



Chairman Gary St. Vil

TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID FORMAT

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Ledyard, CT 06339

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MINUTES
FINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

5:00 PM

Annex Meeting Room - Video Conference

DRAFT

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - The Meeting was called to order by Committee Chairman Councilor Buhle at 5:00 p.m. at the Council Chambers Town Hall Annex Building.

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

II. **ROLL CALL**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location	Arrived	Departed
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Gary St. Vil	Town Council Chairman	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Ty Lamb	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Fred Allyn, III	Mayor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Matthew Bonin	Finance Director	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Ian Stammel	Assistant Finance Director/Treasurer	Present	In-Person	5:00 p.	6:01 pm
John Rich	Police Chief	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:25 pm
Jen Reguin	Board of Education Chairman	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Jeff Eillenberger	Resident	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Cory Watford	Resident	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Lee Ann Berry	Resident	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Roxanne Maher	Administrative Assistant	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm

- III. **RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS** (Comments limited to Three (3) Minutes) – None.

IV. **PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

• ***Town Attorney Legal Fees***

Councilor Buhle stated at the request of Councilor Ryan that Mayor Allyn provided a breakdown of the Town Attorney Legal Fees for the billing through February 23, 2026 noting the following:

Town Council – Ethics Ordinance, Classified Employees, Salaries	\$ 9,355.00
Permanent Municipal Building Cmt for School Projects	\$15,740.50
TOTAL:	\$25,096.50

Councilor Ryan thanked the Mayor for providing the breakdown of the Legal Fees to-date, noting that it corroborated with what they were being told; and that he wanted to take some time to reviewed the billed hours, stating that the work on the Ethics Ordinance used up a bulk of the billed hours. He noted as Chairman St. Vil mentioned that it was good to have this awareness. He stated at their March 11, 2026 meeting the Town Council voted to overspend the Town Attorney/Legal Account (original budget \$20,000); and therefore, he stated having regular updates regarding the status of the Legal Fees for awareness would help them to stay on top of how they were spending their Town Attorney/Legal Fees Account.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted in the billing breakdown that she did not see where the Mayor spoke with the Town Attorney about the Ethics Ordinance. Mayor Allyn, III noted that he did talk with Attorney Matt Ritter regarding the third draft of the Ethics Ordinance, which the Attorney believed to be the best draft, and that he would revisit the billing to see where that showed on the invoices. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the third Public Hearing for the proposed Ethics Ordinance has been scheduled for March 25, 2026 and that she hoped that the proposed Ordinance would pass; and the billing for this initiative would end.

Councilor Buhle noted the breakdown of \$25,000 in Legal Fees, stating in looking at what they annually allocate for legal support to draft town documents such as the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD); and other long-term plans, that it was a fair value to ensure they were putting forward the best draft possible. She commented on the importance to be able to continue to work with the Town Attorney when drafting an Ordinance, such as the Ethics Ordinance, which was intended to protect the town from potential future bad actors to ensure they were putting forward the best draft possible; and they were submitting documents that could be legally defended. She stated that the legal fees were overspent because of the proposed Ethics Ordinance, which was a one-time initiative, and she stated that there may be other issues that may cause the legal fees to be overspent, noting that they do not get to pick what the legal challenges of the town. She stated that she appreciated the insight and the information that the Mayor provided.

Councilor Ryan commented on the importance to keep track of all of their Legal Expenses to make sure they were within reason and were being controlled. He stated when they had too many people contacting the Town Attorney at their whim for opinions and advice, etc. that the charges add up fast, noting the Attorney Fee was about \$300.00 per hour.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Councilor Buhle stated they had 57 pages of minutes, and that she needed more time to review them.

The Finance Committee agreed to defer the approval of the following Minutes to their April 1, 2026 meeting

- Finance Committee Minutes of March 4, 2026
- Budget Work Session Minutes of March 5, 2026
- Budget Work Session Minutes of March 9, 2026.

RESULT: DEFER

Next Meeting 4/01/2026 : 5:00 p.m.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Continued discussion regarding potential uses for the funding received from the National Opioid Settlement Payments.

Mayor Allyn, III stated that the Police Department would be requesting funding for the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program.

Mayor Allyn also noted the National Opioid Settlement Portal was showing a scheduled disbursement to Ledyard in the amount of \$2,800.00 that would come in around mid-April, 2026. He noted the Opioid Settlement Account balance was \$56,600; and that they would continue to receive disbursements to 2034.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting 4/01/2026 : 5:00 p.m.

2. Schedule for Joint Meetings between the Finance Committees of the Town Council & Board of Education.

Councilor Buhle stated that she anticipated they would have a Joint Meeting between the Town Council Finance Committee and the Board of Education Finance Committee in May, 2026. However, she stated a meeting date has not yet been determined.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting 4/01/2026 : 5:00 p.m.

3. Continued discussion regarding potential grant opportunities.

Councilor Buhle noted the Finance Committee would address the 2027 Federal Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Grant Program Applications which would open in April under New Business Item #1. She stated that Police Chief John Rich was present this evening to talk about a project that may be eligible for the next round of Federal Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Grant Program.

Councilor Buhle went on to state that she contacted Congressman Courtney's Office to inquire about the Community Project Grant Funding, which was a different Program from the Congressionally Directed Spending Grant Program from the Senate. She stated the Community Project Grant Applications closed on March 6, 2026; and therefore, she asked if they would also include Ledyard on their mailing list for the Community Project Grant Funding going forward.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting 4/01/2026 : 5:00 p.m.

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

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. MOTION to recommend the Town Council authorize the Mayor to submit a *COPS Law Enforcement Technology and Equipment Grant* through the 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending initiative, to purchase Body Cameras and In-Car Camera Equipment. Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Police Chief John Rich noted during the Police Department’s March 12, 2026 Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget Work Session they included funding in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to replace the Police Officers’ Body Cameras which were purchased in 2021; and the In-Car Video System was purchased in 2018. He noted that they had one camera that recently failed, stating that the version of the Body Cameras they have were coming to their end of life and extinction; and he explained that the technology for this type of equipment has significantly improved, noting the higher resolution and video capabilities. He stated that these systems were expensive, noting since 2020 the State of Connecticut has required that Police Departments have both the Body Worn Cameras and the In-Car Video Systems. He proceeded to provide an overview of the costs as follows:

<i>Equipment</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Discount</i>	<i>Town Cost</i>
• 12 In-Care Video Cameras	\$111,493	20%	\$89,195.56
• 25 Body Worn Cameras	\$41,223.25	\$8,200	\$33,023.25
TOTAL Hardware Cost			\$120,000.00

<i>Cloud Storage (Motorola)</i>		
• Migrate Data from in-house Storage to Cloud		\$279,000 (one-time cost)
• Recurring Annual Cost		-?-

Chief Rich stated their current in-house system currently had some of the cloud capabilities such as the ability to download links and email, make an expiration date and send data to the State Attorney’s Office, etc. He stated if they did move to Cloud Storage that many of these features would become more seamless.

<i>Software (Motorola)</i>	
• Redaction Software was not included in this price – Chief Rich stated the Redaction Software would allow them to blur other parties/vehicles/license plate out of the video who were not involved in the incident, if the video was going to be released to the public.	

Chief Rich stated that he has requested the following Quotes for all of the Equipment both with and without Cloud Storage.

Chief Rich also noted another expense to consider was whether they were going to need more server space. He stated that the Police Department would rely on MIS Director Justin Dube to obtain quotes for that equipment.

Councilor Buhle stated if they could obtain the 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Grant to cover the 12-In-Car Cameras; 25-Body Worn Cameras; the Data Migration and

the first year of service that they would be looking for about \$470,000 Grant Application. She stated that this would be a big step forward for the Police Department. She stated that she appreciated Chief Rich working so quickly to put this information together since their March 12, 2026 Budget Work Session. She noted the urgency to include the 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Grant on the Town Council Agenda was because the Application Deadline was April 6, 2026. Chief Rich stated that he expected to have the Quotes in-hand by the Town Council's March 25, 2026 meeting.

Councilor Ryan stated that he was in-favor of applying for and receiving any grant funding they could to help with the purchase of the Police Body-Worn Cameras and In-Car Camera Systems. However, he stated that they also needed to understand the on-going or recurring costs associated that the town would be responsible for.

Councilor Ryan continued by commenting on the costs of Cloud Storage verses the Local Storage, and he questioned:

- Whether they would have the option to migrate back from the Cloud Storage in the future if the costs were untenable;
- What the on-going annual costs were going to b;
- All of the associated costs, noting that these were questions that they should have answers to before moving to a totally Cloud Based Storage.

Councilor Ryan stated that overall he thought applying for 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Grant was a great idea; and he appreciated all the work that has been done to try to move this forward. He stated obtaining the 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Grant for this Police Department equipment would remove the Capital Funding in the outgoing Capital Improvement Plan; and there was no local matching funds required for this Grant Program. Chief Rich stated Councilor Ryan's comments were correct.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry questioned the following:

- Whether migrating to the Cloud Storage was optional; or whether the Police Departments were being required to move the Cloud Storage.

Chief Rich stated at this time migrating to Cloud Storage was optional.

- The yearly fee for the Cloud Storage.

Chief Rich stated that he would expect that there would be an yearly fee for the Cloud Storage; and that he would have that information for the Town Council's March 25, 2026 meeting. He went onto state that there would be a yearly fee for the software and the hardware, noting that those costs were relatively inexpensive, noting that the Police Department currently included about \$7,050 in their budget for Body Camera Maintenance.

Councilor Buhle stated should the MIS Department determine that the Police Department needed additional server space that they could include that cost in the 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Grant. She noted in their 2026 Congressional Directed Spending Grant they included money for a new server, and that she hoped that the new server would be big enough if they decided not to go forward with the Cloud Storage. She stated that this was a great opportunity for Ledyard.

VOTE: 3- 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO RECOMMEND 3 – 0	
MOVER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
AYES:	Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

The Finance Committee thanked Chief Rich for attending tonight’s meeting. Chief Rich left the meeting at 5:25 p.m.

2. MOTION to recommend the Town Council approve the following four tax refunds in the combined total amount of \$12,562.61 each exceeding \$2,400.00 in accordance with tax collector departmental procedures.

- Beth Dench \$3,919.94
- Home Loan Serv for Lily Bensko \$2,724.59
- Home Loan Serv for Nicholas Onega \$2,696.00
- Laura Waite \$3,222.08

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Buhle stated in accordance with policies established for the Tax Collection Department, refunds to taxpayers exceeding \$2,400.00 are to be approved by the Town Council. She noted that all four tax refunds were due to double payment.

VOTE: 3– 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO RECOMMEND 3 – 0	
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

3. MOTION to recommend the Town Council grant a Bid Waiver to PKF O’Conner Davies of Wethersfield, CT due to receiving fewer than three qualified bids in response to RFP #2026-03 (Auditing Services) in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev.2) *“An Ordinance Regarding Purchasing for the Town of Ledyard”*

In addition, appoint PKF O’Conner Davies to conduct auditing services for the General Government, WPCA, and Board of Education for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, in accordance with Chapter III, Section 11 of the Town Charter for a fee of \$75,000.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated the Fiscal Year ending June30, 2025 was the last year of their Contract with Auditing Firm Clifton/Larson/Allen, LLC. He stated in soliciting Requests for Proposals the Town received two bids, noting that PKF O’Conner Davies was aggressive with their Proposal, noting their cost came in about \$5,300 less than the previous Firm’s contract, over the first three years of the Contract or about \$2,000 per year. He stated periodically changing Auditing Firms was also good because it provided an opportunity to have a fresh set of eyes on the Town’s books. He stated as much as Clifton/Larson/Allen, LLC., had done a great job that it was good to change from time to time; and that he supported awarding the bid to PKF O’Conner Davies.

Finance Director Matthew Bonin, attending remotely via Zoom, stated that PKF O’Conner Davies was a well know Auditing Firm in Connecticut, noting they do a lot of Municipal Audits. He stated that there were only a few Firms that do Municipal Audit Work, and that he was surprised they actually received two proposals. He stated as Mayor Allyn, III, noted that it was always good to have a new set of eyes.

VOTE: 3– 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO RECOMMEND 3 – 0
MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES: Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

4. MOTION to recommend the Town Council authorize the Mayor to submit 2026 Ledyard Rotary Grant Application for Summer Camp Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000.00.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III stated the Town has received this \$1,000 Ledyard Rotary Grant for several years. He stated as been done in years past, the Grant Funding would be used to help Ledyard families send kids to the Parks & Recreation Summer Camp.

VOTE: 3– 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO RECOMMEND 3 – 0
MOVER: Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES: Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

5. MOTION to recommend the Town Council adopted a proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Water Operations Budget in the amount ~~\$1,863,000~~ **\$1,860,262** (as amended at the Finance Committee’s March 18, 2026 meeting).

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in looking at the new Auditor Contract from PKF O’Conner Davies their cost for the WPCA Auditing Work was listed as \$6,600; however the Water Operations included \$9,000 for the Auditing Work. Therefore, she suggested reducing the Auditing Work Account.

Assistant Finance Director Ian Stammel stated the WPCA voted on their proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 before the Auditing Proposals were received. He stated he did not see a problem with adjusting the Water Operations Auditing Service Account, however, he stated the Auditing Fee was spilt as follows 80% Water Operations; and 20% Sewer Operations; noting that the change would be a reduction of \$2,738 in the Water Operations for a new total Water Operations amount would be \$1,860,262. He stated that he would present this information to the WPCA at their March 24, 2026 meeting.

- ❖ MOTION to make the following Adjustment to the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Water Operations Budget:

Account	Description	FY 26/27	Adjustment	New Amount
50591923-5360	Accounting Services Audit	\$9,738.00	-\$2,738	\$7,000

For a new total Water Operations Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget in the amount of \$1,860,262

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry

Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated although \$2,738 was not a huge amount of money that taking some money from this account and from that account that eventually it could add up to a significant savings.

VOTE: 3– 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO AMENED 3 – 0	
MOVER:	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER:	Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
AYES:	Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

Continued discussion on the Main Motion as amended as follows:

MOTION to recommend the Town Council adopted a proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Water Operations Budget in the amount ~~\$1,863,000~~ **\$1,860,262**.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Councilor Ryan noted the background information noted the following changes from the following account lines saw increases; noting that that some debt would be paid off during the current fiscal year:

Account Name	Increase	Decrease
✓ GU Operating Agreement	\$ 9,455.00	
✓ GU Customer Service	\$ 3,159.15	
✓ Route 12 Water Purchased Used	\$50,000.00	
✓ Finance Department Services	\$ \$7,000.00	
✓ Retirement	\$ 5,738.50	
✓ General Obligation Bond Interest		\$ 832.00
✓ CWF/DWSFR Loan Principle		\$34,355.00
✓ Contingency		\$ 476.45

Councilor Ryan stated that the Water Operations Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget also included \$63,750 for a Technical Administrator. He stated the reason it probably does not show-up in the excel spreadsheet was because the way the math worked out it was showing a zero change to the budget. He stated this additional position was added value in terms of managing the Water Operations \$1,863,000 Budget.

Councilor Buhle stated that the Water Pollution Control’s Water Operations Budget was paid by their Rate Payers and that it was not paid by the Town’s Tax Payers.

In accordance with Section 4 of Ordinance #400-001 “An Ordinance Establishing a Water Pollution Control Authority” which states: “The WPCA shall provide, by the fourth Monday in April, a budget of estimated revenues, expenditures and capital improvements for the ensuing fiscal year for inclusion as an appendix in the Town

annual budget. *The Town Council shall approve the water system budget*". The Town Council was not required to approve the Sewer Budget.

VOTE: 3– 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO RECOMMEND 3 – 0
MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES: Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

6. MOTION to recommend the Town Council to set a Public Hearing (Hybird Format - Video Conference and In-Person) date to be held on April 21, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. to be held in the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard, to receive comments and recommendations on the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: The Finance Committee discussed the location of the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget and agreed that the Council Chambers was an adequate space.

Councilor Ryan noted the dates regarding the Annual Budget were not randomly selected, noting that in accordance with Chapter VII; Section 5: *“After the formation of a preliminary budget, the Town Council shall provide sufficient copies of said budget for general distribution in the office of the Town Clerk, and shall conduct one or more public hearings on or before the last Monday of April.”* He stated the reason April 21, 2026 was selected was to allow time to receive Public Comment and to make budget adjustments, if needed, prior to the submitting the Proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to the Town Clerk on the First Monday in May, (May 4, 2026).

VOTE: 3– 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO RECOMMEND 3 – 0
MOVER: Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES: Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

7. MOTION to recommend the Town Council set the Annual Town Meeting (Hybrid Format -Video Conference and In-Person) date regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget on May 18, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. to be held at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex, 741 Colonel Ledyard Highway, Ledyard Connecticut; and to adjourn to a Referendum to be held on May 19, 2026 between the hours of 6:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: In accordance with Chapter VII; Section 5: *“The Town Council shall then prepare a budget for recommendation to the annual Town Meeting and shall file said budget with the Town Clerk no later than the first Monday of May (May 4, 2026) . The annual Town Meeting for the consideration of the budget and the transaction of other business shall be held on the third Monday of May at such hour and at such place as the Town Council shall determine. The vote of the Town meeting on the annual budget shall be adjourned to a vote on the voting machines the day following the Town Meeting.”*

VOTE: 3– 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED TO RECOMMEND 3 – 0

MOVER: Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Town Councilor

SECONDER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

AYES: Jessica Buhle, Carmen Garcia-Irizarry, Tim Ryan

8. Discussion and possible action regarding the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget.

Councilor Buhle stated that the Finance Committee was continuing their Budget Work noting that they had another Budget Work Session scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. She stated that she looked forward to receiving comments and suggestions from her fellow Councilors as well as the public. Therefore, she stated that the Committee would defer action on the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget to after they have completed their budget work.

RESULT: NO ACTION

Next Meeting 4/01/2026 : 5:00 p.m.

9. Review and discuss the following Reports:

- Committee to Review the Budget Process Report dated October 31, 2023
- Committee To Transform The Budget Process Report dated October 3, 2016

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that these two Budget Committees spent a significant amount of time studying the budget and to provide a number of recommendations. She stated in reviewing the two Reports that the Town has already implemented many of the recommendations; however, there were other recommendations that she thought they may not have looked at yet. Therefore, she asked that the two Reports be included this evening to discuss some of the recommendations.

Councilor Buhle questioned whether Councilor Garcia-Irizarry had any specific items that they could be pursuing more effectively.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the following:

- Clearly Defined Policy for the Competitive Bidding Process Requirements for Requesting and Approving a Bid Waiver.
- Clearly Defined Policy for the Use of the Town Attorney

Councilor Ryan served as the Chairman of the *2023 Committee to Review the Budget Process*; and he explained that the idea was that all of the Recommendations would be the basis for Town Council to designate some Ad Hoc Committees to research. He stated to his knowledge they have not looked into the two items Councilor Garcia-Irizarry mentioned. He suggested that they could group these two items in with other financially based ideas to review, and assess further to evaluate their impact. He stated that this would expand to any of the recommendations in the 2023 Report. He stated if there was interest in any of the recommendations that they should pursue chartering an Ad Hoc Committee to look into them and apply some numbers and some actual data.

- Shared Resources and Services with other Towns
Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that Ledyard has been working to share resources and services with neighboring towns such as the Public Works Department sharing the cost and use of the Street Sweeper and providing Mechanic Services for Preston. She questioned as an example whether a Grant Writer was something they could share with Preston.

Councilor Buhle stated when they talk about *Shared Services* that Ledyard had a good relationship with Preston, as Councilor Garcia-Irizarry mentioned. She stated in working with Preston, that effectively Ledyard had more resources than Preston. Therefore, she questioned at what point does Ledyard try to work with other towns that have a larger economy of scale than we have; such as Groton. She noted as an example that Groton may have five staff people that perform a particular job that maybe they could share with Ledyard.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated that Ledyard was highly efficient in use of their funds, noting the Animal Control Facility as an example. He explained when Ledyard's Animal Control Facility was in a state of disrepair; and Groton had a newer Facility that Ledyard reached out to Groton to ask if they could provide Animal Control Facilities/Operations for them. He noted that Groton said "Yes", but that they would need Ledyard's Vehicle, and the cost was going to be \$140,000. Therefore, it was cost prohibitive, because they also had Collective Bargaining Groups; and because Groton had high levels of staff which comes with a cost. He stated that they could certainly reach out to Groton again, noting that Preston was an easier fit because they do not have Collective Bargaining Units; and therefore, they did not have a union to union issue. He stated the Street Sweeper was a good example of partnering with Preston, noting that the Ledyard's Nip Bottle Surcharge Revenue has made that arrangement work. Councilor Buhle stated that she was not suggesting they only reach out to Groton, noting that they may want to reach out to Stonington, or other towns, where there may be opportunities.

Councilor Buhle addressed the Grant Writer noting they included \$30,000 in the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget, explaining that the intent was for the Grant Writer to be on a per diem basis. She questioned the status of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Government's (SCCOG) Grant Writer. Mayor Allyn stated that SCCOG does not have a Grant Writer yet, but that Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (seCTer) does have a Grant Writer on staff and as a Member that Ledyard was able to use the seCTer Grant Writer, which was fee based. However, he noted that Ledyard in addition to three other towns may ask the seCTer Grant Writer to prepare a Grant Application for the same Grant Program. He stated that they would have to hope that the seCTer Grant Writer would be able to prepare all four Applications in an unbiased way, so they would all have a fair shot at the funding.

Councilor Ryan stated as Councilor Garcia-Irizarry mentioned there were a lot of shovel ready recommendations in the *2023 Committee to Review the Budget Process Report*, noting that he would not be opposed to discussing a couple of the recommendations at a Finance Committee meeting or at a Town Council meeting. However, he stated for things such as creating a Policy for the *Competitive Bidding Process* that they would not want to do that right out of the gate without having an

Ad Hoc Committee that would make a recommendation for how those Policies would change. He stated that these exercises would show that they were using the Reports. He stated that the Finance Committee could discuss some of the discrete items in the Reports, should Councilor Buhle want to keep this as a Standing Item on the Finance Committee Agenda.

Councilor Garcia-Irizary stated that she was not opposed to establishing Ad Hoc Committees to review assigned recommendations from the Reports, to figure out and lay out a path on how to implement those ideas.

Mayor Allyn addressed the establishing of additional Ad Hoc Committees and he asked that they be mindful noting that they recently added the following Ad Hoc Committees: (1) Sustainable CT Ad Hoc Committee; (2) Ad Hoc Committee to Evaluate Separating the Planning & Zoning Commission; and there was going to be at least one more new Commission. He stated they were out of staff to take on these additional Committees; unless they were planning to hire more staff.

Councilor Buhle stated that she agreed with Mayor Allyn's comment, and she stated while being mindful of their staff and the Councilors on the Finance Committee, that they would keep these Reports on the Finance Committee's Agenda as an on-going discussion item, noting that they could move things forward that did not require additional staff time. Councilor Garcia-Irizary stated once one of the Ad Hoc Committees complete their work that they could evaluate this idea.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting 4/01/2026 : 5:00 p.m.

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

X. ADJOURNMENT

VOTE: Councilor Garcia-Irizary moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Ryan **3 - 0 Approved and so declared**, the meeting was adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Buhle.
Committee Chairman
Finance Committee