



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

MINUTES
LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2025; 7:00 PM
HYBRID FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

DRAFT

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

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

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- III. ROLL CALL –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location
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
Kevin Dombrowski	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tony Saccone	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Gary St. Vil	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person

- IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS

• **Black History Essay & Poster Activity Contest – 2025**

Chairman Rodriguez welcomed the students who participated in the 2025 Black History Essay & Poster Activity Contest and their families to tonight’s Town Council Meeting. She provided some background noting that this was the fourth-year the Black History Month Activity Contest was held; and she explained that it involved an Essay Contest for the High School and Middle School students, along with a Poster Contest for the Elementary school students. The Contest was open to all students in Ledyard including Tech, Magnet School and Home School students. The contests were voluntary and was held from February 1 – March 7, 2025.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked the Contest Judges for participating in the Program, and she noted that some of the Judges were present this evening to award the prizes. She recognized the Judges as follows: Library Commission Member Mr. Ralph Hightower, Police Sergeant Michael McKinney, who was being represented this evening by Sergeant Matthew Andrade, Board of Education Member Mary Harris, Town Councilor Gary St. Vil, and herself. She stated that she would like to thank all who participated in the contest and for attending tonight’s Town Council meeting.

Chairman Rodriguez went on to state that they look forward to hosting the Black History Month Poster and Essay Contest because of the learning experience. Black History is American History, and that she was humbled and grateful for the work the students did in writing their essays, they were inspirational, educational and sincere. The Judges were impressed by the essays, and it was hard to find just one winner, so therefore there were multiple ties. She stated the students, and their parents should be proud of their accomplishments.

Mayor Allyn, III, and the Judges joined Chairman Rodriguez in presenting the prizes as follows:

Ledyard Middle School (Essay Contest)

First Place	Elianys Zoe Vazquez Malave	\$100.00
Second Place	Savannah Baber	\$50.00
Third Place	Anaya Chumpitazi	\$25.00

High School (Essay Contest)

First Place:	Gianna Penn	\$100.00.
Second Place (Tie):	Demia Crews Luca Kolada	\$50.00 \$50.00
Third Place:	Aminah Jemmo	\$25.00

The Poster Contest Winners:

Grades K-2 - Poster Contest

First Place – Benjamin Erhart– 2nd Grade – Gales Ferry School - \$50 Gift Card to BAM.

Grades 3-5 - Poster Contest:

First Place :	Ava Miller	5 th Grade	Juliet W. Long School	\$50 Gift Card to BAM
First Place:	Ariana Hage	5 th Grade	Juliet W. Long School	\$50 Gift Card to BAM.
Second Place:	Ainsley Bagos	5 th Grade	Gallup Hill School	\$25 Gift Card to BAM.
Second Place:	Avery Poole	5 th Grade	Gallup Hill School	\$25 Gift Card to BAM.
Third Place:	Olivia Siemens	3 rd Grade	Gallup Hill School	\$15 Gift Card to BAM.
Third Place:	Bella Erhart	5 th Grade	Juliet W. Long School	\$15 Gift Card to BAM.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked all the students who participated in the contest, the Town Council, the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Judges for their involvement in the Black History Month Contest; and she Congratulated all of the winners. She noted that it was wonderful to see all the talented young people Ledyard has; and she encouraged all the students to keep up the good work.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that this concluded the Black History Month Essay & Poster Activities Contest. She again thanked the Community Relations Committee and Councilor St. Vil for their work and time involved in planning and hosting the Black History Month Essay and Poster Contest.

Councilor St. Vil stated all the students did a great job!; and he noted that judging the Black History Month Essay & Poster Activities Contest and deciding who is going to win was the hardest decision he had to make this year. He congratulated all the winners, and he thanked all the students for their hard work.

Chaiman Rodriguez encouraged everyone to look at all the Posters displayed in the Council Chambers this evening. She asked that students not take their Posters home, explaining that the Posters would be returned to them at their elementary schools.

- V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS – None.
- VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.
- VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Barnes expressed his appreciation to Historic District Commission Member Doug Kelley and Mayor Allyn, III, for their efforts related to the upcoming movie, *Fog of War*, that was filmed at the Nathan Lester House. He stated that more than 600 people attended a

Special Premiere at the Garde Art Center in New London, on Tuesday evening March 25, 2025. He stated that those attending enjoyed seeing the historic Nathan Lester House on the big screen and that he understood that many really enjoyed the movie. He stated because he was on business travel; he unfortunately was not able to attend, but that his wife and son attended and that they loved the movie noting that it was well received. He stated the movie *Fog of War* would begin airing on April 4, 2025 on Amazon before airing later on Netflix.

Mayor Allyn, III, thanked Councilor Barnes for his comments stating that the movie *Fog of War* was filmed in 2023, noting that the historic Nathan Lester House was well represented, both inside and out, throughout the movie. He also noted that there was one scene in the movie in which one of the Geer Family's cars from the 1930's was driving down Thomas Road, and he suggested that folks look for that scene in the movie. He stated as Councilor Barnes mentioned the movie was very well received, and that he hoped residents would get to see it, noting that perhaps there would be more opportunities to film movies at the historic sites in Ledyard. He went on to state that what was equally important was that local vendors, food suppliers, and a lot of other people were tied into the project for about 30 to 45 days, noting that it was a nice little boost to our local economy; and for the Nathan Lester House.

Councilor Barnes thanked Mayor Allyn, noting that the filming of the movie *Fog of War* turned out well, noting that it was a great example of everyone coming together, noting that the money the filming company provided to the Nathan Lester House would help with continued improvements at the historic house.

Councilor Brunelle stated with the weather getting nicer that more people were out walking on the roads; and using the town's new Multi-Use Pathway. Therefore, she reminded people to go a little slower, and that they completely stop at Stop Signs. She noted that there were a lot of younger people learning to drive; and she asked people to be patient if someone was driving the speed limits, noting that they were probably just learning to drive.

Councilor Barnes, noted Councilor Brunelle's comments regarding student drivers, and he also reminded people that motorcycles were starting to be more prevalent on the roads. Therefor he urged motorists to watch out for their two wheeled friends.

Councilor Dombrowski also commented on the warmer weather and the bicyclists on the roads. He reminded residents and bicyclists that bikes do not have the right-of-way, noting that they were required to abide by the same traffic laws just as though they were driving an automobile. Therefore, he stated people riding a bicycle have to stop at the Stop Signs just like an automobile. He noted a recent incident in which an individual on a bicycle, coming off of Pumpkin Hill Road, went through the stop sign and cut him off. He stated the person looked at him rather ornery when he talked to them, because not only did the bicyclist not stop at the stop sign, but they also pulled out into the middle of Gallup Hill Road, and were going about 5 miles an hour; as they were trying to get up to speed, noting that it was a real danger to both the bicyclist and any motorist if they did not see them. He stated that he often sees bicycles not stopping at Stop Signs, noting that they just blow right through them, and he stated that this was not only for right turns, but they were also going straight through the intersection. Therefore, he noted the importance for everyone to follow the traffic laws and the rules of the road to keep everyone safe.

