TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman Kevin J. Dombrowski

MINUTES
LEDARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023; 7:00 PM
HYBRID FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

DRAFT

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

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location
Kevin Dombrowski	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Andra Ingalls	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Whit Irwin	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
John Marshall	Town Councilor	Excused	
Mary McGrattan	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Gary Paul	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Timothy Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	Remote
William Saums	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS – None.

V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

Ms. Minna DeGaetano, 10 Marla Avenue, Ledyard, noted the State Legislature's proposed Senate Bill 146 "*The Act Increasing Uniform Assessment Rate for Property Tax*". She stated should the Legislature approve this Bill that it would have an effective date of October 1, 2023. Therefore, she questioned whether the town's residents would be hit with an increase in the mil rate and an increase on the percentage of the assessed property value rate from 70% to 75%. She also questioned whether the Town Council has considered the provisions of Bill 146 in their preparation of the Town's Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated the State Legislature had a number of proposed Bills that were being considered. He explained an increase in the Assessment Rate would be similar to a revaluation year, noting that when they see the Assessments Increase that they typically see the Mil Rate go down. He stated this may be a ploy by the State because they were considering Senate Bill 1240 - Mil Rate Tax Cap which would apply to all commercial and industrial properties. He stated this proposed Bill would work similar to the car tax cap, noting that the Mil Rate Tax Cap has been proposed for 31.25 mils, noting that Ledyard's mil rate was currently slightly over the proposed cap. He explained Bill 1240 called for the State to create a New Revenue Sharing Account to cover the loss of revenues between the Mil Rate Tax Cap and the Municipalities Mil Rate. Therefore, he stated increasing the Assessment Rate may be a way to push the valuations below the cap so that the state could avoid having to pay out to municipalities. He explained by the State increasing the Assessment Percentage Rate that it would not impact their taxes. However, he stated if Senate Bill 1240 - Mil Rate Tax Cap were to be approved that it would impact their taxes. He concluded by stating that he did not think the State would implement Legislation that would impact towns mid-year, knowing that all the Municipalities were doing their budget this time of year.

Councilor McGrattan noted per state statute Municipalities were required to approve a mil rate by the fourth Monday in June. Therefore, she did not think the State would implement something that would impact Municipalities' Mil Rate after they have been set.

Chairman Dombrowski stated if the State were to approve such a Bill that it most likely not become effective until the next fiscal year; even if the Bill was effective October 1st. He stated to the Mayor's point, changing what the taxes could be in the middle of the year would throw every Municipality into turmoil. However, he stated he did not know the particulars of the Bill Ms. DeGaetano mentioned this evening, noting that he did not know what Hartford's thoughts were or even if the proposed Bill would pass. He thanked Ms. DeGaetano for her question.

Mayor Allyn stated the State Legislature would adjourn in June this year. Chairman Dombrowski stated the town could reach out the Ledyard's Delegation to obtain more information regarding Ms. DeGaetano's question pertaining to the status of Bill 145 "*The Act Increasing Uniform Assessment Rate for Property Tax*".

IV. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

VI. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Rodriguez noted a Drug Take Back Day was held on Saturday, April 22, 2023 in Ledyard Center. She stated the program was sponsored by the Ledyard Police Department, Ledge Light Health District, and Ledyard Prevention Coalition. She stated they had a good response with people dropping off over 60 pounds of unused prescriptions, and unused over the counter medications.

Councilor Rodriguez continued by commenting on the tragic accident that took place on Friday, April 21, 2023 on the Groton-New London Gold Star Bridge. She offered her condolences to the family of Wallace Joseph Fauquet III, who was the Oil Truck Driver who lost his life in the accident. She started the Fauquet Family was well-known in Ledyard, noting they were part of the Soccer Club. She stated that their hearts go out to the Family. She stated it was a horrible tragedy, but that they saw the heroes in their communities that day, acknowledging all those who responded to the accident. She went on to state that unfortunately because of the impact to the traffic throughout the area, which included moving traffic from one freeway to the other freeway, that there was another fatal accident. She stated emergency vehicles and ambulances were having difficulty getting to the accidents, noting that Life Star was called in. She thanked all of the First Responders, the Police Departments, Fire Departments, Ambulances, and the overall community who reached out during this tragedy.

Councilor Paul stated that he wanted to echo Councilor Rodriguez's comments regarding the tragic accident last Friday. He expressed his condolences to the family of Wallace Joseph Fauquet III, noting that Walt worked for him at Spicer Oil for a short time. He addressed the newspaper articles and on-line reports which talked about what a great guy Walt was. He stated it was all true, noting that Walt was a great person, he loved his family, and his community and he was a hard worker. He stated the Fauquet Family was part of their community and he wanted to express his condolences to them.

Councilor Saums stated that he also echoed the comments of both Councilor Rodriguez and Councilor Paul noting that it was well said. He noted the many people who have contributed to the GoFundMe Page, stating that since Friday, over $150,000 has been donated, stating that the goal was $100,000. He stated there was a lot of generosity in their community.

Chairman Dombrowski stated today was Administrative Professionals Day, and he thanked Town Council Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher for her effort and all of her work that she does t support the Town Council. He presented Ms. Maher with a bouquet of flowers. Ms. Maher thanked the Town Council for their recognition, noting that she enjoyed working for each one of them and that she sincerely appreciated their recognition and thoughtfulness.

VII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following:
Public Hearing Minutes of April 12, 2023
Regular Minutes of April 12, 2023
Public Hearing Minutes of April 17, 2023 (Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget)
Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez
VOTE: 8 – 0 Approved and so declared

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Dombrowski stated a Communications List has been provided. He noted there were no referrals listed.

X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee
Councilor Ingalls stated although the Administration Committee has not met since the last Town Council meeting they had few items on tonight's Agenda.

Community Relations Committee
Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee met on April 19, 2023 and continued to discuss the following: (1) Black History Month Event for 2024 – Councilor Paul stated the Committee agreed that presenting the Awards and recognizing the work of the kids who participated in the Essay and Poster Contest at a Town Council Meeting was a positive event for the community; and they hoped that would continue. He stated the Committee noted that some of the ideas they have discussed may not be right for local government; or for a Community Relations Committee event. Therefore, he stated the Committee would like to serve in a supportive role, and work to bring in some different things next year; (2) Farmers Market Booths – Councilor Paul stated the Committee would like to host three booths at the Summer 2023 Market as follows: (i) ***June 21, 2023 or July 19, 2023 – Mental Health Awareness*** featuring the following services: Brian Dagle Healing Hearts Foundation; Home heating fuel through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) and other assistance programs; Utilities – Electric/Water Assistance; Homeowners Assistance program that provided no interest loans to help people replace their furnace, roof or septic system, etc. Home meal delivery available for those who cannot get out to grocery shop through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA); The Linda C. Davis Food Pantry located in Ledyard Center; United Way located in Gales Ferry was a great resource; Connecticut's Paid Family Medical Leave Program; Police Department "*Green and/or Blue Envelope*" for drivers with Autism or Hearing Impaired; (ii) ***August 20, 2023 – Library Services – Back to School*** -This would also include a Bill Library Open House, Short Presentation, and Tour of the Library; (iii) ***September 19, 2023 – First Responders - Home Town Heroes*** – Volunteer – To provide information on how residents could volunteer. Councilor Paul stated that the Committee would like to promote the many organizations and committees that are operated with volunteers from the community. He stated that the Committee would like to invite the following to attend their Booth that day: Representative from the Police Department; Representative from the Ledyard Center Fire Company; Representative from the Gales Ferry Fire Company; Chairman from each of the town's committees/commissions/boards.

Finance Committee
Councilor Saums stated the Finance Committee met on April 19, 2023 and he noted in addition to the items on tonight's Agenda that the Committee also had a motion on their agenda to consider a bid waiver to STV Construction for the oversight of the school roof projects. He stated because the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) was not ready with an update, the Finance Committee took no action.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee
Councilor Paul stated the LUPPW Committee has not met since the last Town Council Meeting. He noted the LUPPW Committee's next meeting was scheduled for May 1, 2023.

Water Pollution Control Authority

Councilor Saums stated the WPCA met on April 25, 2023 and addressed the following: (1) Rate Increase - As required, the WPCA conducted a Public Hearing on April 25, 2023 regarding a proposed 4.5% rate increase for July 1, 2023; (2) Wastewater Sewer Pump - Construction will begin on the Smith & Loveless skid mounted sewer pumps at the Waste Water Treatment Plant on May 1, 2023; (3) Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project - After reviewing the Application Process for the CT Communities Challenge Grant Program for both the Sewer Line Extension Project and for a Water Main on Baldwin Hill Road, the WPCA determined that substantially more time would be required to prepare the Application than expected. They concluded that the next round should include assistance from an engineering firm due to the size and number of estimates required. The Grant opened twice annually for applications. They also discussed the possibility of a trail along an existing utility easement on Gallup Hill Road as the route for the larger sewer line, which is planned as Phase III of the Sewer Line Extension Project using ARPA Funds. If the utility easement could be used for the new Sewer Line, the existing sewer line under Gallup Hill Road could be abandoned, and the road would not need to be excavated; (3) Policy Manual - The WPCA Policy Manual was under review for a number of policy updates. He credited Member Terry Jones for all his work to maintain the Policy Manuel; (4) Multi Model Pathway - The Town still expected a Spring, 2023 start for construction on the Multi-Model Pathway and Sewer Line Extension. While many of the questions Groton Utilities posed have been resolved, there is some question as to whether all of them have been addressed; (5) Booster Chlorination Treatment System – The Department of Public Health (DPH) and Groton Utilities (GU) recommended inactivating the Booster Chlorination Treatment System on Route 12; because it was no longer used or needed. The WPCA agreed, noting that the Treatment System had been used to sanitize water in the Route 12 main. However, with the addition of the Holmberg Tank and the Regional Interconnection crossing under the Thames River, there was enough water moving that it does not stagnate or require additional chlorine; (6) WPCA Membership – Councilor Saums stated that Ledyard was very fortunate in that this WPCA had in its ranks a financial person, several engineers, a doctor of chemistry, an employee of a municipal water company, a former town council chair, two other former town councilors (when the council was also the WPCA), two planning commission members, and new members, as well as members with long experience with the WPCA. He stated at their meeting last night that he commented with all seriousness that this was the best WPCA ever.

Board of Education

Councilor Irwin stated the Board of Education met on April 19, 2023 and addressed the following: (1) Proposed Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget – The Board was pleased with the Public Hearing regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2023/2024 that was held on April 17, 2023; (2) Connecticut Nutrition Standards – Ledyard Public Schools would be meeting the Connecticut Nutrition Standards. Everything sold in the schools included vending machines and other groups that sell food products to the students would meet the Standards. There would be an exemption for Events and the details were available on the Board of Education website at: www.Ledyard.net; (3) Tuition and Facilities Rates for 2024 were set; (4) Board of Education changed their regular meeting night from Wednesday to Tuesday.

Chairman Dombrowski stated in speaking with Board of Education Finance Committee Chairman Mike Brawner they discussed the Board's meeting date change, noting that it would allow the Members of the Board of Education to attend Town Council meetings and members of the Town Council to attend Board of Education meetings.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) MIS Technician – Mayor Allyn stated Mr. Kirk Bryson was selected to fill the MIS Technician role, noting that he began work on April 17, 2023. He stated that Mr. Bryson would be working under MIS Director Justin Dube, stating that the Department had a full complement; (2) Deer Strikes – Connecticut Department of Energy & Environment Protection (DEEP) April 18, 2023 - Mayor Allyn stated he and Police Chief Rich met with DEEP to discuss the 300% increase in deer strikes that has occurred in Ledyard since September, 2022. He stated that he was looking for DEEP to change the Management Zone from 12 to Zone 10 (Coastal Zone). Mayor Allyn stated DEEP had some data sets and that they would continue to monitor this issue, and collect more data before making a decision regarding the Management Zone; (3) Health Districts - FDA Food Code – Mayor Allyn stated all the Eastern Connecticut Health Districts have adopted the Food and Drug Administration's Food Code. He stated the Food Code was a three-year project, noting that since the COVD-19 Pandemic there

were a lot more Outdoor Dining opportunities. He stated under the FDA Food Code dogs were permitted to be outside when people were dining outside. He stated Ledge Light Health District asked that the public be made aware of this Food Code, noting that outdoor diners could experience having a dog sitting at a table next to them; (4) New London – Groton Gold Star Bridge Accident – April 21, 2023 – Mayor Allyn stated that he too expresses his deepest condolences to the Fauquet Family, noting that Wallace Joseph Fauquet III, was a 1999 Ledyard High School Graduate; (5) Police Department Chaplin Herman Pollard – Mayor Allyn stated on April 22, 2023 Chaplin Pollard passed away. He stated Chaplin Pollard was a wonderful man, noting that he served as Ledyard's Police Department Chaplin for decades. He stated the passing of Chaplin Pollard was a big loss for the Police Department, the Town and the Country, noting that he was fantastic man; (6) Public Act No. 21-58 *"An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management*" in accordance with *"Resolution Regarding Revenues Received from Beverage Container Surcharges"* - Nip Bottle Surcharge Disbursement - Mayor Allyn reported Ledyard received $13,048.20 from the Nip Bottle Surcharge. This equated to 260,964 nip bottles (17 nips bottles per capita) sold in Ledyard during the past six-months. He stated that he would share the data sheet with the Town Council. He stated Public Act No.21-58 (Nip Bottle Surcharge) has not changed the littering of nip bottes on the roads. He stated on Earth Day (April 22, 2023) he picked-up about 35 nip bottles in cleaning up about one mile of road. He stated the 35 nip bottles was not too bad, noting that he had cleaned up the same stretch of road about six months earlier. However, he stated there were other roads in town that were covered with nip bottles; (7) Senate Bill 1242 "*Solid Waste Management Disposal*" - Mayor Allyn stated he attended a Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) meeting earlier today and received an update regarding Senate Bill 1242. He stated this Bill would impose a $5.00 per ton surcharge for all waste that originated from your town. He stated the State would use the surcharge money collected to annually haul 800,000 – 900,000 tons of waste out of Connecticut to landfills in Pennsylvania and Ohio, etc. He stated a Task Force thru CCM was being formed to try to work with the State to develop other options. He stated during the meeting they also discussed the removal of Organic Waste from the waste stream, which would reduce the State's overall waste tonnage. He stated Governor Lamont, and the Legislature were working toward mandating the removal of Organic Waste from the waste stream to become effective in 2028. He stated Southeastern Regional Resource Recovery Authority (SCRRRA) already had a PILOT Program to remove the Organic Waste from the waste stream which appeared to be working well. However, he stated because removing Organic Waste from the waste stream would be considered a "*change in service*" that the waste haulers would add a cost for new Organic Waste pick-up. He stated that they would need to look at the metrics for all of these proposals; (8) Raised Bill 1213 "*Pequot Fund*" - Mayor Allyn stated Raised Bill 1213 would increase the Pequot Fund disbursement to all municipalities throughout the state to $139,380,000. He explained the original intent of the Pequot Fund when it was implemented in 1993 was for the State to distribute 85% of the revenues received from the Casino Gaming to the municipalities and that the State would retain 15%. However, he stated last year the State retained 90% revenues and only distributed 10% to the municipalities, noting over the years the State found a way to turn the Program opposite from the original intent. He stated that he commended Senator Osten and other who were working at turning this back around to the original intent of the Pequot Fund. He stated the State has had surplus year after year, noting that this was a good opportunity to make some of these things right with regard to their original intent; (9) Our Lady of Lords Church – Hate Crime – March 11, 2023 - Mayor Allyn stated on April 25, 2023 an arrest was made regarding an incident in which a man who broke into and defaced the catholic church by painting profanity and hate speech on the floor and on a wall; (10) Ledyard Prevention Coalition April 25, 2023 Meeting – Mayor Allyn stated he along with Councilor Rodriguez attended the Ledyard Prevention Coalition meeting at which they discussed providing the Finance Committee with recommendations for the use of the Opioid Settlement Funding. He stated one of the considerations was SERAC located in Norwich. He noted this Organization that has replaced DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) along with others, noting that more information would be forthcoming. He stated SERAC was a non-profit organization that provides services regarding substance abuse, problem gambling, and mental health challenges. He stated the Ledyard Prevention Coalition would most likely be ready to provide some recommendations to the Finance Committee in June; (11) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding – Mayor Allyn stated he participated in a webinar today and learned that the State would be distributing ARPA Funding that the Federal Government designated for Senior Citizens Centers. He stated Ledyard would be receiving $29,000, noting that it was based on a per capita allotment. He stated they had 18 months to designate the use of the funding and that the funds needed to be spent by 2026; (12) Ledyard and Gales Ferry Fire Companies – Mayor Allyn thanked both the Ledyard Center and Gales Ferry Fire Companies for their Mutual Aide Support to other Fire Departments in the region. He noted the Ledyard Center Fire Department went to a large 7-acre brush fire in Montville; and the Gales Ferry Fire Department went to 750-acre fire in

Exeter, Rhode Island. He stated sixty-six agencies were involved in the Brush Fire from four different states including as far away as Maine, and the National Guard. He stated that he received an email from the Exeter Fire Chief in which he stated that he was overwhelmed that so many Agencies, from four States, who have never trained, practices, or worked together in the past, were able to work so seamlessly and effectively contain the 750-acre fire, noting that they did not lose a single house. He stated following the Exeter, Rhode Island fire the Gales Ferry Fire Department provided Mutual Aid at the Connecticut Scrap Facility in Montville. He stated because all of the Fire Tanker Trucks in Hartford County, including Ledyard Center and Gales Ferry Fire Departments, were being used at the Scrap Facility fire that the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environment Protection (DEEP) deployed about six of their *Quick Strike Fire Units* throughout Eastern Connecticut to provide coverage. He noted one *Quick Strike Fire Unit* was deployed to the area of the Preston Plains Park to provide coverage in Preston, Gales Ferry, and Ledyard Center in the event something were to happen. He stated it was fantastic to see that all the training and drills the Fire Departments and their Volunteers do came together as they anticipated and worked properly. He stated although it was a terrible situation, it was good to see that during a real event the drills and Departments came together as they have practiced; (13) 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway Property - Mayor Allyn stated the Land Survey was nearly complete which would result in a Lot Line Adjustment. The only asbestos found on the house was the black tar mastic that was used to bond between the chimney and the flashing and he noted that it was being removed next week, He also noted that they have received a quote for the Demolition of the structure/house.

Questions to the Mayor -

Councilor Rodriguez asked Mayor Allyn to repeat the following:

- Nip Bottle Surcharge Disbursement to Ledyard – Mayor Allyn stated the payment received was $13,048.20.
- Raised Bill 1213 "*Pequot Fund*" – Mayor Allyn stated the State had $139,380,000 to be distributed to all of the 169 Towns based on the Pequot Fund Formula.
- ARPA Funds for Senior Citizens Centers – Mayor Allyn stated the $29,000 that Ledyard would be receiving would need to be designated within 18 months, and that the funding had to be fully expended by December 31, 2026; or returned back to the Federal Government.

Councilor McGrattan addressed Raised Bill No. 1213 "*Pequot Fund*" which would return the program back to the original intent of the Pequot Fund when it was implemented in 1993 which required the State to distribute 85% of the revenues received from the Casino Gaming to the Municipalities and that the State would retain 15%. She questioned whether this Bill (1213) to properly disburse the Pequot Fund to the Municipalities was an attempt to satisfy towns so that they could proceed with the Legislature's proposal regarding the Taxation on Indian Lands that would allow the Vendors doing businesses at the Casinos not to pay property taxes to the Town. She stated in other words would the Municipalities get the proper amount of money owed to them from the Pequot Fund in lieu of receiving property taxes from the Vendors. Mayor Allyn stated the State Legislature was putting together a Working Group which would involve both the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN) Chairman Butler, and Mohegan Sun Tribe Chairman Gessner, Jr., Montville Mayor McDaniel, himself and six members of the State Legislature. He stated the intent of the Working Group would be to meet twice a month in Harford for six-months to report on and discuss taxation issues on Indian Lands. He stated the Working Group would then write a White Paper on what their feeling was on how this issue should be handled for the next Legislation Session. However, he stated that he has expressed his concern to their Legislators; stating that they should not try to legislate something that the Judicial Branch has already unanimously passed as a judicial ruling. Mayor Allyn continued to explain that the distribution of the Pequot Fund was based on a per capita formula, noting that he struggled with this approach stating as an example that the town of Somers received about 150% more Pequot Funding than Ledyard, because all of the people incarcerated in the Somers' Prison were counted as part of their town's population. He stated the people in the prison were not people who were using services in the community. Councilor McGrattan requested clarification, noting for this year Ledyard could continue to collect property taxes from the businesses that were operating at the Casino. Mayor Allyn stated that was correct, however, he stated this was the second consecutive year that this type of Legislation has been propoosed, which would undo both Montville's and Ledyard's ability to collect those taxes.

Councilor Saums addressed the $29,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding that Ledyard would receive specifically for the Senior Center. He stated the town had allocated $160,000 to be used for the replacement of the Heating and Air Condition System (HVAC) ($155,000) and doors ($5,000) at the Senior Center. Therefore, he suggested that the town apply the $29,000 ARPA Funding that they would be receiving toward these Projects, which would

free up $29,000 for cost overruns on other town ARPA Projects. Mayor Allyn stated that Councilor Saums' suggestion was a good approach.

XII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. MOTION to appoint Mr. Gary St. Vil (D) 2 Thompson Street, Ledyard as a Regular Member of the Planning & Zoning Commission to complete a three (3) year term ending October 31, 2023 to fill a vacancy left by Mr. Awrach.
Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor McGrattan
Discussion: Councilor Ingalls stated Mr. St. Vil was currently serving as an Alternate Member on the Planning & Zoning Commission. She stated Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman Tony Capon indicated that Mr. St. Vil was serving well and he requested that Mr. St. Vil be appointed as a Regular Member to fill the vacancy left by Mr. Awrach, noting that he was next in seniority to be moved to a Regular Member. She addressed Minority Representation, noting that the Regular Member Pool, now had 3 Democrats, and 2 Republicans.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Mary McGrattan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums
EXCUSED:	Marshall

2. MOTION to approve a revised "*Town of Ledyard Employee Personnel Handbook*" as presented in the draft dated March 23, 2023.
Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Irwin
Discussion: Councilor Ingalls stated that the Employee Handbook was last updated in the late 1990's and that some of the content has become outdated. She stated this was a comprehensive rewrite of the *Employee Handbook*, noting that it included Policies as an Appendix to the Handbook, allowing for the Polices to be updated from time to time, as needed, without having to rewrite the *Employee Handbook.*

Councilor Ingalls explained that there were Human Resources Guidance Documents that provided direction as to what belonged in an Employee Handbook versus what belonged in an Employee Contract. She stated if there was a discrepancy between the *Employee Handbook* and a Labor Contract that the Labor Contract would supersede, noting the following statement was included in the *Employee Handbook*:

"Employees represented by a Labor Union would be governed by the polices in their collective bargaining agreement to the extent that they differ from the polices outlined in the Employee Handbook."

Councilor Saums commented on the amount of work involved to bring the *Employee Handbook* up to date, and to make sure that it complied with all of the Labor Bargaining Contracts. He stated that he suspected that this was the work of former Administrator of Human Resources Don Steinhoff before he retired earlier this month.

Mayor Allyn stated former Finance Director Marcia Hancock undertook updating the *Employee Handbook*, noting that she worked as a subcontractor during the last six-months, with the oversight of Administrator of Human Resources Don Steinhoff. He stated because the Employee Handbook was so old that an electronic version that they could edit was not available. He stated because the *Employee Handbook* had not been updated since the 1990's there were a number of things that needed to be changed and were changed with this edition.

Councilor Saums stated when he first looked at the draft *Employee Handbook* he questioned where the "track changes" were. However, he stated when he saw the 1990 version, which looked like a photograph, he realized that the Employee Handbook was totally rewritten.

Chairman Dombrowski stated when the Administration Committee first reviewed the draft *Employee Handbook* they had the same question regarding the "track changes". However, he stated it was difficult to red-line a document that was completely new.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT:	APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER:	Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Whit Irwin, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums
EXCUSED:	Marshall

3. MOTION to adopt proposed Amendments to Ordinance #100-016 (rev 1) *"An Ordinance Combining Parks And Recreation Commission and Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard"* as contained in the draft dated February 8, 2023.

DRAFT~~: 1/11/~~ ***2/8/2023*** Ordinance: # 100-016 ***(rev 1)***

AN ORDINANCE COMBINING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISIONAND
SENIOR CITIZENS COMMISSION
FOR THE TOWN OF LEDYARD

Be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Ledyard there is hereby established a *"Parks, ~~and~~ Recreation, and* ***Senior Citizens Commission.***

Section 1. Purpose

(a) The purpose of this Ordinance is to formally combine the Senior Citizens Commission with the Parks and Recreation Commission in the Town of Ledyard. herein, to be known as Ledyard Parks, ~~and~~ Recreation, Senior Citizens Commission.

Combining the duties of the Town Committees/Commissions/Boards that have similar interests into a single commission will provide a financial benefit to the town as it will minimize administrative support by reducing the number of Committees/Commissions/ Boards in town and provide services more effectively.

Combining the two Commissions will provide a financial benefit for Senior Citizens programs because they would be eligible for funding under the Parks & Recreation Capital Account Fund 203 (formerly Fund 8) established by Ordinance #200-009 "An Ordinance Providing for Transfer of Certain Revenue from Real Estate conveyance Tax to Special Town of Ledyard Funds; and in accordance with Ordinance #200-012 "An Ordinance Creating a Municipal Parks and Recreation Capital and Non Non-Recuring Expense Fund for the Town of Ledyard.

(b) The purpose of Ledyard Parks, Recreation**,** and Senior Citizens Commission is to provide services for the senior citizens within budgetary limits; and to provide recreational programs for the general population and manage properties under the administrative control of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Section 2. Authority and Establishment of Commissions

(a) Parks and Recreation Commission

Pursuant to the authority contained in Section 7-148, General Statutes of Connecticut, there is hereby created a Parks and Recreation Commission for the Town of Ledyard.

(b) Senior Citizens Commission

Pursuant to Chapter III, Section 4 of the Charter of the Town Ledyard, there is hereby established a Senior Citizens Commission.

Pursuant to Chapter III, Section 4, of the Town Charter, commencing on the nineteenth day after the effective date of this ordinance, the duties of the Senior Citizens

Commission of the Town of Ledyard as set forth in Ordinance #100-016, shall be discharged in accordance with this Ordinance; and shall hereafter be known as the Ledyard Parks, Recreation, and Senior Citizens Commission.

Section 3. Membership

The *Ledyard Parks, Recreation, and Senior Citizens Commission* shall consist of ***seven (7) regular members and two (2) alternate*** members who shall be electors of the Town of Ledyard and who shall hold no salaried municipal office.

Membership on any other Board, Commission or Committee of the Town of Ledyard shall not preclude membership on the *Ledyard Parks and Recreation and Senior Citizens Commission.*

In making the original appointments under this ordinance, the Town Council shall designate ***three (3) members to serve for three (3) years, three (3) members to serve for two (2) years; three (3) members to serve for one (1) year***. Thereafter, vacancies shall be filled for a three (3) year term.

Section 4. Terms of Appointment

The members of the *Ledyard Parks, Recreation, and Senior Citizens Commission* shall be appointed for a three (3) year term by the Town Council.

Members shall commence to serve their terms immediately upon appointment and shall serve until their successor has qualified or they have been reappointed or removed by the Town Council.

As each of the terms of the members expire, the Town Council shall appoint a successor for a term of three (3) years to fill each vacant position.

Any vacancy on the Commission other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the Town Council.

The Commission shall annually elect a Chairman and Secretary from its members. ***In accordance with General State Statutes of Connecticut Section-1-225 a Regular Meeting schedule shall be set and filed with the Town Clerk before January 31st; of the coming year, and shall be a thirteen (13) month calendar; inclusive of January of the following year***. Special meetings may be called by a majority of the members of said Commission.

Any member of the Commission who is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings and any intervening duly called special meetings shall be considered to have resigned from the Commission and the vacancy shall be filled as hereinbefore provided, except that the Commission may vote to waive the requirements of the section in each case where illness or other extenuating circumstances make it impossible for a member to meet the attendance requirements of this section.

It shall be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Commission to notify the Town Council when a member has not properly performed his/her duties.

Appointment and removal of any member of the *Ledyard Parks and Recreation and Commission Senior Citizens* shall be as provided for in Chapter IV, Section 9, of the Town Charter.

Section 5. Implementation

Within two weeks after the adoption date of this ordinance, all current members of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Ledyard and the current members of the Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard shall indicate to their respective chairman their desire to serve on the Ledyard Parks, Recreation and Senior Citizens Commission.

The respective chairman shall thereafter report to the Town Council the desires of their members. In addition, the respective chairman shall make recommendations to the Town Council regarding present members to serve on the combined commission.

The Town Council shall appoint members to the Ledyard Parks, Recreation, and Senior Citizens Commission no later than the effective date of the Ordinance.

Section 6 Responsibilities and Duties

1. To annually prepare a budget containing its estimates of expenses and revenues to carry out its programs and the purposes of this Ordinance; and to submit the same to the Mayor for inclusion in the annual budget of the Town of Ledyard. When requested, and at least annually, *the Ledyard Parks, Recreation, and Senior Citizens* Commission shall make reports to the Town Council.

2. Shall adopt Rules of Procedure, and establish policies for programs and the operation and use of facilities under the Commission's jurisdiction.

3. To plan the development, improvement and expansion of park lands and recreation facilities and other facilities under the Commission's jurisdiction, including the acquisition, erection, installation, improvement, and replacement of park or recreation facilities and equipment.

4. To develop, establish, improve and coordinate ***recreational*** programs to benefit the ***general*** population in the Town of Ledyard. ***Including*** nutrition, health, social services, transportation and other concerns of Ledyard's senior citizens.

5. To seek federal, state and private funds and may accept any money, gifts or endowment and expend the same for its designated purpose, provided such conditions does not remove any portion of the Commission from the control of the facilities or programs; or in any manner limit the use of the facility or programs to further the purpose of the Commission.

6. To engage such employees as assigned by the Mayor and other contractors hired by the Town of Ledyard to provide programs and services, and to maintain facilities under the Ledyard *Parks, Recreation, **and Senior Citizens** Commission's* administrative control and oversight within the budgetary limits of said Commission.

7. The *Ledyard Parks, Recreation, and **Senior Citizens** Commission* shall serve to represent ***senior citizens*** at town meetings, before the Town Council or before its committees, and if required before other organizations.

Section 7. Severability

If any section, or part of a section, of this Ordinance shall be held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such holding shall not be deemed to invalidate the remaining provisions hereof.

Section 8. ***Cancellation and Amendment of Previous Ordinances***

- ***This Ordinance amends Ordinance #100-016 "An Ordinance Establishing a Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard".***

- ***This Ordinance cancels and supersedes Ordinance #100-014 "An Ordinance Creating A Parks and Recreation Commission for the Town of Ledyard".***

Section 9. Effective Date

In accordance with the Town Charter this ordinance shall become effective on the twenty-first (21st) day after such publication following its final passage.

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on: _____

_____
Kevin J. Dombrowski, Chairman

Approved / Disapproved on: _____

_____
Fred Allyn, III, Mayor

****

Revisions:

Parks and Recreation Commission
Ordinance #12 "*Ordinance Creating a Parks and Recreation Commission for the Town of Ledyard*" Adopted by Town Meeting December 11, 1967; Ordinance #12 "*Ordinance Creating a Parks and Recreation Commission for the Town of Ledyard"* Amended and Adopted December 22, 1972; Ordinance # 137 "*An Ordinance Amending an Ordinance Creating A Parks and Recreation Commission for the Town of Ledyard*" adopted on October 22, 2014; ***Renumbered Ordinance #137 to #100-014 on September 25, 2019 as part of the Twenty-fourth Town Council 2017-2019 Ordinance Update Initiative Project.***

Senior Citizens Commission
Ordinance #58 "*An Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Commission for Senior Citizens for the Town of Ledyard,"* adopted on September 28, 2011 and overrode the Mayor's disapproval/veto on October 12, 2011.–Ordinance #147 "*An Ordinance Amending an Ordinance Establishing a Senior Citizens Commission in the Town of Ledyard*" adopted December 13, 2017; ***Renumbered Ordinance #134 to #100-016 on September 25, 2019 as part of the Twenty-fourth Town Council's 2017-2019 Ordinance Update Initiative Project***.

History:
2023: Ordinance #100-014 "*An Ordinance Creating A Parks and Recreation Commission for the Town of Ledyard*" adopted on October 22, 2014; and Ordinance #100-106 "An Ordinance Establishing a Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard were combined. The duties of both Commissions remained in place and some minor editorials were made throughout the document creating a *Parks and Recreation and* Senior Citizens *Commission.*

Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez
Discussion: Councilor Ingalls stated that combining the Parks & Recreation Commission with the Senior Citizens Commission has been discussed for quit sometime. She stated combining these two Commissions was a good move.

Chairman Dombrowski stated a Public Hearing was held on April 12, 2023 at which public comments were received regarding amendments to Ordinance #100-016 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance Combining Parks And Recreation Commission and Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard".*

It was noted that the Parks & Recreation Department moved from the building on Blonders Boulevard to the Senior Citizens Center on Van Tassel Drive, Gales Ferry, in 2020; and have since been sharing staff and resources between the two Offices. The adoption of the amendments to Ordinance #100-016 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance Combining Parks And Recreation Commission and Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard"* would complete this merger, streamline daily operations, provide financial and space benefits, as well as support additional programs and events.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated Parks & Recreation Chairman Kenneth DiRicco was present this evening if anyone had questions.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER: Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
SECONDER S. Naomi Rodriguez, Town Councilor
AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums
EXCUSED: Marshall

Finance Committee

4. MOTION to accept and appropriate $20,000 to Account #20250101-50000-G0015 (Library Grant Expense) received from *The American Library Association - Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities Grant* to be used to purchase books, programming, and building improvements designed to serve individuals with disabilities.
Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls
Discussion: Councilor Saums stated at their December 14, 2022 meeting the Town Council authorized the Library to apply for a 20,000 *American Library Association - Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities Grant* to be used to purchase books, programming, and building improvements designed to serve individuals with disabilities.

Councilor Saums stated tonight's action was to appropriate the funding to the proper account so they could be expended as intended. He noted Library Director Jennifer Smith was attending remoting this evening if anyone had questions.

Library Director Jennifer Smith she received notification on April 5, 2023 that Ledyard was awarded the Grant in the full amount of the $20,000 requested. She stated as part of this grant process that the Legislative Body (Town Council) was required to formally accept the Grant and authorize the expenditure of the funds by May 5, 2023. She stated that she would be happy to elaborate if anyone had questions.

Mayor Allyn, III, commended Library Director Jennifer Smith noting that she joined Ledyard last summer (2022). He stated Ms. Smith came out of the gate pursuing grant opportunities, noting that she secured the maximum amount allotted under this grant program. He thanked Ms. Smith for her efforts.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums
EXCUSED: Marshall

5. MOTION to adopt a proposed Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget in the amount of $64,540,940 comprised of:

- General Government: $28,632,572
- Board of Education: $35,908,368

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls
Discussion: Councilor Saums stated tonight's meeting packet included the following budget reductions that the Finance Committee made at their April 19, 2023 meeting:

Employee Health Care/Benefits										
Account ID	**Description**	**FY 22/23 Budget**		**FY 23/24 Finance**		**Change - PHN**		**Change - Health Ins.**		**FY 23/24 Finance Cmt Revised 4/19/2023**
10110253-52000	HEALTH CARE	1,052,000.00		1,136,160.00		(56,000.00)		(52,600.00)		1,027,560.00
10110253-52100	HEATLH CARE BOE	5,304,000.00		5,325,000.00				(225,000.00)		5,100,000.00
10110253-52101	HEALTHCARE									

	WAIVERS	259,750.00		285,725.00		(8,500.00)		-		277,225.00
10110253-52310	DEFINED CONTR PLAN	315,000.00		378,000.00		(13,000.00)		-		365,000.00
10110253-52400	SALARY BENEFIT ADJUSTMENT	75,000.00		75,000.00		-		-		75,000.00
10110253-52500	SOCIAL SECURITY	627,544.00		645,000.00		(20,000.00)		-		625,000.00
10110253-52106	HEALTHCARE BOE RETIREES	604,000.00		600,000.00		-		(25,000.00)		575,000.00
Employee Healthcare/ Benefits	**Total 10110253 EMPLOYEE EXPENSES**	**10,517,247.00**		**10,554,428.00**		**(97,500.00)**		**(302,600.00)**		**10,154,328.00**

Councilor Saums stated with these budget reductions the proposed Mil Rate to support the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget was reduced from a projected 1.09 mil rate increase, as presented at the April 17, 2023 Public Hearing, to a 0.74 mil rate increase. He stated these adjustments were a significant reductions and were not taken lightly.

Councilor Saums went on to explain the reductions in the Healthcare Expenses was a result of changing from the current CT State Partnership 2.0 Plan (7% increase) to United Healthcare (3%). He stated changing healthcare plans required a lot of work for both the General Government and the Board of Education, noting that they had to work with all of the affected unions, explaining that per their Labor Agreements that the Town has to provide a healthcare plan that was equal to; or better than the one they currently had.

Councilor Saums continued by addressing the budget reductions for the Ledyard Public Health Nursing. He explained that the Finance Committee has discussed Ledyard Public Health Nurse Budget at length throughout this year's budget preparation, as they have done during the past few year's budget preparation cycles. He stated the reason they were discontinuing the Ledyard Visiting Nurses was not because they do not want it; or they do not think it was a good thing. He stated they think the Ledyard Visiting Nurses (LVNA) was a great thing; however, he stated including employee health benefits that the town has been losing money to provide the LVNA services since the 2018 fiscal year; and that these loses have gone up every year. He stated this year the loses were significant enough that it would have affected the town's mil rate, and the town's ability to pay. He stated the Finance Committee and the entire Town Council appreciated the work that the LVNA has done over the years, noting that they were one of the Top 25 Visiting Nurse Agencies in the country. He stated the reason the LVNA was not returning money to the town, as they once did, was because large healthcare organizations control where patients were receiving their home healthcare services from, explaining that they do not tell people that they had a choice. He stated as much as the town has tried to get the word out to residents that the patient has a choice in the selection of their home healthcare provider, and that they can ask for the LVNA to call on them, that the patients were receiving services from elsewhere. He stated this trend has been going on for years; and that they were sorry that this has been the case. He stated they appreciated all that the LVNA has done over the years, including the work of Nursing Director Karen Goetchuis.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 8 - 0
MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums
EXCUSED: Marshall

<u>General Discussion</u>

6. Discuss Work Session Items as time permits.- None.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Rodriguez moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Paul

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

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

I, Kevin J. Dombrowski, 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 April 26, 2023.

_____
Kevin J. Dombrowski, Chairman