



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

MINUTES
LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2024; 7:00 PM
HYBRID FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

DRAFT

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building.

Chairman Rodriguez welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. She stated for the members of the Town Council and the Public who were participating via video conference that the remote meeting information was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town’s Website – Granicus-Legistar Meeting Portal.

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- III. ROLL CALL –

Table with 4 columns: Attendee Name, Title, Status, Location. Lists attendees including April Brunelle, Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Kevin Dombrowski, Gary Paul, S. Naomi Rodriguez, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone, and Gary St. Vil.

- IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS – None.

- V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

Mr. Eric Treaster, 10 Huntington Way, Ledyard, stated that he recently learned about an Application for a five-story 320-unit Apartment Complex for the property that was previously called Sweet Hill Farm on Military Highway, Gales Ferry. He provided the pictures below of the Triton Square Apartments which was a five-story high 304-unit Apartment Complex in Groton, located behind the Super 8 Motel that was across the street from the Super Stop & Shop grocery store, noting that it can be seen from Interstate-95.



Mr. Treaster went on to note last September, 2023, the Planning & Zoning Commission updated Ledyard’s Zoning Regulations, which included a replacement for the Multi-Family Regulations to allow an unlimited density that was based on the Health Code and a height that was 65-feet high (six stories). He stated when he saw the Triton Square Apartments being constructed in Groton, he took a closer look at Ledyard’s new Regulations, noting that a

development such as the Triton Square Apartment Complex would be allowed in both Ledyard Center and Gales Ferry without the Planning & Zoning Commission holding a Public Hearing. He stated he understands that many were fans of Affordable Housing and that they wanted as much housing as possible. However, he stated the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) which the Planning & Zoning Commission adopted, repeatedly used the following words throughout the document: *“protect the character of Ledyard”* and *“the Planning & Zoning Regulations should be changed to better protect the character of Ledyard”*. Mr. Treaster stated it was his opinion that a development such as the Triton Square Apartment Complex being allowed by right in Gales Ferry was not consistent with the character of Ledyard or Gales Ferry. He stated he was not anti-development, however, he stated that he would like to see the Apartment Complex Application in Gales Ferry be three stories (35 feet high) which was the same height as a single family home. He stated Ledyard has had a 35 foot high limit since they originally adopted their Zoning Regulations in 1963, noting that they had several new apartment complexes that were attractive and reasonable. He stated it was his opinion that Ledyard did not need this monstrosity in the Gales Ferry Village or Ledyard Center.

Mr. Treaster went on to state the reason he did not pay too much attention to the Gales Ferry Apartment Complex Application in the past was because a complex of this magnitude required both water and sewer, noting that Ledyard did not have the sewer capacity to support such a development. He stated the 16-inch water line on Route 12 would provide enough water to the 320-unit-five story Apartment Complex, if it were located on Military Highway (Sweet Hill Farm) in Gales Ferry. However, he went on to explain the Application that was currently in-front of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC) included a \$1.1 million Self-Contained State-of-the-Art Sewer Treatment Plant; noting that it would be approved. He stated once the IWWC Application was approved that it would then go before the Planning & Zoning Commission, and he noted in his opinion that the 320-unit-five story Apartment Complex would be approved, by right, without a Public Hearing.

Mr. Treaster continued by addressing the construction to extend the Ledyard Center Sewer Line, that was currently under way, stating that it would provide at least 70,000 gallons of sewage per day, and would support a 400-unit Apartment Complex, like the Triton Square Apartment Complex, if one were to be proposed. He stated it was his opinion that these buildings were not consistent with the character of Ledyard. He stated he submitted proposed Zoning Regulations that would reduce the height regulations to 35-feet and spread the buildings out to provide more green-space. He stated a Public Hearing regarding his proposed Zoning Regulation change was scheduled for August 8, 2024.

Mr. Treaster stated that he previously requested a Moratorium on New Multi-Family Applications in the Gales Ferry District until the Zoning Regulations that he proposed could be reviewed. He also suggested that another possibility was for the Town Council, as the Legislative Body, to place the following question on the November 5, 2024 Presidential Ballot *“Should the Town of Ledyard acquire the 19-acre Sweet Hill Farm for a Public Park?”*. Mr. Treaster stated should the Town Council make a decision to include the question he proposed on the November 5, 2024 ballot that the odds of the Planning & Zoning Commission placing a Moratorium on New Multi-Family Applications in the Gales Ferry District until after November 5, 2024 was possible.

Mr. Treaster asked the Town Council to amend tonight’s Agenda to discuss the possibility to acquire the 19-acre Sweet Hill Farm property for fair-market value to be used for the following: Park; the Town Fair; Community Center, Large Scale Outdoor Public Events, future Development of the Town; etc. He stated there were many justifiable uses for the property, noting that it was only fair to the residents for the Town Council to have that discussion this evening.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that a couple of residents wrote letters providing comments regarding the development of the 19-acre Sweet Hill Farm property that were similar to Mr. Treaster’s comments this evening. She stated the Town Council had no authority over the Planning & Zoning Commission or the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. She questioned the legality to place Moratorium on New Multi-Family Applications in the Gales Ferry District on the privately owned Sweet Hill Farm, located on Military Highway. Mr. Treaster stated privately owned property had nothing to do with a Moratorium.

Councilor Dombrowski stated by State Statute the Town Council had no authority with regard to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Treaster stated the Town Council appointed the members to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Councilor Dombrowski stated by the State Statute the Town Council can only appoint the members of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Treaster stated that the Town Council does have the right to place a question on the November 5, 2024 ballot.

Chairman Rodriguez questioned the legality of placing a question on the November 5, 2024 ballot to acquire property that was privately-owned; and not currently for sale. She also questioned if the property was for sale, how much money that they would be talking about to purchase the property. She stated all these questions would need to be answered, stating that she did not see how the Town Council could move forward on Mr. Treaster's suggestion.

Mr. Treaster stated the Town would be obligated to pay fair-market value for the property. He stated if the townspeople approved his suggested question: "*Should the Town of Ledyard acquire the 19 acre Sweet Hill Farm for a Public Park?*" the town would be authorized to acquire the property. He went on to state that because the property would be used for a *Public Purpose*, such as a park, that per State Statute the town could acquire the property under *Eminent Domain*. Chairman Rodriguez and the Mayor stated that they would not use *Eminent Domain*. Mr. Treaster stated nevertheless the question "*Should the Town of Ledyard acquire the 19 acres Sweet Hill Farm for a Public Park?*" was worth discussing on the record. Chairman Rodriguez stated that she would not go in the direction Mr. Treaster has suggested; and she thanked him for his comments.

Ms. Jennifer Zeronza, 18 Bluff Road West, Gales Ferry, addressed the proposed Quarry in Gales Ferry/Ledyard by Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI). She noted that 15-years ago she purchased property in Gales Ferry as a second home. She stated her family has spent a decade and a half of summers, holidays, weekends, and every chance they get making family memories in Gales Ferry. She stated they were in a new phase of their life where they were ready to move to Ledyard permanently. However, she stated the proposed Quarry Development by Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI) was holding them back. She stated that Ledyard's website describes the town as follows:

"A suburban community with a quiet rural nature of southeastern Connecticut, abundant single-family residences separated by numerous red maple swamps, and rocky rugged uplands characterizes the settlement of Ledyard. Ledyard offers space for ample residential areas for families to live and grow. The community emphasizes our historical heritage and traditional New England themes".

Ms. Zeronza stated that Ledyard, as described on its website, was the town they have seen and experienced, noting that she helped to lead a historic walk through the village. She stated it was the town where they chat with their neighbors as they walk to the Library, or get ice cream at Sweet Hill Farm. She stated neighbors help each other plow driveways in the winter and share garden vegetables and fresh caught fish in the summer. She stated in stock opposition to this idealist existence they were now threatened with aggressive and destructive development at the Cashman Property (former Dow-Styrenics Property). She stated in response that she has spent two years learning Ledyard's Planning & Zoning Regulations, as well as organizing, communicating and testifying to prevent the utter destruction of land, history, and our way of life, just upriver from her home. She stated that she has stood up at Public Hearings before and would do so again, noting that she was present this evening to remind the governing body of the town that individual taxpayers drive the economy too, noting that they were customers of local stores, gas stations, restaurants, gyms, and ice cream stands. She stated for 15-years her family happily paid Ledyard taxes, to support a school system that they never used. She stated every day her family asked themselves whether they should invest in a renovation of their home in Ledyard, should they buy a larger home in Ledyard, or should they move to another town, as they consider both the proposed use of the Cashman Property, as well as the massive Apartment Complex that was being discussed at the Sweet Hill Farm Property. She rhetorically questioned whether her family should take their tax dollars and consumer spending and go somewhere else, stating that she hoped not; and that she hoped her family could live in Ledyard permanently. She stated that she would be happy to serve on a Commission that could find reasonable and acceptable solutions to increase the tax base of Ledyard. She stated until then that she would stand up again, and again, in an effort to protect and to remain part of the community they love. She stated the

leadership of this town had an important decision to make as to whether they would strike an appropriate balance between necessary business revenues and protection of its citizens; or would they bend to aggressive corporations and developers who seek to destroy their community in the name of profit. She stated they love this community and this town. Please protect it. Thank you.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked Ms. Zeronza for her comments, and she explained the Applications have to follow the land use processes. She stated as she mentioned earlier this evening, per State Statute the Town Council does not have any authority and cannot get involved with Applications that were before the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC) or the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Ms. Zeronza stated that although she understood that there were processes in place; that she also knew that folks talk, noting that it was important, as the governing body, that the Town Council consider the impact the proposed developments were having on folks who wanted to move to Ledyard, to spend their money here, and to be part of this community.

Councilor Dombrowski stated the Town Council has seen all of the correspondence that has come into the office; and that they hear and empathize with all of the residents' concerns regarding both of the proposed developments (Cashman Property and Sweet Hill Farm Property). However, he stated they must recognize that members of the Town Council cannot have any influence over any zoning matters. He also explained that members of the Town Council cannot stand up in front of the Planning & Zoning Commission to state their opinion. He explained in accordance with State Statute, the Town Council usurped their authority to have no involvement whatsoever in zoning matters in 1973 when they established Zoning Commission per Ordinance. He went on to explain the City of Norwich was the only municipality in the entire State of Connecticut that had authority over zoning matters, because they were still the Zoning Commission, noting that there was a special state statute governing the City of Norwich.

Councilor St. Vil stated that he wanted to amplify the sentiment of Chairman Rodriguez and Councilor Dombrowski, noting that State Statute defined what the Town Council could do or say regarding zoning and wetland matters. He explained the State Statutes allowed a *Due Process* for every Application that comes before the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission. He stated as a resident of the town that citizens could present a recommendation to the Planning & Zoning Commission and Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission to modify/change the Regulations. He stated changing the Regulations was not an easy task noting that it required public hearings and input from all stakeholders. He stated that he was shocked that anyone would recommend the Town Council amend their Agenda this evening because there was an Application before a Land Use Regulatory Commission that they did not agree with, noting that it would now be *subjective*. He stated that prior to being elected to the Town Council that he served on both the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission, noting it was a tough job. He stated both Commissions had a lot of smart people, who dedicate a lot of time to make sure the right decisions were made.

Ms. Zeronza stated that she respected the process and structure. However, she stated as a townspeople who was not involved in the government, that she did not have a lot of trust in the process. She stated that she was seeing a lot of high-powered Attorneys, who had many years of experience being deeply involved. Therefore, she stated as a resident she wanted everyone in town government to understand how the citizens feel, how the proposed developments were going to impact the town's economy, and that she was going to stand up to make sure their voices, as citizens, was being heard.

Mr. Carlo Porazzi, 30 Chapman Lane, Gales Ferry, stated that he wanted to comment on the following correspondence that was included in the Communications List on tonight's agenda as follows:

- Residents' request for the town to hire an expert across the board for a couple of complex matters that were alluded to this evening - Mr. Porazzi stated that he supported these requests.

- Ms. Ribe’s email dated July 22, 2024 requesting the Town Council establish a temporary Committee to hold workshops to provide a high level overview of how our town government worked - Mr. Porazzi stated Ms. Ribe called out some important points, noting that he found Ms. Ribe’s email enlightening and that he supported her suggestion. He stated that he understood that Community Outreach Programs have been tried before, however, he asked that they continue that conversation because it was important for all to get educated. He stated that ignorance was not an excuse, but at the same time, residents who were interested in local government needed to learn more. He went on to note that during a Planning & Zoning Commission meeting he heard the following comments:
 - A resident commented that he did not know where any of them were twelve-years ago when some of the Rules and Regulations were being changed - Mr. Porazzi stated he thought the comment was insensitive, noting that they were probably raising their kids and working 50-hours a week, cutting the grass, and paying their taxes; and so, the town’s business was lower on the rung. He stated this was not an excuse, and that they should be more involved.
 - An Attorney stated that he was outraged that the laypeople were upset about the Rules and Regulations - Mr. Porazzi again stated that they could all use some education, and that they would like to work with them, to understand their position, and to understand how they could go about changing the Rules and Regulations in the best manner possible, without putting the Town Council and others on the spot.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry addressed Ms. Ribe’s email dated July 22, 2024 requesting the Town Council establish a temporary Committee to hold workshops to provide a high level overview of how our town government worked. She stated after the Planning & Zoning Commission’s July 11, 2024 meeting, which was eventful, that she and Ms. Ribe had a conversation about the many things that go on in town, and that residents were not familiar with how the town worked. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated until she became a member of the Town Council that she did not know how a lot of things worked. She also noted during their conversation that Councilor Ryan mentioned the New London Academy; and that she noted that Groton also had something similar to educate their residents on how local government worked. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in addition to holding meetings (Work Shops) to educate residents on local government that it would also be helpful to have this type of information written down in a place where it was accessible to all residents.

Councilor Ryan addressed Mr. Porazzi comment regarding legal professionals attending meetings and he questioned whether Mr. Porazzi was referring to the Planning & Zoning Commission, or Town Council meetings, because he did not recall legal professionals attending the Town Council’s meetings. Mr. Porazzi stated that he has been to quite a few meetings and may have used the incorrect terminology, noting it was not a Town Council meeting.

Councilor Dombrowski stated although he was not against holding workshops to educate residents about how local government worked, that they have done programs in the past. He noted former Mayor/Town Councilor Mary McGrattan facilitated several initiatives to educate the community on how their local government worked, noting that they were well done by many town departments, however, no one showed up. Chairman Rodriguez stated the last Community Relations Committee offered workshops noting that the town departments provided great presentations. However, as Councilor Dombrowski stated, no one showed up. Councilor Dombrowski stated that perhaps they need to find a way to better advertise the workshops for residents to learn about how local government worked.

Mr. Porazzi stated because the town has received more complex Applications that they may be drawing people out of the woodwork. Therefore, he stated that perhaps residents would be more receptive to attending the workshops to learn about how local government worked. He stated should the town provide another Program for residents to learn about their local government that he would be willing to promote the workshops, stating that perhaps they would be able to increase the attendance because of the things that were being proposed for the town.

Councilor Ryan stated that he previously lived in New London and that he served on their Planning & Zoning Commission. He stated the best way to learn about how local government worked was for residents to attend meetings, learn about the background, regulations, policies, etc., and get involved. He stated all of the information was out there for public consumption, noting that all of the town's elected officials, volunteers, and staff should be willing to answer any questions, in terms of directing them to references, and how they could learn about something. He also noted that residents could email the Town Council or a particular Commission and that they could point residents in the right direction. He stated the Town Council would love to see more people involved and engaged. He stated having the support of the entire community was what mattered, noting that they did not want to make decisions in a vacuum.

Councilor Dombrowski stated before becoming a member of the Town Council that he served on the Zoning Commission for ten-years. He noted that Mr. Treaster also served on the Zoning Commission and that they worked together on the Zoning Regulations. He stated the Zoning Commission and Planning Commission were combined in 2012; and that the Zoning Regulations were changed in 2022. Therefore, he stated that the current Zoning Regulations were not the same as what he and Mr. Treaster left them at, for good, or for worse, he did not know.