Councilor Buhle thanked Council St. Vil and Chairman Rodriguez for putting together the Black History Month Essay & Poster Activity Contest again this year. She also thanked all of the Judges for participating in the Program. She stated last year she enjoyed hearing some of the Essays that were read at the Town Council Meeting; and she noted that she had hoped some of the Students were going to read their Essay's this evening, stating that it was great to hear the different perspectives.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that this was her favorite time of the year, because she loved to see what the students write, and what they draw. She stated that she was proud that this was the 4th year that they held the Black History Month Essay & Poster Activity Contest.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that she was wearing purple tonight because it was Epilepsy Awareness Month and that she had some friends who were epileptic. Therefore, she stated on their behalf, she was wearing the color purple to show support for all those who suffer from the disorder.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2025

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Buhle

VOTE: 9 – 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.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she wanted to take a moment this evening to explain that the Town Council's Communications List was to record both incoming and outgoing communications pertaining to initiatives that the Town Council has jurisdiction over. She stated that it should be noted that per Connecticut General State Statutes the Town Council has no jurisdiction; and was not to have any influence over Zoning and Wetland Matters. She noted with that being said, correspondence regarding Planning & Zoning or Wetland Matters should be addressed and sent to the Land Use Department to be included with their records. She stated that the Town Council will not include correspondence on its Communications List regarding Land Use Applications that were currently being reviewed and under consideration by the Planning & Zoning Commission or the Wetlands Commission; or regarding Land Use Applications that were being litigated; as to not provide undue influence. She went on to state that the Town has embraced technology to provide all members of the public to access the many meetings of our Town's Commissions and Boards; enabling all of us to be aware of our resident's opinions, viewpoints, and positions on the various issues facing our community. She stated that residents were welcome to come to a Town Council meeting and provide their comments during the *Resident and Property Owners Comments* portion on the agenda. She stated that the Town Council was informed of the on-going Business of the Town, and she encouraged residents to participate in our local government.

X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee

Councilor Buhle stated although the Administration Committee has not met since the last Town Council meeting they have a few appointments on tonight's agenda. She noted the Committee would be meeting on April 9, 2025 .

Community Relations Committee for Diversity Equity & Inclusion

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion met on March 19, 2025 and continued to discuss the following: (1) Black History Month Activities; and (2) March being Women's History Month – Councilor Brunelle stated that she has received about 12 nominations for the Linda C. Davis Woman of the Year Award. She stated that the Committee was hoping to announce the winner at the April 9, 2025 Town Council meeting. She noted because this was the first year for the *Linda C. Davis Woman of the Year Award* that they had expected the number of nominations submitted would be low.

Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee met on March 19, 2025 and have a number of items on tonight's Agenda. He went on to note that the Finance Committee has completed their Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget Work Sessions with Department Heads and have scheduled a Special Meeting on April 7, 2025 to prepare a proposed Budget to present at the April 21, 2025 Public Hearing. He stated that he along with Councilor Ryan, and Councilor Buhle were actively involved in reviewing the Mayor's proposed Budget and seeing what they could do to continue to try to drive down the Mill Rate increase. He stated based on the projected decrease in revenues and increase in expenses due to inflationary costs, that much of the budget was out of their control. He asked residents to attend their meetings, stating that these were their tax dollars.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil stated the LUPPW Committee has not met since the last Town Council meeting. He noted the LUPPW Committee's next meeting was scheduled for April 7, 2025.

Historic District Commission

Councilor Barnes stated that the Historic District Commission met on March 17, 2025 and discussed the following: (1) Spicer Homestead Ruins – The Commission identified an error in the Spicer Ruins A2 Survey; (2) Up-Down Sawmill Piping – The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funded pipe repairs at the Up-Down Ledyard Sawmill was schedule to begin following the spring season.

Parks, Recreation, & Senior Citizens Commission

Councilor Barnes stated the PR & SC met on March 18, 2025 and he reported the following: (1) Center's Improvement Work – Councilor Barnes announced that the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Center has been closed for renovations, noting that the work which included replacing the flooring has been going well and was on schedule; (2) Meals on Wheels Delivery – Councilor Barnes stated the meals were still being delivered.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that the Meals on Wheels deliveries were cold sandwiches; and that Seniors were being encouraged to attend the libraries to participate in the different activities that they were having for them while the Center was closed for the renovation work.

Permanent Municipal Building Committee

Councilor Brunelle stated the PMBC was supposed to meet on March 20, 2025; however, the meeting was cancelled. Therefore, she did not have any update.

Gales Ferry Fire Company

Councilor Saccone stated the Town Council would be addressing a request for the Gales Ferry Department to replace their Brush Truck later this evening. He noted that Fire Chief Jeff Erhart was present to answer questions regarding the purchase. He explained that the Fire Apparatus Replacement Schedule rotates the purchase of the various fire trucks between 20 to 25 years, noting that none of us would keep our cars longer than 25 years. He stated that Chief Erhart and his crew has come up with a good plan to replace the Brush Truck, explaining that it was the only Brush Truck in town; and that doubled as the town's medical response vehicle, to minimize miles on the larger fire trucks.

Inland Wetland and Water Courses Commission

Councilor St. Vil announced that the IWWC would be holding a site walk on March 29, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the former Sweet Hill Farm, located at 19, 20 & 39 Military Highway. He stated the site walk would be followed by a Public Hearing on April 1, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Ledyard Middle School.

Economic Development Commission

Councilor Buhle stated the EDC will hold their Regular Meeting on April 1, 2025; and that they have scheduled a Public Engagement Meeting on April 15, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at the Ledyard Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Center to obtain public input regarding the Route 12 Corridor Study.

Retirement Board

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Retirement Board met on March 18, 2025 and forwarded a recommendation for the Town Council to consider an Amendment to the Defined Contribution 401(a) (DC) Plan. She noted that the proposal would be presented at the Finance Committee's April 2, 2025 meeting.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Ledyard Prevention Coalition Meeting – March 18, 2025 – Mayor Allyn explained that because the State had said that the Narcan Emergency Kits could not be in hot or cold environments, the Kits were removed from the outside locations in Gales Ferry and in Ledyard Center; and were relocated inside at the Gales Ferry Library and at the Police Department. However, he stated because there was no data that stated cold or heat would damage the Narcan Medication that the Emergency Kits would be reinstalled at the following public locations: Town Green-Ledyard Center, and by the Gales

Ferry Library. He stated the Ledyard Prevention Coalition would also be looking at some other location options for the Narcan Emergency Kits along Route 12; (2) Employees Defined Contribution 401(a) Plan – Mayor Allyn noted at their March 18, 2025 meeting the Retirement Board forwarded a recommendation to the Town Council to approve a proposed “*Amendment 2025-1 to the Town of Ledyard 401(a) Plan*” (DC Plan); (3) Southeastern Connecticut Council of Government (SCCOG) March 19, 2025 Meeting – Mayor Allyn stated among the many new proposals the State Legislation has been considering for this year was a Bill that would prohibit towns from charging credit card fees. He explained when people use credit cards for things such as building permits, or to pay their taxes, or any other business in town that there was a 3.5% credit card convenience fee/surcharge fee to the Town. However, he stated with the proposed Legislation that the town would not be allowed to add the 3.5% credit card fee to the tax payment or any payments to the town. Therefore, he stated if everyone paid their taxes by credit card, the town would have to increase the mill rate by 1.25 mills to pay for the cost of the 3.5% credit card fees. He noted because there was already 1,400+ unfunded mandates in the State of Connecticut that SCCOG Member Towns would be paying close attention to this new proposal; (4) America 250 Planning Committee – Mayor Allyn stated that he appointed Beautification Committee Chairman Ms. Kate Khors to the America 250 Planning Committee noting that she was an idea person. He stated the America 250 Planning Committee had a lot of great ideas; and that more information would be coming; (5) Chamber of Commerce March 18, 2025 Meeting – Mayor Allyn noted that *Connecticut Main Streets* provided a Report of their assessments that they conducted on what would be the downtown areas of each of the State’s 169 towns. He stated the Report would be provided to the Municipalities’ Economic Development (EDC) Commissions around April 15, 2025; at which time Ledyard’s EDC would start working to review the Report; (6) Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (seCTer) – Mayor Allyn stated at last month’s seCTer’s Economic Development Meeting that *Placer-AI* gave a presentation regarding their company. He noted that *Placer-AI* had Agreements with about 25 million cell phone users throughout the country; which allowed them to track everything that the cell phone user does in terms of where they go, how long they spend there, whether it was at home, or at work, or at Dunkin Donuts, or Starbucks, or wherever. He stated *Placer-AI* gathered all that data in almost real time. He noted the data included all sorts of different overlays, such as traffic counts, etc. He stated that he invited Ledyard’s Economic Development Commission to join him in attending today’s seCTer meeting to test the *Placer-AI* demo, and that one Commission member took part in the meeting today. He stated that the EDC would be discussing *Placer-AI* at their April 1, 2025 meeting; (7) Modified Motor Vehicle Tax Depreciation Schedule – Mayor Allyn stated last week the Town of Montville adopted the *Modified Tax Depreciation Schedule*; and that Stonington, Preston, and Norwich would be following. He stated that the Town Council would be considering adopting the *Modified Tax Depreciation Schedule* later this evening; (8) Board of Education \$8,550,000 Roof Replacement & Various Projects – Mayor Allyn reported the following: (a) Board of Education Central Office – The roof replacement has been completed and they were waiting for the warranty approval; (b) Gales Ferry School – More work was needed to complete the roof replacement; (c) Juliet W. Long School - The Solar Project has finally started; and the Board of Education was hopeful that the Solar would be operational this year, noting that they expect to offset their electrical costs by about 50%; (9) Movie – *Fog of War* – Nathan Lester House – Mayor Allyn stated as Councilor Barnes mentioned earlier this evening the movie *Fog of War* that was filmed at the Nathan Lester House in 2023 has been released, noting that it would begin streaming on Amazon on April 4, 2025; and would begin streaming on Netflix in June. He stated the movie sheds great light on the historic Nathan Lester House, noting that the Directors and the Producers were thrilled with it; and that they would like to come back and do something else in Ledyard, however, he stated that time would tell; (10) Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Center Improvement Work – Mayor Allyn stated the Facility has been closed for a couple of weeks while the flooring was being replaced and some other work was being done. He explained that the flooring has been a monumental task, because they had to disconnect and remove everything from the commercial kitchen. However, he stated the floor was now complete, and the improvements were coming along nicely. He stated although the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Center was scheduled to reopen on Monday March 31, 2025; that they would still be working on the partition that separated the room; (11) Route 12 Gales Ferry Corridor Study – Mayor Allyn noted as Councilor Buhle reported, the Economic Development Commission would be holding a Public Workshop on April 15, 2025 to discuss the Study. He stated that they were looking for residents to attend and provide input regarding the Route 12 Corridor and what they envision for Gales Ferry.

Questions for the Mayor

The Town Council and Mayor Allyn discussed the following in further detail:

- ***Credit Card Convenience Fees/Surcharge/ACH Wire Transfers:*** Mayor Allyn explained that currently Municipalities were allowed to pass the 3.5% credit card convenience fee (surcharge) on to the customer/taxpayer. However, he stated a new piece of Legislation, if approved, would now prevent Municipalities from collecting any fee or charge that increased the total amount of the transaction, if that fee or charge was a result of the method of payment (credit card/debit card/ach wire transfer) used. He stated that Municipalities were not required to accept credit cards, debit card, or ach wire transfers. He stated that Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) Member Towns discussed options that included not accepting credit card, debit card, or ach wire transfer payment. However, he stated that they did not want to take away the convenience for people paying by credit card. He stated that the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) had lobbyists working on this issue. He stated that this new piece of legislation would also apply to payments such as water and sewer bills, land use fees such as building permits, town clerk's office for document charges, dog licenses, etc. He stated Municipalities were not like restaurants or retailers where they could absorb the credit card convenience fee/surcharge fee. He stated, as he had discussed at previous meetings the town was launching a cloud-based building permit system which would allow people to pay on-line.

Mayor Allyn noted as an example, if a resident paid their \$10,000 tax bill with a credit card that by not being able to pass along the 3.5% credit card convenience fee/surcharge fee; the taxpayer's taxes would essentially be reduced by 3.5%; and that the cost (difference) would be passed on to all the other taxpayers to make up the difference.

Mayor Allyn stated he did not know when the Credit Card Convenience Fee/Surcharge Fee came out of the Legislative Committee. However, he explained that State Representative Greg Howard was the Guest Speaker at the Rotary Club's March 20, 2025 meeting. He stated during his conversation with Representative Howard regarding the Credit Card Convenience Fee/Surcharge Fee Legislation that he stated this was not the first time the proposed bill was presented, noting that the bill has never made it very far; and that it was probably not going to happen this year. Mayor Allyn stated although he did not know if the proposed bill would move much further than expected from previous iterations, that the bill was more of a concern this year than it was in previous years.

Mayor Allyn went on to state that people were paying for a lot of things on-line, noting as an example the many property owners who live part of the year in another state, and pay their Ledyard taxes on-line by credit card, because it was easy and convenient. He also noted that if the proposed bill does pass, that it may also impact the points or miles people get on their credit cards that they use to pay off their credit card balance, or for other things. He stated that he has asked the Tax Collector to put together the data on how many tax dollars the town received on an annual basis via credit card, etc., to better understand how the proposed bill could impact the town's tax levy.

- ***Juliet W. Long Heating Ventilation/Air Conditioning Project:*** Mayor Allyn stated the Bid Opening for #2025-02-17 (Juliet W. Long HVAC Project) was held on March 17, 2025. He stated although the required three bids were received that the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) would be coming to the Town Council to request the Bond Authorization Documents be increased. He explained because the low bid came in \$500,000 higher than the amount the townspeople previously approved, that per the Town Charter they were going to have to go back to a Referendum to seek authorization to increase the amount of the Bond Authorization to proceed the Juliet W. Long HVAC Project. He stated the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) was working with Finance Director Matthew Bonin and Bond Counsel to try to include the request to increase the previously approved \$8,550,000 for various Board of Education improvement projects on the May 20, 2025 Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget Referendum, noting that this would be the third time the townspeople

would be asked to vote on these school projects (1st Referendum: February 22, 2022 \$8,367,500; 2nd Referendum: October 17, 2023 increased by \$1,825 new total \$8,550,000). However, he stated if the townspeople approve the additional funding that the Contractor was going to have a very small window of time to manage the logistics such as ordering materials and getting on-site to start working when the Elementary School closes on or about June 17, 2025.

- ***Gales Ferry School Roof Warranty Work:*** Mayor Allyn stated the Roof Warranty was still in process; explaining that some of the aluminum roofing panels were not installed correctly. Therefore, he stated those panels would need to be removed and new panels would be installed. He stated because the roofing material manufacture would be the party responsible for the 20-year warranty of the roof, that the Garland Company, one of the roofing material manufactures, would conduct a full inspection of the roof once the new panels have been reinstalled.
- ***Juliet W. Long School Roof:*** Mayor Allyn stated the roof replacement at the Juliet W. Long School has been completed. He stated that they were planning to begin the Solar Work soon.
- ***Property Line and Setbacks Relative to the Town Notifying Residents of Work:*** Public Works Director/Town Engineer explained that Storm Drain work was within the town's right-of-way or easement area, therefore, he did not believe they provide a notice to the property owners. However, he explained for controversial or discretionary spaces that they would mark the area; and therefore, there would be an advanced indication that the town would be doing work in that area. He stated this was also done as a precursor to a road being resurfaced. He stated that he already had a Purchase Order in place for the work in the area of Thompson Street, in the Highlands.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

General Items

1. Discussion and possible action on a *Resolution Concerning Public Benefits Charges on Electric Bills to Consumers*.

MOTION to approve a proposed “*Resolution to Call on the Connecticut State Legislature to Support Legislation Which Aims to Eliminate The Public Benefits Charges On Electric Bills for Connecticut Residents And to Fix Systemic Issues Which Enables Such Fees And Charges*” as presented in the draft dated March 11 26, 2025.

DRAFT: ~~3/11/2025~~ 3/26/2025

003-2025/Mar 26 (b)

A RESOLUTION

TO CALL ON THE CONNECTICUT STATE LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT
LEGISLATION WHICH AIMS TO ELIMINATE THE PUBLIC BENEFITS CHARGES ON
ELECTRIC BILLS FOR CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS AND TO FIX SYSTEMIC ISSUES
WHICH ENABLES SUCH FEES AND CHARGES.

WHEREAS: The Ledyard Town Council recognizes the significant financial burden that "public benefit" charges on electric bills place on the residents and businesses of our town; and

WHEREAS: These charges, often included as line items on electric bills, are imposed on consumers without sufficient transparency or direct accountability, resulting in increased energy costs for households and businesses; and

WHEREAS: These charges also circumvent the legislative process regarding decisions causing these fees, effectively allowing utilities to impose costs without direct legislative oversight; and

WHEREAS: All public benefit-related initiatives should be proposed, debated, and approved through the legislature with proper votes on their funding via the state budget process, rather than being implemented by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) board; and

WHEREAS: The Ledyard Town Council is committed to advocating for measures that ensure affordability, fairness, and accountability in utility billing for our residents; and

WHEREAS: The Ledyard Town Council supports legislative measures that align with our commitment to fiscal responsibility, transparency, and the well-being of our residents; and

WHEREAS: The Ledyard Town Council supports the following proposed legislation that endeavor to protect the consumer and make electricity more affordable for Connecticut residents and businesses by recommending changes to the general statutes and augmenting the way fees are implemented and assessed:

- ~~S.B. 647 – An Act Concerning Protections for Consumer Access to Affordable Electricity~~
- S.B. 598 - An Act Prohibiting Electric Distribution Companies from Collecting Fees other than Fees for the Purchase or Delivery of Electricity
- H.B. 5923 - An act establishing a task force to study electric distribution company accountability and electric distribution competition and infrastructure
- H.B. 5404 – An act concerning the composition and conduct of the public utilities regulatory authority (PURA)

NOW, THEREFORE; BE IT RESOLVED; That the Ledyard Town Council hereby expresses its strong support for Connecticut Senate Bills #598, ~~647~~ as well as Connecticut House Bills #5923 and #5404, all proposed during the 2025 session, and urges the Connecticut General Assembly to take swift and decisive action to pass this legislation during the current legislative session.

That the Town Council calls upon Governor Ned Lamont and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to support the aforementioned legislation and work collaboratively with the legislature to implement policies that promote transparency and affordability in utility billing.

That the Town Clerk is directed to transmit a copy of this resolution to Senator Catherine Osten, Representative Greg Howard, Representative Brian Lanoue, Representative Kevin Ryan, Governor Ned Lamont, the Connecticut General Assembly Committee on Energy and Technology, the Connecticut General Assembly leadership and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to convey the Town Council's position on this matter.

That this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on: _____

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski
Discussion: Councilor Ryan stated because he did not receive any feedback from members of the Town Council since their March 12, 2025 meeting; that the proposed Resolution presented this evening was the same draft dated March 11, 2025; noting that no changes were made. Therefore, he questioned whether anyone had comments regarding the proposed Resolution.

Councilor Buhle noted that she saw that “S.B. 647 - An Act Concerning Protections for Consumer Access to Affordable Electricity” did not make it out of Sub Committee. The Town Council agreed to remove “~~S.B. 647 – An Act Concerning Protections for Consumer Access to Affordable Electricity~~” from the draft Resolution as a “friendly amendment”.

Councilor Barnes stated while he supports all of the “*Resolution to Call on the Connecticut State Legislature to Support Legislation Which Aims to Eliminate The Public Benefits Charges On Electric Bills for Connecticut Residents And to Fix Systemic Issues Which Enables Such Fees And Charges*” on the face of it; and everything it was about; he questioned whether the Town Council has submitted Resolutions to the State to express their position on specific legislation in the past.

Councilor Dombrowski responded to Councilor Barnes’ question, stating that the Town Council has submitted Resolutions to the State in years past to convey their position regarding specific pieces of legislation.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she appreciated Councilor Ryan's work in drafting the proposed “*Resolution to Call on the Connecticut State Legislature to Support Legislation Which Aims to Eliminate The Public Benefits Charges On Electric Bills for Connecticut Residents And to Fix Systemic Issues Which Enables Such Fees And Charges*”. She stated although her electric bill was lower than last month that her electric bills have been extremely high. Therefore, she stated that she was ready, willing, and able to sign the proposed Resolution.

Councilor Ryan stated as they discussed at the March 12, 2025 Town Council; and just to be clear, that while the proposed “*Resolution to Call on the Connecticut State Legislature to Support Legislation Which Aims to Eliminate The Public Benefits Charges On Electric Bills for Connecticut Residents And to Fix Systemic Issues Which Enables Such Fees And Charges*” aims to remove the Public Benefit Charge on the Electric Bills; that most importantly the proposed Resolution was to address the root cause that allowed for those fees to be implemented in the first place.

Councilor Ryan went on to state that the driving purpose of the proposed Resolution was to address the systemic issues that has allowed the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to implement the fee with no legislative oversight. Therefore, he stated that he hoped by hearing from Municipalities it would encourage legislative measures to be put in place that would require all public benefit-related initiatives be proposed, debated, and approved through the legislature with proper votes on the funding through the state budget process, rather than being simply implemented by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) Board.

Chairman Rodriguez stated she hoped that other towns would see what Southington and Ledyard have done and that they would follow suit.

Councilor Ryan went on to note Councilor Barnes’ March 12, 2025 comment regarding the timing of the Town Council’s action regarding the proposed Resolution. Therefore, he stated that he was pleased that the Town Council would be acting on the proposal this evening because it was their last meeting before April. He noted as dictated in the Resolution, their position would be forwarded to the appropriate stakeholders prior to the Public Benefit Charge on the Electric Bills sunsets; so that it would have more meaning.

VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 9- 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Kevin Dombrowski, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT CALENDAR

- *1. MOTION to reappoint the following members to the Cemetery Committee for a three (3) year term ending April 26, 2028:
 - Mr. William Vidal, III, (D) 183 Spicer Hill Road, Ledyard (Regular Member)
 - Mr. Vincent Godino (D) 1906 Center Groton Road, Ledyard (Alternate Member)

- *2. MOTION to reappoint Mr. Charles Duzy (R) 4 Harvard Terrace, Gales Ferry, to the Housing Authority for a five (5) year term ending March 31, 2030.
- *3. MOTION to approve a tax refund to Corelogic Centralized Refunds, P.O. Box 9202, Coppell, TX 75019-9760 in the amount of \$2,454.84.

Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Brunelle

VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 9- 0
MOVER:	Kevin Dombrowski, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	April Brunelle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil

Administration Committee

- 3. MOTION to appoint Mr. James Harwood (D) 10 Eska Drive, Ledyard as a Regular Member of the Planning & Zoning Commission to complete a three (3) year term ending December 31, 2026 filling a vacancy left by Mr. Whitescarver.
 Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry
 Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez noted that they were just moving Mr. Harwood from an Alternate Member on the Planning & Zoning Commission to a Regular Member on the same Commission.

VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 9- 0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil

- 4. MOTION to appoint Ms. Rebecca Watford (R) 429 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard, as an Alternate Member to the Historic District Commission to complete a five (5) year term ending December 6, 2028 filling a vacancy left by Mrs. Parkinson.
 Moved by Councilor Dombrowski, seconded by Councilor Buhle
 Discussion: Chairman Rodriguez asked Councilor Barnes if he had any comments. Councilor Barnes replied “No”.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Mayor Allyn if he had any comments. Mayor Allyn replied “No”.

VOTE: 7 – 2 Approved and so declared (Dombrowski, Rodriguez not in favor)

RESULT:	APPROVED 7 - 2
MOVER:	Kevin Dombrowski, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Garcia-Irizarry, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil
NAYES:	Dombrowski, Rodriguez

- 5. MOTION to authorize the purchase of fire apparatus (brush truck) in the amount of \$320,479.60 for Gales Ferry Fire Co from account # 0210-20-2040-54325 (AES - Fire Apparatus CNR).
 Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Ryan
 Discussion: Gales Ferry Fire Chief Jeff Erhart explained that in accordance with the Apparatus Replacement Schedule and Capital Funding Plan that the Gales Ferry Brush Truck was due to be replaced. He stated the 2004 Brush Truck was mainly used as one of their first responding vehicles; and therefore, they put a lot of miles on the vehicle. He stated for a community such as Ledyard that they used the Brush Truck to respond to a variety of calls such as medical

responses and to provide water, in an to effort reduce the number of miles they put on their larger pieces of Fire Apparatus.

Mr. Erhart went on to note in working to replace the 20-year-old Brush Truck that they considered their needs and worked to keep them to a minimum. He stated although the \$320,479.60 cost for this Brush Truck was over the amount that had been set aside in the Capital Plan Budget, that based on the caliber of the vehicle and their needs that it was the lowest price they could get, noting that there were no frills on the vehicle. He stated initially they had hoped that they could keep the cost to replace the 20-year-old Brush Truck to about \$286,000. However, he stated that the cost came in \$34,467 higher than originally projected cost in the 20-year Apparatus Replacement Schedule. He stated that it would take about 24 - months to build the Brush Truck.

Mr. Erhart addressed escalating costs, and he explained because they were part of a Purchasing Collaborative they were able to buy into a National Contract and obtain better pricing. He noted that the Purchasing Collaborative was based in Houston, Texas, and that there were a number of cities and towns in Connecticut that were also members of the Collaborative.

Mr. Erhart went on to explain that they expected to receive a return of \$35,000 - \$50,000 for the sale of the 2004 Brush Truck. However, he stated he was not sure how accurate that projection was, because they would not be looking to sell the Brush Truck for another two-years, therefore, it was difficult to know what the value would be at that time. He stated that the Apparatus Replacement Schedule specifies a 25-year cycle, noting at the time of delivery of the new Brush Truck, which would be in 2027; that their truck would be 23-years old.

Councilor Ryan addressed the Apparatus Replacement Schedule and the Chart, and he stated the data the Fire Departments provide make it very clear. He went on to note as he mentioned during the Finance Committee’s March 19, 2025 meeting, that if the town does not adjust their annual funding allocations for the Apparatus Replacement Schedule Capital Plan that they would be in a deficit position by the year 2030. Therefore, he stated that the Finance Committee and Town Council would have some work to do to make sure the Fire Apparatus Replacement Plan was appropriately funded. However, he noted based on current projected costs that after 2031 the Spreadsheet showed that they would continue to go positive, therefore, it might just be a shifting of funding.

Councilor Saccone stated in working to replace a piece of Fire Apparatus that it involved four to five people within the Fire Department, including career staff. He explained that they think about the town’s needs and consider their best options. He explained because fire apparatus was custom built that there were also some risks in selling their fire trucks. However, he stated that there were some rural fire departments that had limited budgets; and therefore, they were always seeking out used fire apparatus, noting that he believed that there would be a market for used fire trucks, especially with the economy.

Councilor Buhle noted that the town did not go out to bid to replace the Brush Truck because they were participating in a Purchasing Collaborative that was based in Houston, Texas. Mr. Erhart stated that Councilor Buhle was correct, and he explained that the Gales Ferry Fire Department conducted their due diligence with their Administrator of Emergency Services. He stated that by using a Purchasing Collaborative they were not required to go out to bid, in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) “*An Ordinance for Purchasing*” and he noted using the National Contract that they saved about \$12,000.

VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 9- 0
MOVER:	Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil

- 6. MOTION to authorize a Bid Waiver for CWPM, LLC for Bid No. 2025-04 (Trash and Recycling Collection Services) due to lack of three bids, in accordance with Ordinance #200-

001 (rev 1) “*An Ordinance for Purchasing.*”

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated that the Town Council would normally not be addressing the Curbside Trash & Recycling Collection Contract. However, explained that because only two bids were received that in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) “*An Ordinance for Purchasing*” a Bid Waiver was required. He stated that he has been on a 30-year journey with trash collection, noting that there has been a lot of advancements that residents have seen.

Mr. Masalin continued by noting the Town received the following two bids, which was anticipated because of the reduced number of local contractors that provide these services: (1) CWPM, LLC in the amount of \$4,526,810.10 was the low bid over the total 6-year proposal; and (2) Casella (Willimantic Waste Paper Co., Inc.); who was their current contractor, was in the amount of \$4,703,611.13. He noted the net difference between the two proposals over the 6-year period was \$176,801.03 for the continuation of services under the present terms.

Mr. Masalin continued by explaining that the Motion was framed somewhat general, because there needed to be some flexibility in Bid #2025-04 which included an option for the Board of Education not to participate in this bid. He stated although CWPM was the low base bid for the six-year period, that their cost for the Board of Education was \$79,000; whereas the Casella bid for the Board of Education was 73,000. Therefore, he noted that the Board of Education could secure services directly with whoever else that they felt they would rather do that with, and that he cleared the way for the Board of Education to decide how they wanted to proceed. Mr. Masalin stated in addition to the March 14 -17, 2025 email exchange with Casella’s Marketing Manager Mr. Brian Hovey, they also had a telephone conversation; noting that he has not had any other dialogue with Casella.

Mr. Masalin went on to state that he was comfortable with CWPM’s proposal noting that their total cost represented a 2.5% increase for Curbside (Trash & Recycling) Collection Services year over year, which was the reason their proposal came in lower than Casella’s proposal, whose increase was 5% year over year. He stated for many years CWPM has been their contractor for the Transfer Station and for the Bulky Waste Service; and he noted that their presence has been growing in the curbside collection realm, both in the private subscription and in picking up for towns. He stated that CWPM recently picked-up a contract with Stonington through the purchase of Crandall Waste Management; who was now totally out of the waste collection business.

Councilor Saccone noted that Mr. Masalin had anticipated the Curbside (Trash & Recycling) Contract was going to come in higher based on the number he initially included in his proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget. Mr. Masalin stated as he presented during his March 18, 2025 Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget Work Session, with having hard numbers from the March 6, 2025 Bid Opening, that Account #10140113-54210 (Disposal Services) could be reduced from \$752,500 to \$711,000 in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget.

Mr. Masalin stated transitionally changing Curbside Collection Service providers may be the biggest challenge for the town going forward because all the household trash carts, and recycling carts would have to be picked up; in conjunction with the new carts that would have to be delivered.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry questioned whether CWPM could put the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recycling Authority (SCRRRA) Recycling Stickers on the Recycling Carts so residents would know what could and could not be put in the recycling carts. She noted in driving around town that she sees people putting their recyclables in bags; which they should not do, because it would be counted as household trash, instead of recycling. Mr. Masalin stated that he did not believe CWPM would put the SCRRRA Recycling Sticker on their carts, because it would be specific to what the present recycling allowances were; and that they would have to undo that at some other point. He went on to state that an Informational Packet would be going out with every cart. He stated that he could ask CWPM if they would put the Recycling Stickers on carts, however, he noted that he has never seen those stickers anywhere. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated she has seen the Recycling Stickers on carts in Stonington. Mr. Masalin stated that the carts were probably owned by the Town of Stonington.

Mr. Masalin went on to state that he planned to include an Article in the next Events Magazine, that would speak to the Curbside Collection Transition and to remind residents about Recycling, noting that they were going to have to be more proactive. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry questioned whether CWPM had their own Recycling Stickers, noting one of the advantages of having the Recycling Sticker on the carts was that it would be accessible and it would remind residents about what they could recycle. Mr. Masalin stated that he has seen what was accepted for recycling and not accepted for recyclables change over time. He stated should that happen they would then have stickers that misrepresented what to put in the Recycling Carts. He stated that while he understood having the Recycling Sticker on the cart was convenient, that it was a snapshot. He stated although it sounded great that the eventualities of that might not be favorable at some point.

Councilor Ryan asked if the Board of Education decided to use another Trash Contractor, whether CWPM would honor the prices they provided in their Bid. Mr. Masalin stated that CWPM would honor the prices for the Town side of the contract. He went on to state that he would assume that should the Board of Education choose to use CWPM that they would honor the price in their Bid. However, he stated if the Board of Education chooses to go with Casella, that he did not know what kind of deal they would work out with them, noting that he was not going to get in the middle of that arrangement.

Councilor Ryan stated that if you do the math that the CWPM Contract proposal was a win for the town, strategically speaking, because they would essentially have 6-years of service for a guaranteed 2.5% increase year over year, which was good considering inflation. He stated in addition; they would receive all brand-new trash carts.

Mr. Masalin agreed with Councilor Ryan’s comments, and he noted that Casella’s bid included several asterisks that represented variable costs at their discretion; such as a surcharge for diesel costs, or any other random type of things that they might deem was affecting their cost of doing business. He stated that he would suggest that the next time the town solicited bids for Curbside Trash & Recycling Collection Services that they make the Bid Specifications explicit to include every cost.

Councilor Buhle stated that she appreciated the format of the bid comparison spreadsheet, noting that it made it clear and easy to understand. Mr. Masalin pointed out the Second Comparison was the cost to pick up Recycling every week, mainly to show what the difference in cost would be; noting that the lower of the two bids cost to pick up recycling every week was \$1.4 million over the total 6-years. Mr. Masalin stated although he did not think weekly recycling pick-up would be an option, that if the cost was reasonable, they could have considered the numbers between the base bid and the option. However, he stated because of the additional \$1.4 million cost that the town would continue to pick up the Recycling every other week. He stated that some residents have requested a second Recycling Cart that they received for a \$100 Reimbursable Deposit; providing the cart was returned in a usable condition. He stated about 90 residents have requested a second Recycling Cart, noting that there was not a huge need. He suggested for those who have bulky cardboard that they could bring it to the Transfer Station.

VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 9-0
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil

7. MOTION to appropriate and transfer the Board of Education Fiscal Year 2024/2025 audited surplus of \$118,629 from unrestricted fund balance to Account #22570101-58250 (BOE Reserve Fund) in accordance with “Resolution Creating a Funding Mechanism for Making Annual Appropriations to a Capital Reserve Fund for the Board of Education” adopted on September 28, 1988.
Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Councilor Saccone explained with the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024 Annual Audit completed, that in accordance with “*Resolution Creating a Funding Mechanism for Making Annual Appropriations to a Capital Reserve Fund for the Board of Education*” this action would move the Board of Education’s surplus in the amount of \$118,629 to their Capital Non-Recurring Account. He stated this was an administrative action.

VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 9- 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil

8. MOTION to adopt the proposed “*Resolution of the Town of Ledyard to Adopt an Optional Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule*” as presented in the draft dated March 10, 2025.

DRAFT 3/10/2025

Res. 003-2025/_____

RESOLUTION
OF THE TOWN OF LEDYARD
TO ADOPT AN OPTIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE
DEPRECIATION SCHEDULE

WHEREAS: the State of Connecticut adopted House Bill #7067 entitled: “An Act Concerning an Emergency Certificate of Need Application Process for Transfers of Ownership of Hospitals that have Filed for Bankruptcy Protection, *The Assessment of Motor Vehicles For Property Taxation*, A Property Tax Exemption for Veterans Who Are Permanently And Totally Disabled And Funding of the Special Education Excess Cost Grant”.

WHEREAS: House Bill #7067 allows Municipalities to adopt a modified depreciation schedule for vehicles as follows: The modified schedule generally increases, by five percentage points, the taxable portion of a vehicle’s MSRP that is subject to property tax. By law, a vehicle’s property tax assessment equals its depreciated MSRP value multiplied by 70%.

Table: Valuations Under the Current Schedule and the Bill’s
Optional Modified Schedule

Vehicle Age (in years)	% of MSRP	
	Current Schedule	Modified Schedule
Up to 1	85	90
2	80	85
3	75	80
4	70	75
5	65	70
6	60	65
7	55	60
8	50	55
9	45	50
10	40	45
11	35	40
12	30	35
13	25	30
14	20	25
15-19	15	20
20+	≥ \$500	≥ \$500

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Ledyard Town Council hereby adopts the Optional Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule as shown in the Table below with assessed values for new vehicles (up to one year old) at 90% of their MSRPs, rather than 85%, and correspondingly increases the values for older vehicles by five percentage points. By law, unchanged by the bill, the minimum assessment amount is \$500.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; that in accordance with House Bill #7067 this Resolution along with the attached Form provided by the Office of Management & Policy (OPM) will serve as the Town of Ledyard’s notification of its adoption of the Motor Vehicle Modified Schedule.

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on: March 26, 2025

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

.....

I 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 Fred B. Allyn, III is the Mayor of the Town of Ledyard, and has been since May 1, 2017.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Town of Ledyard this _____ day of _____, 2025.

(Seal) _____
Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk
Town of Ledyard

History:
Under the State’s new methodology (House Bill #7076) for motor vehicle valuation Ledyard would see a 13% decline in motor vehicle valuations.

The State’s new motor vehicle taxation model, which will commence with the October 2024 Grand List will use the vehicles MSRP (Sticker Price) in year one, followed by a 20% depreciation in year two, then a straight-line annual depreciation of 5%.

However, House Bill #7076 allows Municipalities to adopt a modified depreciation schedule for vehicles as follows: The modified schedule generally increases, by five percentage points, the taxable portion of a vehicle’s MSRP that is subject to property tax. By law, a vehicle’s property tax assessment equals its depreciated MSRP value multiplied by 70%.

By adopting the Modified **Depreciation** schedule by a vote of the Town Council; it would move to MSRP, then 90% in year two, 85% in year three and so on. This change Ledyard would reduce the Grand List decline to 0.64% as opposed to the 1.6% under the State’s new model; and recover nearly \$444,000 in taxes.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle
Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, provided some background explaining in crafting House Bill #7067 entitled: “*An Act Concerning an Emergency Certificate of Need Application Process for Transfers of Ownership of Hospitals that have Filed for Bankruptcy Protection, **The Assessment of Motor Vehicles For Property Taxation**, A Property Tax Exemption for Veterans Who Are Permanently And Totally Disabled And Funding of the Special Education Excess Cost Grant*” the State agreed to provide towns and cities an option to adopt a *Modified Motor Vehicle Tax Depreciation Schedule* that would not reduce their local tax revenues as greatly as the new Depreciation Formula would.

Mayor Allyn continued to state that although he was not a fan of the motor vehicle tax; that Municipalities have come to rely on it. Therefore, he stated the State should not make changes to the Assessed Depreciation Value of Motor Vehicles that would impact Municipalities’ local tax revenues without making major changes at the State level.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain that Governor Lamont and the State Legislature passed a Public Act, which allowed cities and towns to change the depreciation schedule provided in House Bill #7067, which was noted in the proposed Resolution, that would have started at 85% of the Manufacturers Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) and then depreciate by 5% each year thereafter. He stated by the Town Council adopting a *Modified Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule* that Ledyard's Motor Vehicle Assessment would start at 90% of the Manufacturers Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) and then depreciate by 5% each year thereafter. He stated this 5% change would provide an additional minimum of \$444,000 of additional motor vehicle tax revenue for Ledyard. He stated that he was reluctantly supporting the Modified Motor Vehicle Tax Depreciation Schedule, because he did not like adding a tax back to the people. However, he stated with the proposed legislation that would provide more reductions in revenues for Ledyard that he did not know where the town could go to make up the difference in the loss of revenues.

Mayor Allyn went on to state recovering the \$444,000 in Motor Vehicle Taxes was good for Ledyard because it would help to offset the loss of tax revenue provided in Public Act 24-46 (Veterans Tax Exemption) which was projected to be more than \$400,000. He also noted the proposed legislation "*An Act Establishing a Property Tax Exemption for Property Located on Certain Indian Lands*"; which was designed to negate the Town's ability to collect personal property tax from the third-party private vendors operating at the Mashantucket Pequot Foxwoods Resort Casino. He explained if this piece of Legislation was approved by the State that Ledyard would see a loss of \$625,000 to \$825,000 in tax revenues. He noted the way that language currently reads, was that the State would add \$100,000 to the Mohegan Pequot Fund for both the towns of Ledyard and Montville; which would result in a loss of \$725,000 in tax revenue for Montville and a loss of a minimum of \$625,000 in tax revenue for Ledyard. He stated even if they get back \$100,000 that it was going to be a significant tax loss for their communities.

Mayor Allyn noted that Stonington was the first municipality to adopt the *Modified Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule*, and that Preston and Norwich were also in the process of approving it. He stated a lot of towns were adopting the *Modified Motor Vehicle Tax Depreciation Schedule* because they all recognize the burden of the loss of tax revenue that House Bill #7067 has put on them.

Mayor Allyn concluded his comments by stating that the State of Rhode Island successfully removed the motor vehicle tax a couple of years ago; and that he would like to see Connecticut follow suit at some point. However, he stated it would take some work for the State to figure out how to do that without impacting Municipalities' local tax revenues. Therefore, he stated in the meantime, adopting the *Modified Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule* was beneficial to the town.

Councilor Barnes stated that he agreed with Mayor Allyn, in that he was not a fan of Motor Vehicle Personal Property Tax. He went on to state that he was also not a fan of the proposed *Resolution of the Town of Ledyard to Adopt an Optional Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule*"; unless he heard some comments this evening that could convince him otherwise, for the following reasons:

- The town was moving the \$440,000 tax revenue from real property to personal property and were still taxing the residents;
- The Town was still taxing their residents;
- The town would be putting more tax on the vehicle personal property;
- Residents who may have three children may have several vehicles;
- There were residents that do not have a house, but they do have a vehicle;
- The proposed *Modified Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule* would place the increased burden of taxes on those who have vehicles.

Councilor Ryan stated that he was not trying to sway Councilor Barnes view; however, he noted an observation that he made during the March 19, 2025 Finance Committee meeting explaining with this year's Real Property Revaluation that was currently underway, that the Grand List would go up and the Mil Rate would come down. He went on to note that the State's Motor Vehicle Tax Cap was set at 32 Mils; however, with a current Mil Rate of 35 that Ledyard has

already exceeded the State's Motor Vehicle Tax Cap. He stated under the Motor Vehicle Tax Cap Program that the State has been reimbursing the Town for the difference. He explained that if Ledyard's real property Mil Rate goes below the Motor Vehicle Tax Cap that the town would lose revenue. Therefore, he stated by adopting the *Modified Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule* that it would actually blunt the effect of that. He also noted that he believed that a lot of people would see a tax reduction for their motor vehicles.

Councilor Buhle stated that she also did not want to sway Councilor Barnes' position; however, she stated it was difficult to try to compare taxes for motor vehicles and for real property, noting that they were inconsistent across the State. She stated because she lived in a town that had a low Grand List and a high mil rate, that her motor vehicle taxes for her car was higher than if she lived in Fairfield, even though her car was valued the same in both towns; whereas her house in Fairfield would be worth more than what it was valued at in Ledyard. She also noted that older vehicles were increasing in value, therefore, she explained because they were now going to be assessing the value of vehicles based on the Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) which would depreciate by 5% each year; that by starting at 90% instead of the State's new depreciation schedule that begins at 85%; and depending on how their Mil Rate shakes out, that Ledyard residents may see a reduction in their motor vehicle taxes.

Councilor Garia-Irizarry stated regardless of whether they tax homes or vehicles that the town would still have to get the \$440,000 in tax revenue. Therefore, she stated the question was who would be paying the difference. She noted as an example that Senior Citizens no longer have kids in the schools, and most were still living in their homes, and living paycheck to paycheck; and have one vehicle to reduce their expenses. She stated if the town added the needed \$440,000 on the property taxes that Senior Citizens would be paying more money for their property versus somebody that might have five cars. She stated that she understands the additional burden for families that have more cars, however, she stated that their households generally have more people.

Councilor Dombrowski addressed residents who were renters and had vehicles. He stated that homeowners were not the only people who pay property taxes. He stated renters also paid property taxes indirectly, explaining that if the Landlord's property taxes increased that the people living in the apartments would see their rent increase. He stated the difference in the taxes was going to be made up somewhere.

Councilor Dombrowski went on to note as the Mayor stated earlier this evening, that he also did not like the motor vehicle tax. However, he stated under the State's new Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule that instead of using the former Blue Book Value to assess the value of the vehicle, that they would be using the Manufacturer' Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) and then the value of the vehicle would depreciate by 5% each year starting at 90%. Therefore, he stated that the car value would be fixed to whatever the MSRP was, and that value would slowly go down.

Councilor Saccone noted that Councilor Buhle had mentioned how during the past few years that used car values went up. However, he questioned what the value of the car, or the increase was based on. He stated by using the Manufacturer' Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) with a 5% depreciation schedule that they would not have to worry about what the market was doing other than what the MSRP was when the car was first sold. Therefore, he stated that they would be spreading out the tax burden.

Councilor Saccone went on to note Councilor Dombrowski's comments regarding homeownership verses renters. He stated the new *Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule* would not only tax homeowners, but that it would spread the taxes to the renters in town. Therefore, he stated that he thought the new *Motor Vehicle Depreciation Schedule* would help the homeowners as well.

Councilor Brunelle stated that everyone who had a car was using their roads and wearing them down, noting that the roads and potholes had to be fixed. Therefore, she stated if someone had five vehicles; and they were using all of them that they were driving on the

roads more than if someone had one car. She stated that she thought that spreading the taxes out amongst the cars, was more logical. She stated if people had extra cars that they were not using that maybe they could downsize, noting that she had lots of neighbors that have tons of cars that they do not use, and they were just sitting in their driveway. However, she stated if someone had an antique car that they used for leisure, that they would obviously want to keep it.

Councilor Barnes thanked everyone for their comments noting that they were all great arguments across the board. He stated for transparency his family had a lot of cars, but that they were not all his, noting that he only drives one car, and it had 99,000 miles, and that he would probably drive the car until it had 200,000 miles on it. He stated as a backup vehicle for every member of his family they had a 2012 Honda that had 180,000 miles.

Councilor Barnes continued by noting Councilor Garcia-Irizarry comments and he stated that he understands that Senior Citizens were on a fixed income. However, he stated that he thought that the issue was bigger for our younger workers. He stated that individuals were being told right now that they could not work from home anymore, noting that a car may not have been an issue before, and now a car may be a necessity for them to get to work and to live. Therefore, he stated for these reasons; that his position would have been the same, until he heard Councilor Dombrowski’s point about balancing taxes across both their homeowners and renters, noting that he thought this was probably the most valid argument. He also noted that Councilor Saccone’s comments were also helped him to reconsider his opinion.

Councilor Barnes noted that previously the assessed values of cars was based on the Blue Book Value, and now they were going to be assessed on the Manufacturer’ Suggested Retail Price (MSRP). Therefore, he questioned how this would work for Classic Vehicles, and whether there was a different valuation schedule for Restored Classic Cars. Mayor Allyn explained the Law stated that Antique and Classic Cars cannot have an assessed value of more than \$500, noting that any vehicle over 20+ years would be assessed at \$500; as noted in the Table in the proposed Resolution. He noted as an example if someone had a 1969 Mustang that was worth \$45,000, that the assessed value for taxation purposes was \$500.

VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 9- 0
MOVER:	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Barnes, Brunelle, Buhle, Dombrowski, Garcia-Irizarry, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saccone, St. Vil

XV. ADJOURNMENT

VOTE: Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski
9 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 8:31 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 March 26, 2025.

S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman