of the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget as presented in the draft dated ~~November 24, 2025~~ ***December ~~9~~ 10, 2025*** (as amended at tonight's meeting 12/10/2025)**.**
Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle

VOTE: **7 – 1 Approved and so declared** (Barnes not in-favor)

RESULT:	APPROVED 7 – 1
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
NAYES:	Barnes
EXCUSED:	Ryan

10. MOTION to approve the Town Council Department Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget in the amount of $289,255.
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated as part of the Fiscal Year Budget Preparation process the Town Council was required to approve a Town Council Department Budget to be included in the Mayor's proposed budget. She explained that the Town Council's Department Budget would come back to the Finance Committee/Town Council as part of the Annual budget deliberation and preparation process.

Councilor Buhle went on to note that the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Town Council Department Budget was presented in the amount of $289,255; a $40,000 or 31.95% increase over the current year's budget.

Increases include the following:

- $30,000 Increase for Legal Fees regarding Tribal and Indian Law Issues; and Tax Recovery;

- $10,000 Increase for Audit Fees – The Town will solicit bids for the Annual Audit Services. Per Finance Director a 5% increase has been included. This budget line can be adjusted based on the bids received.

- $30,000 – NEW ACCOUNT – Grant Writer (Consultant) to assist Departments seek, apply for, and manage Grant Funding. Councilor Buhle stated the Finance Committee added this New Account line to the Town Council Department Budget at their December 3, 2025 meeting. She stated that she pictured this as a PILOT Program, noting that the Grant Writer would report to the Town Council and would work with Department Heads to identify projects on their Capital List; or other opportunities where Grants may be applicable. She stated because many of the Department Heads may be over burdened, that the Grant Writer would be able to take on opportunities that the Department Heads may not be able to take on. She stated that they would evaluate the Grant Writer PILOT Program, noting that she hoped they would bring in more grant funding than the $30,000 designated for this PILOT Program.

Councilor Parad questioned whether the Grant Writer would be a 20-hour per week position. Councilor Buhle stated that the Grant Writer would be a part-time per diem/consultant role, explaining that it would be more of an "as needed" contractor for when Grant opportunities become available. She stated that she envisioned the Grant Writer initially meeting with all Department Heads to discuss their future projects and potential grant funding opportunities. She stated as grant funding becomes available that the Grant Writer would contact the Department Head to discus submitting the Grant Application, noting that many grants require

local matching funds. Councilor Parad asked if they had a pro-active Grant Writer how they would determine how many hours they would work, versus the town telling them which grants that would like to apply for. Councilor Buhle stated that Finance Director Matthew Bonin and Mayor Allyn, III were at the December 3, 2025 Finance Committee meeting and they all felt that a $30,000 budget for a per diem Grant Writer Consultant was a reasonable amount to include for a PILOT Grant Writer Program. She stated if they find in January 2027 they have spent the $30,000 for the Grant Writer and the town received $2.4 million in grant funding; or they have not received any grant funding, then they could decide whether or not they wanted to continue funding a Grant Writer. She stated starting with a PILOT Grant Writer Program would provide the town an opportunity to assess the results and determine how they wanted to proceed.

Councilor Buhle went on to note that there were no major changes to the expenses, explaining that this year the Town would be soliciting Requests for Proposals for Auditing Services for fiscal years ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027; noting the RFP typically included two one-year extensions options.

The Salary Lines were listed at the current year's salary because the Mayor's Office would update them in accordance with the "*Resolution Establishing Administrator/ Department Head Benefits" "Employees shall be paid at the rate as designated by the Mayor or contractually negotiated. Increases in wages shall be effective on the first day of July; and continuing until June 30, 2025, wage increases may not be less than the percentage of the highest union contracted increase for that fiscal year*."

Chairman St. Vil stated that tonight's action was to approve the Town Council's Department proposed Budget to be included in the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget. He explained when the Mayor submits his proposed Budget on March 2, 2026 that the Town Council would have an opportunity to revisit their Department Budget.

Councilor Barnes stated the proposed Town Council Department Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget was a zero % increase budget; minus three priority adjustments; those being a New Account for a Grant Writer $30,000; Auditor Fee $10,000 increase; and Legal Fees $30,000 increase. He stated that by holding themselves to this, does not prevent them from asking for a zero% budget increase, plus three priority additions from other Departments.

Councilor Lamb questioned the reason for the $10,000 increase for the Auditor. Mayor Allyn, III explained the Auditor Contract, which had included a renewal contract period, had a stated percentage increase for each year of the contract renewal. He stated this contract would end with this year's Audit Report (June, 2025). Therefore, he stated that it was time to once again solicit bids for Auditing Services, noting that based on the previous contract they were assuming an increase for the coming year, noting that there were very few Municipal Auditing Firms.

Councilor Lamb questioned the need for the additional $30,000 or 20% for the Legal Fees. Mayor Allyn, III, explained that currently they were in Federal Court with the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN) because they were looking to Annex up-to 5,000-acres in the Town of Ledyard. He stated they were in mediation, noting that they do not know how long this case would go on or how much it was going to cost. He stated there was no burn rate at this time because they were in a holding pattern.

Councilor Lamb addressed the $1,500 for CCM Trainings noting that he self-funded his needs to volunteer for the town. Councilor Brunelle noted by attending Connecticut Council of Municipalities (CCM) Trainings that members of the Town Council have learned about opportunities and programs such as the Compost Recycling Program. Councilor Buhle stated the budget line was flat funded, noting that town volunteers spend countless hours to help their community. She stated that it did not seem right to ask volunteers, who were already going above and beyond, to pay for training programs to learn how they could better their town. Councilor Lamb stated when he was serving on the Board of Education that he saved the town $20,000 explaining that they were paying for a Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) Membership, however, they were able to get all of the information CABE was providing for free. Therefore, he stated by discontinuing their CABE Membership they saved $20,000.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

11. MOTION to approve the Town Council Department Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Capital Improvement Budget in the total amount of $1,500.
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated as part of the Fiscal Year Budget preparation process the Town Council was required to approve a Capital Plan for Town Council Department. She noted that the proposed Capital Plan was in the amount of $1,500 in the Town Council's New Equipment/ Laptop Computer Replacement CNR Sinking Fund as they have in previous years. She stated the funding was used to provide members of the Town Council and the Administrative Assistant a laptop to conduct town business and purchase equipment to support/access the cloud-based meeting portal.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

General Items

Chairman St. Vil stated the next Item was regarding the Teachers Contract. He stated that he wanted to explain this process before they make the Motion, because it can be confusing. He noted in accordance with CGS 10--153d(b), the Municipal Legislative Body, which was the Town Council, only had the Authority to ***Reject*** the Ledyard Education Association (LEA) Contract. Therefore, he explained if they want to ***Approve the contract*** they have to ***Vote "No" Not to Reject***. He stated if they Vote "Yes" then they would be rejecting the Contract.

12. MOTION to reject the Agreement between the Ledyard Board of Education and the Ledyard Education Association, Ledyard, Connecticut, for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.
Moved by Councilor Lamb, seconded by Councilor Buhle
Discussion: Chairman St. Vil noted Under CGS 10--153d(b), the Municipal Legislative Body (Town Council) had the Authority to:
    1. Reject the Agreement by a majority vote within the 30-day period (*that would be a YES Vote)*, or
    2. Vote *NOT to Reject* the Agreement by a majority vote within the 30-day Period; essentially accepting the Agreement; (*that would be a NO Vote)*
    3. Take no action, in which case the Agreement is deemed approved by operation of law at the conclusion of the 30 days.

Chairman St. Vil went on to explain should the Legislative Body (Town Council) vote to Reject the Agreement, the matter proceeds directly to binding arbitration under CGS 10-153f.

Chairman St. Vil noted the Terms of the Contract as follows:

Salary
A total Salary increase of 13.19%, inclusive of steps/increments and including any Stipend increases was negotiated. Assuming all staffing remains the same, the breakout by contract year is as follows:

Year 1- GWI + Step (total negotiated increase 4.447%) = $898,066
Year 2- GWI + Step (total negotiated increase 4.439%) = $936,220
Year 3- GWI + Step (total negotiated increase 4.308%) = $949,034

Insurance
Year 1- 25% increase Employee share would be 24.50%
Year 2- .25% increase Employee share would be 24.75%
Year 3- 25% increase Employee share would be 25.00%

Chairman St. Vil noted the following *Procedural Timeline:*

- ***November 18, 2025*:** The Ledyard Education Association (LEA), ratified a new three year Contract Agreement effective July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.

  In addition, at their November 18, 2025 meeting the Ledyard Board of Education also voted to approve the LEA Agreement.

- December 4, 2025: Agreement submitted to the Town Clerk and transmitted to the Town Council.
- Statutory deadline: The Town Council has 30 days from filing to act.
- If no vote occurs: The contract becomes effective automatically at the close of the 30-day period.
- If the Council votes to reject: The agreement moves to binding arbitration as required by state law.

Chairman St. Vil stated it would be good to know how much of the 4.47% Increase was for Gross Wages and how much was for the Step Increase.

Councilor Buhle stated she served as the Town Council's Liaison for the Ledyard Education Association Contract (LEA) Negotiations, noting that it was contentious. She stated that although Ledyard's total 13.19% increase over the three-year term seemed to be high, that other Teacher Contracts in Connecticut that were coming in with a 15% increase over the three year term. She stated rejecting the contract would not get them a better offer. She also noted that the Ledyard Education Association Contract Healthcare Insurance co-pay was the highest in the town.

Councilor Barnes noted that the Teachers Healthcare Insurance co-pay would be the new baseline. Mayor Allyn, III noted Councilor Barnes' baseline comment and he stated the same would apply for the wage increase.

Councilor Lamb stated as a Board of Education Member that he served on the Ledyard Education Association Contract Negotiations; and he also voted to approve the Contract. Therefore, he questioned whether Chairman St. Vil thought it would be *Conflict of Interest* for him to vote on the Ledyard Education Association Contract as a member of the Town Council this evening. Chairman St. Vil stated that he did not believe it would be a *Conflict of Interest* for Councilor Lamb to vote on the Ledyard Education Association Contract this evening, in his capacity on the Town Council.

Councilor Lamb stated that he agreed with Councilor Buhle's comments that they were not going to get a better offer if they rejected the Ledyard Education Association Contract this evening. He noted that Arbitration would be costly.

Councilor Barnes requested clarification regarding the wording of the Motion. Councilor Buhle stated that the Town Council could not approve the Ledyard Education Association Contract, explaining that they could only reject the Contract.

VOTE: **0 – 8 Motion Failed**

RESULT:	MOTION FAILED 0 - 8
MOVER:	Ty (Earl) Lamb, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	
NAYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

13. MOTION to cancel the Town Council Regular Meeting of December 24, 2025 for the Holidays.
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Brunelle
Discussion: None.

VOTE: **8 – 0 Approved and so declared**

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 – 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor.
SECONDER:	April Brunelle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Buhle, Brunelle, Garcia-Irizarry, Lamb, Parad, St. Vil, Thompson
EXCUSED:	Ryan

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Barnes moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Buhle.

VOTE: **8 - 0 Approved and so declared.** The meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

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

I, Gary St. Vil , Chairman of the Ledyard Town Council, hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Town Council Meeting held on December 10, 2025.

_____
Gary St. Vil, Chairman