Ms. Lee Ann Anderson, 78 Military Highway, Gales Ferry, stated that she echoed some of Mr. Treaster's comments this evening, as well as many of the emails and letters the Town Council received regarding the proposed development for the 19-acre parcel located at 19, 29, & 39 Military Highway, Gales Ferry (Sweet Hill Farm). Ms. Anderson stated that one of their objectives was to keep the character and quality of life in Ledyard and Gales Ferry from overdevelopment that would be detrimental to our town and our children. She stated as some may know the Application to build a five-story 320-unit Apartment Complex for the property that was previously called *Sweet Hill Farm* on Military Highway, Gales Ferry was pending before the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission (IWWC). She stated it was expected that this Application would be approved by the IWWC; and that the Application would then be submitted to the Planning & Zoning Commission. She stated the existing Zoning Regulations would allow for the proposed development. She stated the massive 320-unit Apartment Complex would be larger than the 14-acre Triton Square Apartments located behind the Super 8 Motel in Groton, that Mr. Treaster spoke about. She stated the Apartment Complex would not be in character with the Gales Ferry Village or Ledyard Center Village, noting that it would be in conflict with the approved Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). She stated the high density, massive development would have unintended consequences. She stated the massive and concentrated population would stress the town's police department, schools, and the safety of our roads for walking and driving. She stated the building owners would be paying taxes, not the renters, noting the cost to educate a Ledyard Student was approximately \$17,000 a year. She stated if there were a conservative 200 students living in the Apartment Complex that the town would see an added expense of \$3.4 million a year to support the school budget. She stated the 320-unit Apartment Complex would be wrong for our town, however, she stated the 19-acre parcel would be perfect for a park, ideal for hosting the Regatta, which has been there in previous years, the Ledyard Fair, or other significant outdoor public events, a youth center, sports fields, community and civic activities. Ms. Anderson noted that under Connecticut State Statute Chapter 152; Section 9-369 the town had the right to place any question on the ballot. She urged the Town Council to amend their Agenda this evening to discuss the merits of including a question on the November 5, 2024 Presidential Ballot to determine whether Ledyard Residents would support the town acquiring the 19-acre parcel as a Public Park for future generations. She stated placing the question directly on the ballot would do no harm and it would not be necessary to justify the expenditure for bonding (borrow money) to purchase the property for a Park. She stated that she would be willing to help prepare the question for the ballot. She stated because there was a statutory lead time requirement to place a question on the ballot, the Town Council should make a decision as soon as possible, by amending their Agenda to discuss the matter this evening. She stated if the Town Council was in-favor of asking the question on the November 5, 2024 Ballot that it would help to justify the Planning & Zoning placing a Moratorium on receiving Multi-Family Applications in the Gales Ferry Design District until after November 5, 2024.

Mr. Mike Cherry, 5 Whippoorwill Drive, Gales Ferry, attending remotely, stated he understood Mr. Porazzi's position, noting that he was the resident who asked where they were twelve-years ago. Mr. Cherry stated twelve-years ago when Ledyard was rewriting their Zoning Regulations that he was the Chairman of the Planning Commission, he was the Chairman of the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), he was a member of the Economic Development Commission (EDC), he was working 50+ hours a week, and that he felt guilty because he was not contributing to his town. He stated because there were things that he did not like; that he decided the only way to change things was to become part of the process. He stated at a couple of Planning & Zoning Commission meetings that he pointed out that the town had vacancies on their Commissions, noting that they were not looking for people who had an ax to grind or an agenda. However, he stated they were looking for residents who had open minds that could volunteer to sit on their town's Commissions and represent the rest of their residents. He addressed the following comments that were made this evening:

- A Moratorium on Multi -Family Applications – Mr. Cherry explained that a Moratorium would not help with the two developments that residents were commenting on this evening, because they already had Active Land Use Applications in-process, therefore, he stated a Moratorium would not stop those.
- Purchase the 19-acres located at 19, 29, & 39 Military Highway, Gales Ferry (Sweet Hill Farm) – Mr. Cherry stated the property was purchased from a private party by a private firm. The private firm that purchased the property has greatly invested in the property. He stated that he did not know whether the town could purchase the property at a price where the owner would recover everything that he spent.
- Ms. Ribe's email dated July 22, 2024 requesting the Town Council establish a temporary Committee to hold workshops to provide a high level overview of how our town government worked – Mr. Cherry stated he met with Ms. Ribe and that he also saw Councilor Ryan's comments. Mr. Cherry stated that he thought the town was long-overdue for residents to come and learn about how Ledyard became Ledyard, what gave them the authority to act, and where their Boards and Commissions get their authority from. However, he stated that he would echo Councilor Dombrowski's comments, noting that when the Planning & Zoning Commission met with their Consultant in 2012 to help with the Plan of Conservation (POCD) and the Zoning Regulations, that only the Commission Members attended the Workshops and Public Hearings, noting that no one from the public/residents attended. Therefore, he stated that he challenged the Community Relations Committee to figure out how to get residents to show up when they hold these Workshops, etc. He stated the only time a large interest occurred was when it was going to happen in someone's backyard, and then they get people involved. He stated that he would be happy to help anyway he could; however, he stated the ship has sailed on a lot of things.

Mr. Dave Schroeder, 290 Whalehead Road, Gales Ferry, stated that he was present to also ask the Town Council to amend their Agenda this evening to talk about acquiring the 19-acre parcel located at 19, 29, & 39 Military Highway, Gales Ferry (Sweet Hill Farm). He stated it was his understanding that because the Application to construct the 320-unit Apartment Complex was not before the Planning & Zoning Commission that they could still talk about it; and that the Town Council had the authority to place a question on the November 5, 2024 Presidential Ballot; so the residents could have a discussion. He stated the proposed Apartment Complex was huge; and he questioned whether anyone could think of a building in town that was six-stories tall. He stated it would add two-fifths to the population of the Gales Ferry Village. He stated the construction was out of character for their little historical village, noting that it was going to look like they were in Groton. He stated the people who live in Ledyard and Gales Ferry had rights and he questioned how they had gotten to the point where a project such as this one was being allowed in town, or in that particular location. He stated that he hoped the Town Council would have the willingness to talk about placing a question on the November 5, 2024 Ballot to have a discussion regarding acquiring the 19-acre parcel and the Application for the Apartment Complex, noting that people were upset about the proposed development.

Chairman Rodriguez explained because the Application for the 320-unit Apartment Complex was before the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission (IWWC) the process has begun; and by State Statute the Town Council cannot get involved, noting that they have to follow the law, and trust the process.

Mr. Dave Schroeder stated that Mr. Treaster seemed to believe that there was an angle that could allow them to place a question on the ballot. Chairman Rodriguez stated that they had to follow the law. Councilor Dombrowski explained in accordance with State Statute and Power Initiative that the only question they could place on a referendum ballot were things that were under the Town Council's jurisdiction, such as ordinances, etc. He went on to explain that because Zoning and Wetlands was governed by State Statute the Town Council had no authority. He stated asking a Question would be purely Advisory. Mr. Treaster stated that all the residents were requesting was that they ask a Question.

Ms. Deborah Edwards, 30 Bluff Road West, Gales Ferry, attending remotely, stated in response to a request proposed by several residents that the Administration Committee included a discussion to establish an Ethics Code and Ethics Commission on their June 12, 2024 Agenda. She stated during the meeting the Committee briefly reviewed a template that had been provided by the State, as well as some work that had been done by previous Town Councils. She stated the Minutes from the June 12, 2024, meeting noted that the Committee would continue their discussion at their July 24, 2024 meeting. However, she stated that she attended the Administration Committee's meeting earlier this evening which was posted as a Special Meeting/Work Session, and that no public comments were allowed, and the Agenda did not include an item regarding the Ethics Commission. Therefore, she questioned the reason the Ethic's Commission was not included on tonight's Administration Committee agenda. She stated during their Committee's Report later this evening that she hoped Councilor Garcia-Irizarry could explain: (1) The reason the proposal to establish an Ethics Commission was dropped in 2009, 2010, 2018, 2019, (2) The reason it was not included on the Administration Committee's Agenda tonight, and (3) Provide a status report regarding their work on the Ethics Commission.

Ms. Edwards continued by asking for an update regarding the Cartway Property on Route 12, Gales Ferry. She stated during his Monthly Report to the Planning & Zoning Commission the Blight Enforcement Officer noted that he had conversations with the Representative of the Cartway Property Owner and the Mayor, however, she stated there was no other detail.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Administration Committee Chairman Councilor Garcia-Irizarry to address Ms. Edward's question regarding the Committee's work on the Ethics Commission during her Committee Report later this evening. She continued by asking Mayor Allyn, III, whether he could respond to Ms. Edward's question regarding the Cartway Property.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated the town had a conversation with the Cartway Property Owner and he noted that a couple of Real Estate Brokers called to inquire about the availability of utilities, etc., noting that public water was available in that area. However, he stated to his knowledge the privately owned property was not listed for sale.

Councilor Dombrowski stated the Cartway Property was not listed on the June, 2024 Blight Report, noting that the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee did not meet in July, 2024. Mayor Allyn stated that he would look into the most recent Blight Report relative to the Cartway Property.

Ms. Anne Roberts-Pierson, 4 Anderson Drive, Gales Ferry, thanked the Town Council for their service to the town, noting that she wanted to address the following this evening:

- Ethics Code – Ethics Commission – Ms. Roberts-Pierson noted that she was also interested in the status of the Administration Committee's work regarding the Ethics Commission and that she would wait for their Committee Report later this evening.
- Town Council Draft Minutes – June 12, 2024 Meeting – Ms. Roberts-Pierson submitted the following corrections:
 - Ms. Roberts-Pierson's first name is spelled with an *e* "Anne"
 - The date in Ms. Roberts-Pierson's comments should be June 12, "2024" ; not "2025"
- Land Use Department Revolving Door – Ms. Roberts-Pierson noted since Spring, 2024 the Land Use Office has had the disappearance of the following three employees:
 - Director Juliet Hodge was terminated by the Mayor at the end of April, 2024.

- Office Assistant Makenna Perry - Ms. Roberts-Pierson noted that she did not file a Freedom of Information Act Request (FOIA) regarding Ms. Perry departure, therefore, she did not know whether she was fired or if she left of her own volition.
- Office Assistant Yasmin Gonzalez – Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated Ms. Gonzalez was hired to replace Ms. Perry, noting that she met Ms. Gonzalez in the Land Use Office about one week before the June 4, 2024 Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission’s meeting at which Ms. Gonzalez was introduced to the Commission. Ms. Roberts-Pierson noted through her Freedom of Information Act Request (FOIA) it was revealed that Ms. Gonzalez was terminated on June 6, 2024.
- Office Assistant Anna Wynn – Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated they now have another replacement, Anna Wynn who was introduced shortly thereafter.

Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated that she finds all of this quite disturbing, noting that they have two of the largest Planning & Zoning Applications in the history of the Town of Ledyard that were in-process, or soon to be in-process for the foreseeable future; or at least to the end of the year. Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated that she has had repeated interactions concerning technical problems regarding the transparency of documents appearing on the website. She stated that she and the Land Use Director-Town Planner have gone back and forth for three weeks running, even as recently as yesterday, with regard to the posting of documents on the website. She stated that it was her opinion that there were on-going hiccups in transparency. She stated unless something remarkable happened that she did not have confidence that there was enough competent staff in the Land Use Department, commenting that she did not know if staff-in-training was sufficient; and that she doubted that she was the only citizen that was beginning to feel this way.

Ms. Roberts-Pierson continued by stating that she wanted to bring to the Town Council’s attention her July 16, 2024 letter to the Land Use Director-Town Planner in which she copied (cc’d) the Town Council, noting her letter was included in the Town Council’s Correspondence List on tonight’s Agenda. She stated her letter was regarding the Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI) Quarry Application. She stated because they were short on time this evening, that she would not go into detail. However, she stated in her three-page report she requested experts be hired for the town at the expense of the Application, in order that the Planning & Zoning Commission might have the tools and expertise with which to deliberate and approve or denied the GFI massive; possibility up-to a decade, of activities in the town.

Ms. Roberts-Pierson concluded by stating that she echoed the comments provided by the following residents this evening: Mr. Treaster, Mr. Porazzi. Mr. Schroeder, Ms. Zeronsa, and Ms. Anderson about the power of the Town Council to amend tonight’s Agenda to discuss acquiring the Sweet Hill Farm Property, located at 19, 29, & 39 Military Highway, Gales Ferry, due to the very complex, very inappropriate housing complex that was proposed. She stated to clarify, that the only thing that has happened with the 320-unit Apartment Complex Inland Wetland and Watercourses Application was that it was *Accepted* by the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission at their July 2, 2024 meeting. She went on to note that what was most disturbing at the July 2, 2024 meeting, was that in receiving the Application the IWWC did not immediately state that a Public Hearing was necessary, noting that it was within their power to do so. She stated the IWWC simply said “*Oh, yes, we will accept the Application tonight*”. Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated the Application came-in, without seemingly a thought that a Public Hearing was needed. She stated that she guessed that the IWWC Commission felt that they were expert enough to make a determination on such a project. She stated within 14-days the Citizens of Ledyard put together a Petition which required a Public Hearing. She stated if the citizen had not submitted the Petition that a Public Hearing was not going to happen. She stated certainly a project of this magnitude needed as many eyes on the prize, as possible. She stated the ramifications of such an Application was an existential threat to the Town of Ledyard and to life as they know it. She stated this Application was on-going at the same time as the potential Quarry (Cashman Property- former Dow Chemical/Styrenics property). She stated that she found it interesting that they would be tearing down an mountain and the housing application would rise up. She stated that she thought that the Town Council had the power to amend the Agenda this evening because the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Application has only been received, noting that nothing has happened; it was just sitting, and not in-play. She stated the Application has just been received, that was it.

Chairman Rodriguez responded to Ms. Roberts-Pierson’s comments as follows:

- Town Council June 12, 2024 Minutes – Chairman Rodriguez stated that the Town Council would amend their June 12, 2024 Minutes to include Ms. Roberts-Pierson’s two typographical corrections.
- Ms. Roberts-Pierson’s July 15, 2024 letter – Chairman Rodriguez stated the Town Council did receive Ms. Roberts-Pierson’s July 15, 2024 letter along with all the residents’ letters and emails regarding the Gales Ferry Intermodal (GFI) Quarry Application and the 320-unit Apartment Complex, and that they have read all of them.

- Land Use Office Assistant Staff – Chairman Rodriguez stated that former Land Use Assistant Ms. Makenna Perry was currently working for the Ledyard Police Department.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Mayor Allyn, III, whether he wanted to add anything.

Mayor Allyn, III, asked Ms. Roberts-Pierson how many people in her lifetime has she hired and fired, noting that he was curious to know her qualifications for hiring and firing employees. He stated Ms. Roberts-Pierson has talked about the competence, or lack of competence of the Land Use Department, in her CAPITALIZED EMAILS, which he brought with him this evening. He stated during Ms. Roberts-Pierson’s comments this evening he pulled up the Planning & Zoning Commission’s Agenda using the same link Ms. Roberts-Pierson received, stated that he was also included on the distribution of the Agenda. He stated all the attachments (links) Ms. Roberts-Pierson talked about were included on the Agenda. Ms. Roberts-Pierson noted that the attachments did not appear until this morning. Mayor Allyn stated that the attachments were available, and he thanked Ms. Roberts-Pierson.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked all of the residents for their comments this evening, noting that the Town Council had to move on with the business of the meeting.

Ms. Roberts-Pierson stated the level of condescension that was happening here at the Town Council, the Mayor, the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission, and the Planning & Zoning Commission meetings was outrageous. Mayor Allyn thanked Ms. Roberts-Pierson, and he noted that he would share Ms. Roberts-Pierson’s emails and their level of condescension.

Councilor Dombrowski called a Point of Order.

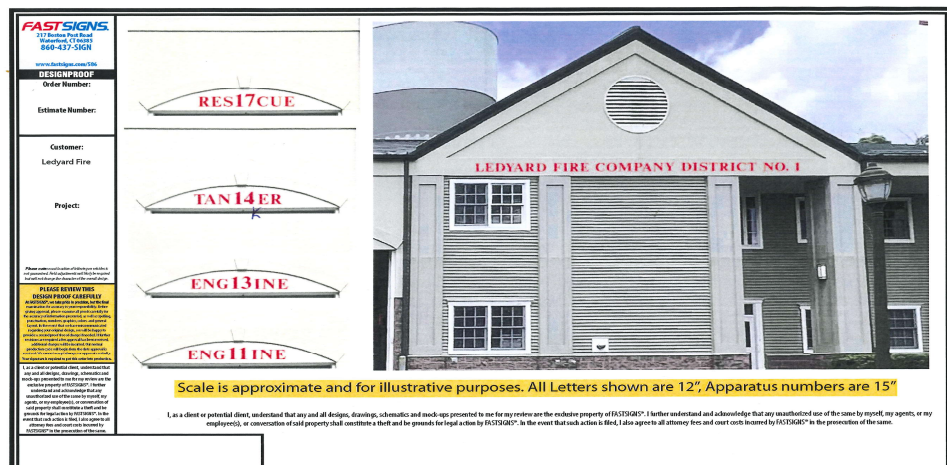
Ms. Roberts-Pierson, and other residents left the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

IV. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

VI. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Chairman Rodriguez stated that the Ledyard Town Council strongly condemns the assassination attempt on former President Trump that occurred on July 15, 2024 at a Pennsylvania campaign rally. She stated political violence, and violence of any sort, was contrary to our democracy. She stated that violence was never a solution and should be unequivocally denounced by all. She stated that they were relieved that the former president was recovering from the injury to his ear, and that their thoughts and prayers were with him and for the health and wellbeing of anyone injured, especially for the family of Mr. Corey Comperatore who was a former Fire Chief, that was fatally wounded while protecting his family from the bullets – He is a True Hero!

Chairman Rodriguez continued by reporting that the Ledyard Fire Department would be putting lettering on the Emergency Services Building located on Fairway Drive, that says “*Ledyard Fire Company District No. 1*”. She noted although the Emergency Services Building was a town owned building, the Fire Department would pay for the cost. She stated in response to her request that Fire Marshal Jim Mann sent a picture of the sample, noting that both she and Mayor Allyn agreed that it was professional looking. She stated Tony Sabilia from FastSigns in Waterford would do the work. She noted that Fire Marshal Mann stated that putting the Fire Department’s name on the building would give the volunteer members pride.



Chairman Rodriguez went on to state that sadly in his July 4, 2024 email Board of Education Chairman Alex Rode resigned citing health reasons. She stated as a retired teacher and retired US Naval Aviator Mr. Rode had the background and skills that made him a consummate leader. She stated during his time on the Board of Education Mr. Rode prioritized the needs of the students to ensure that critical resources were made available to meet targeted interventions in literacy and numeracy. She thanked Mr. Rode for his service to the town, noting that they would keep him in their thoughts for improved health and hope that he would be able to return to things he loved to do soon.

Chairman Rodriguz continued to state the Town Council welcomed Board of Education Chairman Anthony Favry, who was elected by his peers to fill Mr. Rode's vacancy. She stated that Mr. Favry comes into the role of Chairman with nine years of experience in serving on the Board of Education and in previously serving as its Chairman from 2016 – 2023. She stated that the Town Council looks forward to once again working with Chairman Favry.

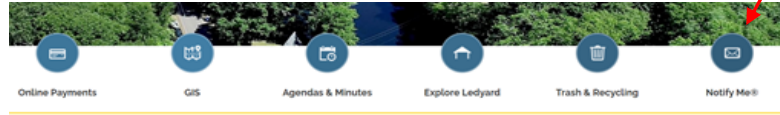
Councilor Ryan echoed Chairman Rodriguez's comments regarding the changes in the Board of Education. He stated that he wished Mr. Rode the best in his health, and he congratulated Mr. Favry for providing a steady hand for the Board of Education thru the remainder of Mr. Rode's term.

Councilor Saccone addressed the comments from all of the residents who spoke this evening. He stated that he has been a volunteer in town for over 25-years; and he explained that it was extremely difficult to join town committees; or to run and be elected to serve on the Town Council. He stated the only way residents may be able to make the changes/adjustments they were seeking was for them to step-up and volunteer to serve on town committees; or run to be elected to the Town Council and do the work that was needed for the town. He stated that he appreciated the residents comments' tonight.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry announced the following: (1) PILOT Food Waste Composting Program – Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated earlier this month Ledyard implemented a six-month Food Waste Compost Collection PILOT Program through Blue Earth Compost, located in Hartford. She stated Blue Earth Compost Starter Kits were available and could be picked-up at the Transfer Station. She noted the Starter Kit included a 6-gallon compost pails and 25-compostable bags. She explained that residents would need to bring their Food Waste to the Transfer Station to dispose of in the Collection Carts stating that Blue Earth Compost would then pick-up the Food Waste on weekly basis. She noted that the Starter Kits were being given for free to 100 residents on a first-come, first-serve basis. She stated that she hoped to provide information and Starter Kits to residents at a Farmers Market his summer; (2) Committee to Provide Government Transparency Regarding Town Processes – Councilor Garcia-Irizarry addressed Ms. Ribe's email dated July 22, 2024 in which she requested the Town Council establish a temporary Committee to hold workshops to provide a high level overview of how our town government worked. She stated that she supported Ms. Ribe's idea, however, she stated that she would also like the town to find ways to better communicate with residents and advertise things. She noted as an example that she and many others on the Town Council posted the Budget Referendum on social media and everywhere they could; and they also told everyone about the May 21, 2024 Referendum. However, she stated when the Referendum results were posted on social media sites, including the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Community Forum that many residents posted comments that they did not know about the Budget Referendum. She stated that she found it frustrating that residents stated that they did not know about the Budget Referendum because she repeatedly posted the date of the Referendum. She stated that she hoped the Town could find some ways to advertise this type of information to inform residents that would not come at a high cost.

Chairman Rodriguez stated every year there were social media comments/posts that the Town had to do a better job to get the word out about the Budget Referendum; and that no one knew about it. However, she stated that there was always one social media poster that stated where the Annual Budget Referendum was advertised, noting that there were seven different places where the Budget Referendum was posted. She stated that they would continue to fight the good fight to get the word out.

Chairman Rodriguez concluded by stating the Town Council welcomed residents' comments on these subjects or any other issues; and she encouraged residents to become involved in their local government, suggesting that residents visit the town's website at WWW.LEDYARDCT.ORG and click on the "*Agendas and Minutes*" tab to watch the meeting videos, learn about the decisions that were being made in their community, and to become an informed and active participant in their local government. She urged residents to sign up for *Notify Me* which was available on the front page of the website by clicking on the *Notify Me* tab and to also select *Alert Center, Calendar, and News Flash*. She also stated that residents should look for the two new Digital Message Signs that were located on Route 12, and soon to be on the Town Green in Ledyard Center.



VII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2024 as amended to include the following typographical corrections provided by Ms. Anne Roberts-Pierson:

- Ms. Roberts-Pierson's first name is spelled with an *e* "Anne"
- The date in Ms. Roberts-Pierson's comments should be June 12, "2024" ; not "2025"

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski

VOTE: 6 – 0 – Approved and so declared

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

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

X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Administration Committee cancelled their July 10, 2024 meeting and scheduled a Special Meeting/Work Session that was held earlier this evening to specifically address: (1) Scheduling a Public Hearing regarding the following Ordinances: (a) "*An Ordinance Providing Tax Relief For Gold Star Families in the Town of Ledyard*"; and (b) Proposed amendments to Ordinance #100-0111 "*An Ordinance Establishing Social Services Board For the Town of Ledyard*"; and (2) Discussed proposed amendments to Ordinance #100-015 "*An Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Municipal Building Committee for the Town of Ledyard*" and received comments from invited guests of the PMBC and Board of Education.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry continued by addressing Ms. Edwards' question regarding the status of drafting an "*Ordinance to Create an Ethics Commission*". She explained that due to time constraints, that tonight's Special Meeting/Work Session was scheduled to focus on proposed amendments to Ordinance #100-015 "*An Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Municipal Building Committee for the Town of Ledyard*". She went on to state that she has been working to research creating a Municipal Ethics Commission noting that she and Human Resources Director Marisa Iannella-Rodriguez attended a Connecticut Conference of Municipal (CCM) Webinar on July 10, 2024 regarding Ethics Commissions. She stated the Administration Committee would invite Ms. Iannella-Rodriguez to attend one of their meetings to share the information that she had on the topic. She stated drafting an "*Ordinance to Create an Ethics Commission*" was a work-in-progress, noting that it was going to take some time. She stated although this item was not included on tonight's Administration Committee's Special Agenda that they have been actively working on it.

Community Relations Committee

Chairman Rodriguez noted that Councilor Brunelle was not present this evening; and no report was provided.

Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee met on July 17, 2024 and they have four items on tonight's Agenda. He also noted that the Finance Committee's August 7, 2024 meeting, would be moved to August 14, 2024.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil stated the LUPPW Committee did not meet in July. He stated their next meeting was scheduled for Monday, August 5, 2024.

Retirement Board

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Retirement Board's July 16, 2024 meeting was cancelled.

Farmers Market Committee

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Farmers Market Committee cancelled their July meeting.

Historic District Commission

Councilor Ryan stated the Historic District Commission met on July 15, 2024, noting that they had a short Agenda. He stated the Commission discussed potential projects they might have that were over and above their current Capital Plan. Councilor Ryan stated that he advised the Commission that if they had any projects that could be contracted in relatively quick order that they would be good projects to present to the Finance Committee for potential inclusion on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) List, in case the town needed to consume ARPA Funds, that might be left from other project underruns. He stated that he was working with Historic District Commission Chairman Earl (Ty) Lamb to get a list of potential projects along with an Order of Magnitude Quotes, so that the projects could be considered. He explained if the town did not have contracts in-place by the end of this calendar year (December 31, 2024) that the town would be required to return any unobligated ARPA Funding to the Federal Treasury. He concluded by noting the Commission's August 15, 2024 meeting would be cancelled.

Ledyard Center Fire Department

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

Gales Ferry Fire Department

Councilor Saccone reported the following: (1) Ladder Truck Emergency Repairs – Councilor Saccone stated the Gales Ferry Fire Department had to have a major repair on their ladder truck; (2) Building Generator – Councilor Saccone stated that unfortunately the Fire Station generator, which was used to heat and cool the building was out of service and they may not be able to repair it.

Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission

Councilor St. Vil stated the IWWC met on July 2, 2024 and addressed the following: (1) 18- Lot Stoddards Wharf Drive Subdivision Application – Councilor St. Vil noted this was a fairly complex Legal Application, noting that the IWWC Commission dispositioned that discussion and accepted the Application; (2) Military Highway Application – Councilor St. Vil stated the Town Council heard from residents earlier this evening about the 320-unit Apartment Complex Application.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Councilor St. Vil stated the Planning & Zoning Commission met on July 11, 2024 and he stated the Military Highway 320-unit Apartment Complex was also a point of discussion during their Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Councilor St. Vil went on to state that what he has been seeing was similar to what the Town Council saw this evening, which was significant public commentary on Open Applications. He stated that he appreciated the comments from the Commission, and Commissioner Beth Ribe's recommendation to educate the community on the Land Use Commission's processes.

Councilor St. Vil continued to note that they need to recognize that the staffing of the Land Use Office was finite, explaining that because they had 4 people that it may take a little time for staff to answer all the residents' questions. He stated they had people asking a lot of questions coupled with some very complex Applications, explaining that once an Application was accepted/received that the clock started. He stated our resources were going to get overwhelmed by the community, and therefore, he questioned how the town could support the Land Use Department. He stated part of the answer was education for the residents, and he questioned whether the Mayor and/or the Town Council could provide some ideas on how the town government could support executing the functions that they were trying to perform.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated understanding that the Land Use Department currently had two substantial Applications pending; noting that there would probably be more in the not too distant future; that in between directing all of the emails received, Land Use Director/Town Planner Elizabeth Burdick has been communicating with Professional Engineering Firms to perform the overviews on behalf of the Town, and at the expense of the Applicants. He stated these Applications were complex, as mentioned this evening, noting that Ledyard has probably not seen Applications of this size since the Fox Run Apartments on Flintlock Road. He stated that Ms. Burdick was making a wise decision in seeking the services of Professional Engineering Firms, and that the Applicants were supporting this approach as well.

Agricultural Commission

Councilor Dombroski stated the Agricultural Commission met on July 16, 2024; however, he unfortunately was unable to attend their meeting.

Water Pollution Control Authority

Councilor Dombrowski stated the WPCA met on July 23, 2024; however, he unfortunately was unable to attend their meeting.

Library Commission

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated at the Library Commission's June 17, 2024 meeting the following was reported: (1) Received a \$3,333 Traveling Toys Grant that would be used to start a toy game collection that patrons would be able to check-out; (2) Received a \$2,000 Ledyard Rotary Grant that would be used for the new Children's Wonder Book Collection; (3) Library had Summer Reading Programs for both Children and Adults.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry went on to report that the Commission did not meet in July, noting that their next meeting was scheduled for August 19, 2024.

Board of Education

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Board of Education met on July 23, 2024 and addressed the following: (1) Mr. Rode Vacancy – The Board unanimously approved to elect Ms. Kate DiPalma-Herb to fill Mr. Rode's vacancy, who unfortunately had to step down because of health reasons, as Chairman Rodriguez mentioned earlier this evening; (2) Assistant Principal Position - Juliet W. Long School and Gales Ferry School – The Board received 73 Applications for the position; (3) Strategic Plan – The Board adopted a new Five-Year Strategic Plan; and (4) Lunch Debt – Ledyard Public School had \$18,000 outstanding that has not been paid for student lunches.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, apologized to the Town Council for his lack of decorum earlier this evening. He continued by reporting on the following: (1) Zoning Regulations and High Density Housing - Mayor Allyn stated that studies were commissioned in 1972, 1977, 1985, & 2007 noting that all of the studies called for higher density housing in downtown Gales Ferry and in Ledyard Center. He stated this information was also in the town's Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD, noting that this information was nothing new. He stated the Zoning Regulations were recently revised in 2022, noting that during this process residents had the opportunity to be present and to have their voice heard, if they had concerns about the Zoning Regulations that were proposed by Ledyard's previous Town Planner. However, he stated

only about three residents attended the Public Hearing; (2) Habitat for Humanity Preliminary Site Plan– Colby Drive - Mayor Allyn stated he met with Habitat for Humanity, noting that their Site Plan called for 40-units of workforce housing on Colby Drive. Habitat for Humanity would be applying for a grant sometime in March, 2025; (3) Economic Development – Mayor Allyn stated he attended the Town of Ledyard Economic Development Commission (EDC) meeting and the following week he attended the SeCTer Board (Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region) meeting that was held in Groton. He stated a lot of towns were facing the same issues as Ledyard, which was housing growth. He stated both Market and Affordable Housing Growth was desperately needed. He stated at the Town Council’s January 10, 2024 meeting he reported that members of the Department of Defense (DOD) flew up from Washington D.C. to specifically meet with Ledyard, Groton, and New London, as the surrounding communities to Electric Boat (EB). He stated after meeting with Electric Boat, the first question the Department of Defense (DOD) Members asked each of the surrounding towns was “*What are you doing for housing needs for the workforce that was needed for Electric Boat?*” Mayor Allyn stated “*Yes, there were housing proposals in town; and Yes, they were desperately needed*”. He stated either Ledyard grows; or they go away. He stated although he believed this was a positive, that he did not want to step into the realm of the Planning & Zoning Commission, because they had their own processes that they had to follow; (4) Shared Bridges with the Town of Stonington – Mayor Allyn stated on July 15, 2024 he met with Stonington to discuss the following two bridges that were shared by both Ledyard and Stonington: (a) Lantern Hill Road Bridge which was already in the State Local Bridge Program, and the replacement of the bridge was moving along; and (b) Wolf Neck Road Bridge which was narrow and in shocking condition. Mayor Allyn stated that Stonington would be developing a proposal to replace the bridge. He explained when neighboring towns share a bridge that was on the town line, they shared the cost 50/50. He stated upon the receipt of Stonington’s Wolf Neck Bridge Proposal that he would bring it to the Town Council; (5) Solid Waste Committee July 16, 2024 Meeting – Mayor Allyn stated he Chaired the Solid Waste Committee Meeting at the Southeastern Council of Governments (SCCOG). He explained the only change the Legislators made this year was to increase the weight load of the trucks hauling trash out of state from 80,000 pounds 100,000 pounds, meaning that Connecticut could haul trash out of state faster. He stated that this was not a solution, noting that SCCOG would approve the Solid Waste Committee’s reprioritized request in September to move forward to their Legislators; (6) 42 Laurel Leaf Drive - Habitat for Humanity Open House – July 23, 2024 – Mayor Allyn stated he attended the Open House, noting that 42 Laurel Leaf Drive was gifted to Habitat for Humanity. He stated the Town Council held a Public Hearing on June 28, 2023 to assist Habitat for Humanity with obtaining their Application to obtain some support from the Neighborhood Assistance Act Program; and he noted that Habitat for Humanity did an amazing renovation to the house; stating that the home was now ready for its new happy owners; (7) Bond Sale July 23, 2024 - Mayor Allyn stated Ledyard’s \$5.5 million General Obligation Bonds went on the Market yesterday to fund the School Roofs, Solar Installations and Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Projects. He stated the Bid Opening (interest rates were being offered) for their Bonds would be held on July 30, 2024; (8) Ledyard Sewer Line Extension Project – Mayor Allyn stated the project was moving along well, noting that they were almost to the Gallup Hill intersection; (9) Gales Ferry Corridor Study – Mayor Allyn stated the Request for Qualifications/Request for Proposals/ (RFQ/RFP) for the Gales Ferry Corridor Study has been posted, noting that the Bid Opening was scheduled for August 15, 2024. He stated 3 or 4 firms have inquired about the project; (10) Road Work – Mayor Allyn stated paving work for the following roads have been completed this summer: Garden Drive subdivision off of Whalehead Road, Goulart Road, Vinegar Hill Road, Matthewson Mill Road, and a portion of Gallup Hill Road. He stated that there were a couple more roads that would be done during this paving season. He stated Ledyard’s Road Surface Rating (RSR) was 86.5 noting that they had previously discussed maintaining an RSR of about 83. However, he stated that Ledyard exceeded their initial target rating, complements of what Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin has been able to do with their roads, and because of the mild winters they have had during the past couple of years; (11) GovDeals Surplus Equipment – Mayor Allyn stated the Town continues to sell surplus equipment on the GovDeals website. He stated that he was still handling this for the Board of Education, and that he would like to move this work to the Board of Education. He stated it was important for the town to move equipment that was no longer in service to put funding back into those capital accounts.

Questions to the Mayor

Councilor St. Vil noted the Mayor's meeting with the Department of Defense (DOD) in which they discussed the impact of Electric Boat's expansion of employment and he questioned whether the Federal Government offered any financial support. Mayor Allyn stated although the members of the Department of Defense(DOD) did not offer any real solutions, they hinted that there could be monies available. He stated each town was given the opportunity to talk about what was going on in their communities. He stated there was some major development going on in New London and in Groton, noting that Triton Square Apartments which Mr. Treaster mentioned earlier this evening (VI. Residents Comments) was one of the developments that was discussed. He stated that this would be a good opportunity to follow up on, and he thanked Councilor St. Vil for his question.

Councilor Dombrowski stated the City of Newport News, Virginia, was recently awarded a \$54 million contract to provide housing for Navy Personnel.

Councilor St. Vil suggested that perhaps Ledyard could receive some financial support for infrastructure such as water and sewer to a greater extent than what was currently being done with the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding. He stated more infrastructure would support the development in areas that were currently zoned as multi-family districts.

Mayor Allyn stated that during their discussions with the State, that Senator Cathy Osten brought up running a sewer line from Groton through Gales Ferry and tying in across the Preston bridge to Norwich. He stated this was being considered by the State for funding, noting that it has not gone across the finish line yet. However, he stated that there were some other proposals that would spend private money to extend sewer lines, noting that they were hopeful about those proposals as well.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the Permanent Municipal Building Committee's Minutes from their July 1, and July 17, 2024 meetings included pictures showing the progress of the school roof projects. Mayor Allyn stated the school roof projects were progressing and that he thought that they would be in good shape to be completed ahead of the start of 2024/2025 School Year.

XII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Rodriguez asked whether anyone wanted to amend the Agenda this evening. Hearing none, she stated that they would proceed with the business on the Agenda.

General Items

1. Discussion regarding the Pfizer Stewardship Permit Application Renewal Permit No. DEEP/SWF/CS-072-021 Solid Waste Land Disposal Facility; dated December 6, 2021.

Mayor Allyn, III, provided some background stating in the 1950's Pfizer, Inc., acquired 220 acres of land at 215 Stoddards Wharf Road, which was a Kettle Hole that was a result of the Glacial Scrub. He stated during the 1960's Pfizer, Inc., used the property as a landfill for the substantial dumping of materials, which included more than 1 million gallons of commercial grade solvent; and other materials such as mycelium, which was a byproduct of penicillin, which was an antibiotic used for bacterial infections. He stated the Kettle Hole was capped and was no longer being used, noting that it has been grassed over and it can be seen in aerial photographs, noting that the property was being mowed and maintained by Pfizer, Inc. He stated that there was a retention basin closer to Stoddards Wharf Road and monitoring wells that Pfizer, Inc., also maintains. He stated the closest monitoring well to the athletic fields was 1,095 feet away from the edge of the mowed grass, and testing showed that there was little to no organic compounds in the soil. He stated the Plume from the Disposal Site was moving very slowly, to not at all.

Mayor Allyn continued by reporting that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) moved the Pfizer, Inc., Landfill located at 215 Stoddards Wharf Road from its Capped Monitoring Program to a Stewardship Program over a decade ago, and that it was renewed in 2023. He noted that he forwarded to the Town Council the following email communications between himself, and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Ms. Tiziana Shea, noting that Ms. Shea responded in a very timely manner.

From: Shea, Tiziana <Tiziana.Shea@ct.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 3:16 PM
To: Fred Allyn, III <mayor@ledyardct.org>
Cc: Avery, Normandy L <Normandy.Avery@ct.gov>
Subject: RE: Pfizer landfill in Stewardship Program, 215 Stoddard's Wharf Rd, Ledyard

Good afternoon, Mayor Allen,

Thank you for reaching out. My apologies for the short delay in getting back to you.

Your assessment is fair. I don't believe we noted any significant concerns during our recent review of the Pfizer Landfill Stewardship Permit (SP) renewal. The Pfizer Landfill has been covered under a Stewardship Permit for over a decade and was recently [renewed in 2023](#). The Stewardship Permit at the Pfizer Landfill serves as a means to capture long term obligations set in place for activities like groundwater monitoring and maintenance of an engineered control (in this place the landfill cap) where waste remains in place. The school areas you reference are some distance to the landfill, the area is generally served by public water, except for to the south, the landfill is capped and monitored which helps to lessen concerns for atmospheric deposition or migration of contaminants, groundwater quality is monitored, and the topography and groundwater flow around the landfill may be helpful as well.

If you have additional questions or would like to discuss further, please don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you and have a wonderful afternoon.

Tiziana
Tiziana Shea
Supervising Environmental Analyst
Remediation Division – Eastern District
Bureau of Water Protection & Land Reuse
Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106-5127
P: (860) 424.3215 I E: Tiziana.Shea@ct.gov



Conserving, improving, and protecting our natural resources and environment;
Ensuring a clean, affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy supply.

 | portal.ct.gov/DEEP

From: Fred Allyn, III <mayor@ledyardct.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 8:48 AM
To: Shea, Tiziana <Tiziana.Shea@ct.gov>
Subject: Pfizer landfill in Stewardship Program, 215 Stoddard's Wharf Rd, Ledyard
Good morning Tiziana,

I'm contacting you today regarding the Pfizer landfill at 215 Stoddard's Wharf Rd, Ledyard. It's identified as Program REM ID #457. Concerns have been raised by the Board of Education as downgradient from the former landfill are three schools and

athletic fields, the latter being the closest to the Pfizer parcel. I reviewed the Stewardship program update report from Pfizer, dated 12/6/2021 and it shows the monitoring wells downgradient appear to have little to no impact. Here is a snippet from that report:

Page 4.1 states the following: “Constituents of Concern (COC’s) were mostly absent in the two downgradient monitoring locations (MW-4 and MW-105S). The recent 10 years of groundwater data sufficiently documents the stability of the plume impacted groundwater at the Facility and demonstrates that the plume is not migrating downgradient. Based on the stability of the plume and that the downgradient monitoring locations continue to show little if any impact and are compliant with the Remediation Standard Regulations tabulated numeric criteria, groundwater at the Facility will be monitored...on an every other year basis...”

MW-105S is the monitoring well closest to the athletic fields. It appears that the plume is not generally moving towards the river (and thus not the schools or athletic fields). If the plume was moving towards the schools and athletic fields, I don’t believe CT DEEP would have allowed Pfizer to change posture on this (moving to post-closure monitoring and stewardship). For this reason, I also do not believe this poses a risk to users of the fields, though I will seek your opinion so I can share with the Board of Education.

Thank you and don’t hesitate to call if it’s easier. My direct line is below in my signature and email is fine too.

Best,

Fred

Fred B. Allyn III



Mayor, Town of Ledyard, CT
741 Colonel Ledyard Hwy.
Ledyard, CT 06339
Tel (860) 464-3221
www.ledyardct.org

Mayor Allyn noted the Reports referred to the emails were included in tonight’s Agenda packet. He explained the underground geological/rock formations tends to direct things down Stoddards Wharf Road. He stated because the Board of Education raised the Pfizer, Inc. Landfill as a possible concern that he wanted to make people aware of this information regarding the 215 Stoddards Wharf Property.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Mayor Allyn to forward all of this information to Superintendent Hartling and the Board of Education. Mayor Allyn stated that he had already shared the information with Mr. Hartling and the Board of Education.

Superintendent Jason Hartling attending remotely, stated that he appreciated Mayor Allyn following up with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) regarding the Pfizer, Inc. Landfill property located at 215 Stoddards Wharf Road, relative to the concerns regarding its proximity to the athletic fields; and for sharing the information with the Board of Education, so that they could make sure all was okay for their kids.

Chairman Rodriguez noted in Board of Education Chairman Favry's July 18, 2024 email he mentioned the ground water. However, she stated both the Middle School and Gales Ferry School were on the Groton Utilities public water system, therefore, she noted there were no issues regarding the water to the buildings. Superintendent Hartling provided clarification, noting in Mr. Favry's July 18, 2024 email he stated that there was no concern relative to the water to the buildings, which Mayor Allyn had previously shared with him.

Councilor Dombrowski stated the Board of Education's concern was regarding any potential runoff from the Pfizer, Inc., property onto the Board of Education property, potentially endangering the students. Superintendent Hartling stated Councilor Dombrowski's assessment of the Board of Education's concerns was fair. However, he stated there were other conversations that the Board of Education Members were brought into, which precipitated him reaching out the Mayor; and the Mayor looking into the matter and obtaining answers from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). He thanked Mayor Allyn for obtaining the information that he provided this evening.

Chairman Rodriguez stated her only concern was with the soil at the Middle School athletic fields. Mayor Allyn stated that the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) was extremely conservative. Therefore, he noted if there were any factors that would leave the DEEP to believe there was a cause for concern that the DEEP would have not allowed them to be in the Steward Program, explaining that DEEP would have required the 215 Stoddards Wharf Road property to be in a Remediation Program.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

Administration Committee

- MOTION to reappoint Ms. Loretta Kent (U) 1363 Baldwin Hill Road, Gales Ferry, to the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission, to complete a three (3) year term ending June 28, 2027.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski

Discussion: None.

VOTE: 6 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 6 - 0
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Kevin Dombrowski, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Brunelle, Buhle, Paul

Finance Committee

- MOTION to grant a Bid Waiver to Oak Hill Controls from Bethlehem, PA, a sole source provider, in the amount of \$29,535 to rebuild the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) at the Highland Wastewater Treatment Facility.

In addition, transfer and appropriate ARPA funding in the amount of \$29,535 for said purpose. Source of ARPA funding transfer to be determined.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) separated the solids from the liquids at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. He stated the Water Pollution Control Authority's (WPCA) annual budget included \$25,000 to dispose of the solids each year. He stated should the antiquated Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) fail, that it could take months to rebuild the equipment because the parts were no longer available. He also stated that during the time it would take to repair the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) that it could cost the WPCA \$250,000 to dispose of the solids and the water. He also explained that the touch screen that operated the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) was also outdated and that parts were no longer available to repair the panel screen should it breakdown.

Councilor St. Vil questioned whether the rebuilding of the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) would increase the system’s capacity. Councilor Saccone stated that it would not increase the system’s capacity.

Mayor Allyn explained that the only way the Wastewater Treatment Facility could increase its capacity was by eliminating groundwater infiltration, or by reducing the in-flow.

Councilor Dombrowski stated that they had equipment that was at the end of its life and at the end of support, without having a way to replace it. He stated that they should have been talking about replacing it a few years ago.

VOTE: 6 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 6 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Brunelle, Buhle, Paul

4. MOTION to approve the following adjustments to American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects List:

- Add - Rebuilding the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) at the Highland Wastewater Treatment Facility at a cost of \$29,535.
- Remove – Electric Vehicle Charging Stations \$20,000.
- Reduce – Youth Mental Health Clinicians by \$9,535.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone
Discussion: Councilor Ryan addressed the three projects as follows:

- Add Rebuilding the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) at the Highland Wastewater Treatment Facility at a cost of \$29,535.
Councilor Ryan stated that they just talked about rebuilding the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) at the Highland Wastewater Treatment Facility (see Item #3 above).
- Remove – Electric Vehicle Charging Stations \$20,000.
Councilor Ryan stated the town was not able to find a willing host to locate the Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations in Ledyard. Therefore, he stated they would be releasing the \$20,000 that was allocated for the Electric Charging Stations to be used toward other initiatives.

Mayor Allyn, III, explained that it was going to be challenging to place the town’s Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station equipment on someone else’s property through a lease type of arrangement. However, he stated EV Charging Stations were starting to happen organically, noting that he would not be surprised to see EV Charging Stations in the parking lot of Job Lot in Gales Ferry in the near future. He stated the only space they had in Ledyard Center to install an EV Charging Station was in-front of Town Hall in the parallel parking areas on Route 117. However, he stated because it would be in the Department of Transportation (DOT) right-of-way that the Town would need to obtain an Encroachment Permit and a lease. He also explained that Eversource recently pulled back the incentives to install the EV Charging Stations in the State of Connecticut.

- Reduce – Youth Mental Health Clinicians by \$9,535.
Councilor Ryan stated that initially \$190,000 was allocated from the ARPA Funding to support Youth Mental Health Clinicians. However, he stated because only \$40,000 had been obligated to provide services to-date; and because the projected spending was not going to reach the \$190,000 allocation, that the Finance Committee initially discussed reallocating \$100,000 to other initiatives. However, he stated during their discussion it was suggested that perhaps they could redirect the ARPA Funding to pay for Clinician services where needed at the elementary schools. Therefore, he stated the Finance

Committee agreed to recommend the Town Council reduce the ARPA allocation for the Youth Mental Health Clinicians by just the amount of the balance (\$20,000 EV Charging Station + \$9533 - Youth Mental Health Clinicians = \$29,535) needed to pay to rebuild the Rotary Drum Thickener Panel (RDT) at the Highland Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Mayor Allyn stated at the Finance Committee’s July 17, 2024 that Councilor Buhle indicated that there was a need for Mental Health Clinicians at their elementary schools. He explained that because the State did not provide Child and Family Services funding this year that he and Superintendent Jason Hartling agreed that this was a good place to use the remaining ARPA funds that were initially allocated for Youth Mental Health Clinicians.

Councilor Saccone provided clarification explaining that the Youth Mental Health Clinician services would be covered through 2026; and that an additional 10% would be set-a-side in case additional funds were needed. Mayor Allyn noted that they would have to have contracts in-place by December 31, 2024.

VOTE: 6 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 6 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Brunelle, Buhle, Paul

- MOTION to grant a Bid Waiver MSS Electronics, Inc., White Plains, New York in the amount of \$22,710 to upgrade electronic lock system at the Emergency Services Building on Fairway Drive to be paid from Account # 21020501-57300 (Ledyard Fire Company – New Equipment).

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Fire Marshal Jim Mann, attending remotely, explained a couple of years ago they began to have problems with the automatic locking system at the Emergency Services Building on Fairway Drive. He stated in looking at the system, MIS Director Justin Dube was able to get it working for them, however, he noted because of the age of the software that Mr. Dube’s assessment was that the locking system needed to be replaced. Mr. Mann stated he contacted the locking system manufacturer who indicated that the software was a 1996 generation, which was before the Emergency Services Building was constructed. He went on to explain that the current locking system manufacturer was now only installing cloud based systems. Mr. Mann stated because of the monthly per-lock cost to maintain the cloud-based locking system he contacted other vendors. He stated one vendor was not available to install a system at this time, and another vendor, MSS Electronics, Inc., was available to install a system that was not a cloud-based locking system for \$22,710. Mr. Mann stated this system was far less expensive than the cloud-based locking systems, noting that they may have to update the software about every 5-6 years. Therefore, he stated because this was the best deal, he was requesting a Bid Waiver.

VOTE: 6 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 6 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Brunelle, Buhle, Paul

- MOTION to adopt a proposed “*Municipal Certification of Resolution Authorizing the Town of Ledyard To Opt-In to the Small Town Economic Assistance Program*” as presented in the draft dated July 9, 2024.

DRAFT: 7/9/2024

Res. 003-2024/Jul. 24

MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATION OF RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF LEDYARD TO OPT-IN
SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

I, Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk of the Town of Ledyard, a municipality organized and existing under the laws of the State of Connecticut, hereby certify that the following is a true copy of the resolution adopted at the Ledyard Town Council of said municipality at their Meeting held on July 24, 2024.

RESOLVED, that Mayor Frederic B. Allyn, III, is hereby authorized to submit this Resolution as a written notice to Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to express the Town of Ledyard’s interest to exercise its Opt-In provision to be eligible to submit grant requests under the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Opt-In Provision under the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) shall be for the four-year period following the submission of such notice to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and may be extended for an additional four-year period in accordance with the same procedure.

Adopted by the Town Council on: July 24, 2024

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

I DO FURTHER CERTIFY that the above resolution has in no way been altered, amended or revoked, and is in full force and effect.

AND I DO FURTHER CERTIFY that Mayor Frederic B. Allyn, III is the Mayor of the Town of Ledyard, and has been since May 7, 2017.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Town of Ledyard this _____ day of _____, 2024.

(seal)

Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk
Town of Ledyard

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone
Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained to be eligible to apply for Small Town Economic Assistance Grants (STEAP) that every four years the town had to adopt a Resolution to “Opt-In”. He stated currently there was no STEAP Grant Funding available, noting that Governor Lamont has not yet chosen to offer STEAP Grants this year. However, he stated by adopting the proposed Resolution to Opt-In that Ledyard would be readily able to apply for STEAP Grants should they become available during the next four years.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that it was best to be prepared, and therefore, it was prudent to adopt the “*Municipal Certification of Resolution Authorizing the Town of Ledyard To Opt-In to the Small Town Economic Assistance Program*”.

VOTE: 6 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 6 - 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
EXCUSED:	Brunelle, Buhle, Paul

XV. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: 6 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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

I, S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman of the Ledyard Town Council,
hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and
correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Town Council
Meeting held on July 24, 2024.

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman