



TOWN OF LEDYARD

CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman Kevin J. Dombrowski

MINUTES
LEDARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 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	Remote
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	Excused	
William Saums	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person

- IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS – None.

- V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS – None.

- IV. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

- VI. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Saums stated “Happy Spring!”

- VII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Minutes of March 22, 2023
Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez

VOTE: 7 – 0 Approved and so declared

- IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Dombrowski stated a Communications List has been provided. He noted the referrals listed.

COMMUNICATIONS LISTING FOR APRIL 12, 2023

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE

1. Awrach email ltr dated 3/23/2023 re: Resign Planning & Zoning Commission
2. Mr. Baily/Chief Rich email thread dated 3/23/2023 re: Dangerous Traffic – Military Highway

3. WPCA Action ltr dated 3/30/2023 re: Meeting 3/28/2023
4. Planning & Zoning Chairman email dated 3/30/2023 re: Request Alternate Member St. Vil be appointed as Regular Member
5. Agricultural Commission ltr dated 4/4/2023 re: Clark Farm – Recommend Agricultural Use be preserved

OUT GOING CORRESPONDENCE

1. Admin Asst ltr to Mayor dated 03/23/2023 re: Action ltr. Town Council Regular Meeting of March 22, 2023.
2. LTC ltr to S. Godino dated 3/23/2023 re: Reappointed to Cemetery Committee
3. LTC ltr to V. Godino dated 3/23/2023 re: Reappointed to Cemetery Committee
4. LTC ltr to Krug dated 3/23/2023 re: Appointed to Cemetery Committee – Regular Member
5. LTC ltr to Krug dated 3/23/2023 re: Appointed to Cemetery Committee – Regular Member
6. LTC ltr to Marshall dated 3/23/2023 re: Appointed to Cemetery Committee – Alternate Member
7. LTC ltr to Krug dated 3/23/2023 re: Appointed to Cemetery Committee – Regular Member
8. LTC ltr to Schneider dated 3/23/2023 re: Reappointed to Permanent Municipal Building Cmt (PMBC)
9. LTC ltr to Peterson dated 3/23/2023 re: Reappointed to Permanent Municipal Building Cmt (PMBC)
10. LTC ltr to Juber dated 3/23/2023 re: Reappointed to Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA)
11. LTC ltr to Jones dated 3/23/2023 re: Reappointed to Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA)
12. LTC ltr to Norris dated 3/23/2023 re: Reappointed to Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA)
13. LTC ltr to S. Vincent dated 3/23/2023 re: Appointed to Ledyard Beautification Cemetery Committee
14. LTC ltr to Lamb dated 3/23/2023 re: Appointed to Historic District Commission Committee
15. LTC ltr to Board of Education dated 3/23/2023 re: Request Nominations for Budget to Transform the Budget Process Committee
16. LTC ltr to DTC & RTC dated 3/23/2023 re: Request Nominations for Budget to Transform the Budget Process Committee

NOTICE OF AGENDAS

1. Housing Authority Agenda 4/3/2023
2. Permanent Municipal Building Cmt Agenda 4/3/2023
3. Economic Development Commission Agenda 4/4/2023
4. Ledyard Beautification Cmt Agenda 4/4/2023
5. Inland Wetland & Water Courses Commission Agenda 4/4/2023
6. Farmers Market Committee Agenda 4/5/2023
7. Conservation Commission Agenda 4/11/2023
8. Cemetery Committee Agenda 4/11/2023
9. Planning & Zoning Agenda 4/13/2023
10. Finance Cmt Agenda 4/5/2023
11. LUPPW Cmt Agenda 4/3/2023
12. Admin Cmt Agenda 4/12/2023
13. Public Hearing Agenda 4/12/2023
14. Town Council Agenda 4/12/2023

MINUTES

1. Housing Authority Minutes 3/6/2023
2. Permanent Municipal Building Cmt Minutes 3/6/2023
3. Economic Development Commission Minutes 3/7/2023
4. Ledyard Beautification Cmt Minutes 2/7/2023

5. Inland Wetland & Water Courses Commission Minutes 3/7/2023
6. Farmers Market Committee Minutes 3/1/2023
7. Cemetery Cmt Minutes 2/21/2023
8. Conservation Commission Minutes 3/14/2023
9. Planning & Zoning Minutes 3/9/2023
10. Finance Cmt Sp. Minutes 3/21/2023
11. Budget Work Session Minutes 3/9/2023; 3/13/2023; 3/20/2023
12. LUPPW Cmt Minutes 3/6/2023
13. Admin Cmt Minutes a 3/8/2023
14. Town Council Minutes 3/8/2023

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Board of Education ltr dated 4/3/2023 re: Year-to-Date Report

REFERRALS

Administration Committee

1. Awrach email ltr dated 3/23/2023 re: Resign Planning & Zoning Commission
2. Planning & Zoning Chairman email dated 3/30/2023 re: Request Alternate Member St. Vil be appointed as Regular Member

X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee

Councilor Ingalls stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening and addressed the following: (1) Met the new Administrator of Human Resources Marisa Rodriguez; (2) Planning & Zoning Commission – The Committee recommended moving Alternate Member Mr. St. Vil to a Regular Member; and (3) Employee Handbook Update – The Committee reviewed the Employee Handbook which had not been updated since the 1990's and forwarded it to the Town Council's April 26, 2023 meeting for consideration/action.

Community Relations Committee

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee has not met since the last Town Council meeting. He stated the Committee will be meeting on April 19, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. and he invited residents to attend.

Finance Committee

Councilor Saums stated the Finance Committee met on April 5, 2023 and he noted in addition to the items on tonight's Agenda that the Committee also discussed the following: (1) Board of Education Roof Projects Bid Waiver – Councilor Saums stated the Committee reviewed a request from the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) to grant a bid waiver to STV Construction Inc., because only two proposals were received in response to Bid #LPS 23-01 (Owner's Representative Services for Select Capital Projects). He explained that the PMBC had recommended STV Construction Inc., (original proposal \$141,470) over Colliers Project Leaders (\$63,301), who was currently working with the PMBC and the Board of Education to close out the Schools Consolidation/Improvement Projects (Middle School & Gallup Hill School) in preparation for the State's Project Audit which was required for the town to receive their Grant Reimbursement funding. He stated STV Construction Inc., proposed having a person on-site throughout the roof projects (Board of Education Central Office and Juliet W. Long School); however, Colliers Project Leaders did not think a full-time inspector on-site was necessary. He stated the Finance Committee expressed concern that the PMBC negotiated a lower price with STV Construction Inc., but that did not ask Colliers Project Leaders to provide a cost update to have a person on-site full-time, which the Finance Committee agreed was a good idea. He stated for these reasons the Finance Committee withdrew the motion, noting that the PMBC would ask Colliers Project Leaders to submit a bid for services similar to those proposed by STV Construction Inc., to provide a fair and equitable process. He stated the Finance Committee would then reconsider a bid waiver for Bid #LPS 23-01 (Owner's Representative

Services for Select Capital Projects) thereafter; (2) Bottle Bill Surcharge Revenues – Councilor Saums stated the Finance Committee discussed ideas on how to spend the revenues received from Public Act No.21-58 “*An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management*” in accordance with “*Resolution Regarding Revenues Received from Beverage Container Surcharges*” adopted on June 8, 2022. He stated the ideas included the following: (a) Pay residents 0.25 cents per nip bottle they pick-up from the roads, until the money was used up; (b) Community Roadside Clean-up Day that would include a contest for various categories such as Strangest Item Collected, Most Nip Bottles Collected, etc. He stated all the nip bottles would need to be in see thru bags that would be provided by Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recovery Authority (SCRRRA) to provide payment; or win a competition; (c) Delivering the bags of nip bottles to Harford to make a statement about the problem of nip bottles was mentioned. Councilor Saums stated the ideas were tabled for further discussion; (3) National Opioid Settlement Payments – Councilor Saums the Committee also discussed ideas on how to use the revenues received from the National Opioid Settlement to combat opioid addiction, which included donating some funding to the Ledyard Prevention Coalition, Ledyard Public Health Nursing; Ledyard Youth Services for Addiction Counselors; Buying Narcan; Funding Counselors for Ledyard Public Schools; and Donating Funds to Organizations Outside Ledyard; (4) Ledyard Visiting Nurse Agency (LVNA) – Councilor Saums stated the Committee discussed the financial viability of the LVNA, which was once a revenue source for the town, but after several years of losses, due to large healthcare organizations directing patients to use their own visiting nursing services, without mentioning Ledyard VNA as an option, that revenue gains have become losses, with the expenditures out pacing revenues. He stated including the cost of benefits that the town has lost money providing visiting nurse services since Fiscal Year 2018/2019. He stated the Mayor has met with several large healthcare organizations without success to encourage them to refer patients to Ledyard VNA; however, none have committed to doing so. He stated the projected losses for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 were \$355,365 (with employee benefits calculated in). He stated the Town Council had a difficult decision to make for the upcoming budget cycle (fy 23/23) because Ledyard VNA provided excellent service to residents, yet fewer and fewer residents were aware of these services as each year passes.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor Paul stated the LUPPW Committee met on April 3, 2023 and in addition to the item on tonight’s agenda the Committee continued its work to update the Assignment of Administrative Oversight of Town-Owned and Town-Leased Properties. He stated the Committee planned to finalize the List at their May 1, 2023 and forward it to the Town Council for action.

Water Pollution Control Authority

Councilor Saums stated the WPCA met on April 28, 2023 and addressed the following: (1) Connecticut Community Challenge Grant Program – The WPCA approved to apply for the Connecticut Community Challenge Grant Program for both the Ledyard Center Sewer Extension Project and for a watermain on Baldwin Hill Road, which had at least one resident with a dry well; and that more residents would likely see their go dry in the future; (2) Environmental Protection Agency Public Water Supply Recommendations – The WPCA reviewed EPA recommendations for limiting six PFA Chemicals and other Chemicals in public water supplies. The proposed rules would require public systems to monitor for these chemicals and notify the public of the PFA Chemicals levels to reduce the level of PFA Chemicals in drinking water if they exceed the proposed standards. Councilor Saums stated that Groton Utilities samples the Reservoir Water and has found no evidence of the PFA Chemicals in the water. However, it was believed that water treatment could potentially add PFA Chemicals to public water supplies. He stated that additional work was being done on the new standards and that the EPA has advised that drinking water should contain no more than .004 parts per trillion of PFA Chemicals; and no more than .02 parts of another PFA Chemical. He noted that the EPA previously advised that drinking water contain no more 70 parts per trillion. He stated it was believed that there was no current methods or technology available to measure these levels; (3) Solar Panels – Wastewater Treatment Facility - Town Farm Road – The Town Attorney was continuing to gather data regarding the solar panel issue; (4) Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA) Easement – Councilor Saums stated there has been no further action by SCWA regarding their request for an easement on town property to renew their Ledyard Center Well; (5) Multi-Model Use Path and Sewer Line Project – There were no specifications in the Multi-Model Use Path and Sewer Line Project Plan for future construction for the Habitat of Humanity’s Plan to construct 40-homes on Colby Drive. Councilor Saums explained that the issue was that Habit for Humanity did not have the funding at this time to pay for the installation of a stub. He also stated that it

was mentioned that the Plans did not include a stub for the property behind the former Ledyard Center School. He stated when the Route 117 Project was done that a lot of thought went into where stubs would be needed. However, he stated this type of planning has not been done on this sewer line extension project. He suggested a solution would be to install the two stubs and place a lien on the properties, which the property owner could pay at a later time. However, he stated the town did not have the money to put in the two stubs. Mayor Allyn, III, stated he has discussed the installation of the stubs with WPCA Chairman Ed Lynch, noting that he believed installing the stubs during the construction and placing an assessment lien on the properties would be the best approach to avoid having to dig up brand new pavement (sewer project) and new sidewalks (multi model pathway) that would be completed as part of these \$3 million Projects. He stated both Developers were going to need the sewer line, therefore, he did not think they would take issue with the town installing the stubs and placing an assessment lien on the properties; (6) Cost-of-Service Study – Councilor Saums stated Groton Utilities has offered to conduct a Cost-of-Service Study, which would begin with a Financial Study and a Projection specific to the Revenue Requirements for the WPCA Water and Sewer Systems. From there Groton Utilities would work with the WPCA to develop a Rate Structure and Rate Track to meet the revenue requirements for both long and short-term. The WPCA would be required to pay for the cost of an external consultant for the Study He stated this work would require a signification time commitment from the Town’s Finance Department to support the Cost-of-Service Study. He stated the WPCA has requested that Groton Utilities provide a time and cost proposal for the Cost-of-Service Study. Councilor Saums explained setting rates was a complex process especially between water and sewer because they cannot measure what was going into the sewer. He stated the Cost of Services Study was a good idea, noting that although they could not make the WPCA profitable, that they could make it more cost effective, which would stave off future rate increases; (7) WPCA Water and Sewer Assets – Councilor Saums stated the WPCA has not received any further communication from Groton Utilities regarding their interest to purchase the Town of Ledyard’s water and sewer assets.

Councilor Ingalls addressed Groton Utilities’ interest to purchase the Town’s water and sewer assets and she questioned the date of the Groton Utilities communication. Councilor Saums stated the last communication the WPCA received from Groton Utilities regarding their interest to purchase Ledyard’s water and sewer assets was around the beginning of this calendar year (2023). He went on to explain that the State wanted regional consolidation between utilities, noting that there were some very small utilities throughout the state. He stated as Ledyard saw when Groton Utilities began to maintain their systems they gained a number of efficiencies, better service, fewer breaks, and a brand-new water treatment plant, etc. He stated the larger the utility the more they could invest and the better service they could provide. He stated that Groton Utilities also proposed conducting the Cost-of-Service Study, noting that the two (purchasing the water and sewer assets and the study) could be connected, stating that it would be helpful to know the value of Ledyard’s assets/system.

Councilor McGrattan questioned the cost for the Cost-of-Service Study. Councilor Saums stated that Groton Utilities would be providing the WPCA a proposal for the cost of the Cost-of-Service Study and the amount of time that would be required from the Finance Department. Mayor Allyn, III, stated the timing of the work to assist with the Cost-of-Service Study would also be important, noting that they would not want to be putting more demands on the Finance Department during the Annual Audit work, or during the Annual Budget preparation. Therefore, he stated during the summer months would probably be the best time, if they could move that quickly on the Cost-of-Service Study.

Economic Development Commission

Councilor Paul stated the EDC met on April 4, 2023 and they discussed the following: (1) Business Directory- Councilor Paul stated the Directory was nearly complete and that it looked awesome; noting that they were working on some final touches such as the businesses that fall into two classifications, etc.; (2) Attracting Businesses to Ledyard – Curb Appeal Plan – Councilor Paul stated the EDC discussed the importance to clean up blighted properties. He stated Land Use Director Juliet Hodge suggested publicizing Ledyard’s new Zoning Regulations on the town’s website or on social media sites, noting that it would help developers know what they could do in Ledyard; (3) Yale-Harvard Regatta June 10, 2023 – Councilor Paul stated the EDC was working on the Yale-Harvard Regatta Festival, noting that there would be a lot of Food Trucks, etc.

Agricultural Commission

Councilor Rodriguez stated Agricultural Commission Chairman Bruce Garstka sent an e-mail dated April 4, 2023 to the Mayor, Town Council and other Land Use Commissions asking that they support the preservation of the Clark Farm Property for continued agricultural use.

Chairman Dombrowski stated the Town Council would take the Agricultural Commissions request under advisement.

Farmers' Market Committee

Councilor Irwin stated the Farmers' Market Committee met on April 5, 2023 and he noted that they were finalizing plans for the 2023 Summer Market Season. He stated the Market Kick-Off was scheduled for Wednesday, June 7, 2023 and would once again be held at the Lower Town Green. He stated the Farmers' Market Committee had a lot of great things planned for this year and that they expected to have great attendance again this summer.

Board of Education

Councilor Irwin stated the Board of Education met on April 5, 2023 and they reviewed their Policy Concerning Extra Curricular Activities for Ledyard School Age Residents attending Magnet Schools, Home Schooling, and other Non-Traditional Schooling to keep the access to the extracurricular activities equitable for all residents and students throughout the magnet schools.

Chairman Dombrowski noted a newspaper article reporting that Norwich was looking to remove several neighboring schools as an option for Norwich students to attend, noting that Ledyard Public Schools was among the towns listed. He stated for the Norwich students who were already attending Ledyard High School that they would continue until they graduated; and that Norwich students who were planning to begin attending Ledyard High School in the Fall of 2023 that they would be allowed to attend for the four years. He stated the option to select other schools would be discontinued for the school year starting in the Fall of 2024, noting that he believed this was a financial decision made by the Norwich Board of Education. He also stated Ledyard's Agri-Science (Vo-Ag) Program would continue to be an option for Norwich students.

Youth and Social Services Board

Councilor McGrattan stated the Social Services Board met on March 21, 2023 and addressed the following: (1) Established a Scholarship Fund for the Parks & Recreation Summer Camp Program - Councilor McGrattan stated the funds would be used to help support children in-need attend the Parks & Recreation Summer Camp. Donations can be mailed to the Town Hall or made via the on-line portal.

Ledyard Housing Authority

Councilor McGrattan stated the improvement/renovation work on the Kings Corner Manor Senior Housing Facility has begun. The heating/cooling mini-splits were in, the concrete work to hold the condensers for the mini-splits was being done outside, and the outside work was being done on walkways in front of the community building and under the carports.

Conservation Commission

Councilor McGrattan stated the Conservation Commission met on April 11, 2023. She reported that on Saturday, April 15, 2023 Team Rubicon and the Conservation Commission would be clearing the invasive species along the Burton Trail, which was located behind the High School. She explained that Team Rubicon was a Humanitarian Organization that was comprised of 70% veterans, that help communities during disasters and with other projects such as this one. She stated Team Rubicon contacted Conservation Commission Chairman Michael Marelli and offered their help.

Ledyard Beautification Committee

Councilor Ingalls stated the Beautification Committee met on April 4, 2023 and she noted most of the Committee Members were new and so the Committee was just getting their feet under them, stating that they had a lot of energy and good ideas. She stated the Committee discussed the Ledyard Center Streetlight Banners noting that they were doing a final review/approval of the photographs before sending them to the printer for the banners.

Councilor Rodriguez stated that she also attended the Beautification Committee noting that the Committee decided to eliminate the flowerpots that were placed in front of the Town Hall, the Annex Building, the Police Department, and the Senior Citizens Center. Therefore, she stated that she contacted the Garden Club to see if they would like to take over the flowerpots, noting that Executive Assistant Kristen Chapman, and Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher would take care of the flowerpots in front of their buildings. She stated that she has not heard back from the Garden Club yet. Councilor Ingalls stated the Beautification Committee had questions about watering the flowerpots and storing the flowerpots. Councilor Rodriguez stated Ms. Chapman, Ms. Maher and Ms. Stammel have been watering the flowerpots outside their buildings for many years; and she stated that they all planned to continue to do that.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Streetlight Banners – Ledyard Center – Mayor Allyn stated today he was talking Public Works Building & Grounds Supervisor Shawn Ruszczyk about hanging the Streetlight Banners for the summer. He stated Mr. Ruszczyk explained because the wreaths were not the same size as the banners, that they had adjust the brackets each year to accommodate the wreaths and that it compromised and weakened the brackets. He stated Mr. Ruszczyk suggested that rather than use the wreaths for the holiday season that they get perforated banners with something festive printed on them such as wreaths, or poinsettias, etc.; (2) Schools Consolidation/ Improvement Projects (Middle School & Gallup Hill School) – Mayor Allyn noted a few weeks ago he sent an email to the State to: (a) express the town's frustration regarding the State's release of the grant reimbursement funding for the School(s) Project(s); and (b) requested a meeting because Ledyard has been waiting a very long time for the Grant Reimbursement funding. He stated since Ledyard began the School(s) Consolidation/ Improvement Project(s) (Middle School & Gallup Hill School) that the State has had a turnover in the Commissioner seat twice. He stated the Acting Commissioner responded to his email stating that they would review Ledyard's paperwork as soon as they received that they would pay the town as soon as possible, less the retainage. He stated the Commissioner informed him that it could take 5 – 6-years to receive the retainage; therefore, Mayor Allyn explained that the town would have to continue to carry the retainage using Short-Term Borrowing. He went on to report that Colliers Project Leaders, the consultant who has been working with the Permanent Municipal Building Committee and the Board of Education, submitted the final closeout paperwork to the State for the School(s) Project(s). He stated the good news was that the town should be receiving State Grant Reimbursement in the amount of \$9 - \$10 million very shortly; (3) Long Pond Dam Watershed Project – Mayor Allyn stated in response to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) (Whitford Brook Watershed Infrastructure Improvements -1) Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin, a Planner from Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) Planner, and someone from Southeastern CT Stormwater and Climate Resilience Agency (SERCA) interviewed the Engineering Firms that submitted proposals. He stated all the Engineering Firms interviewed well. He stated the next step in the process was to issue a Request for Qualifications for the project; (4) Administrator of Human Resources – Mayor Allyn stated Ms. Marisa Rodriguez started as the town's new Administrator of Human Resources on Monday, noting that after twelve years of service that Mr. Don Steinhoff retired on April 6, 2023; (5) 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway – Mayor Allyn stated the Lead and Asbestos Survey went well, noting that there was no asbestos in the house. He stated the only asbestos that was on the house was the black tar mastic that was used to bond between the chimney and the flashing. He stated a contractor would be hired to remove the tar mastic and the well would be filled in by professionals per Ledge Light Health District. He went on to explain that next week they would conduct a demolition review with a contractor and per the Demolition Rules the Town issue a *Register Letter Notice to Abutters*, to inform them about the pending Demolition Permit.. He stated there was only one abutting property owner, noting the town owning the other abutting properties; (6) Taxation on Indian Lands – Mayor Allyn stated the State Legislature has proposed a Working Group to report on taxation issues on Indian Lands which would involve the both the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN) Chairman, and Mohegan Sun Tribe Chairman, Montville Mayor, himself and six members of the State Legislature. He stated the Working Group would meet twice a month in Harford for six-months. He stated that he has expressed his concern to their Legislators questioning the reason they were trying to legislate something that has already been judicially resolved; (7) American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) Projects Update – Mayor Allyn stated eleven Projects have been completed; eleven Projects were underway (in-process); and ten Projects have not been started. He stated

they were reviewing the ARPA projects that were currently in-process relative to the amount of ARPA Funding that would be left that could be used for other ARPA Projects; (8) Legislative Session – Mayor Allyn noted there were two Bills remaining regarding Early Voting: (a) House Bill 5004 would require 14-days of Early Voting for Regular Elections; 4-days of Early Voting for Referendum and Special Elections. The sealed ballots would be delivered to the polling location between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. where they would be opened and fed into the tabulator machines. The Early Voting location had to be at the same location thru out the required days and the specified hours which included Saturdays and Sundays were as follows: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily; and on the Wednesday and Thursday prior to Election Day the Early Voting hours would be 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mayor Allyn stated the Early Voting would be a partially unfunded mandate explaining the State has appeared to agree to provide funding to Municipalities for the added costs for two-years. He stated after the two-years that the town would need to include the expenses in their budget for the Early Voting, which would include poll worker salaries, meals and other related expenses. He stated because of the size of Ledyard they would only need to have one Early Voting location. He stated municipalities with more than 20,000 people would be required to have two Early Voting locations; (b) Senate Bill 1064 would require 14-days of Early Voting for Regular Elections; 10-days of Early Voting for Referendum and Special Elections. Mayor Allyn continued by noting other Bills that were being considered as follows: (a) Senate Bill 1240 - Mil Rate Tax Cap - would apply to all commercial and industrial properties. Mayor Allyn 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 that the State would create a New Revenue Sharing Account to cover the loss of revenues between the Mil Rate Tax Cap and the Municipalities Mil Rate.. He went on to state that he did not foresee the State having enough money in the New Revenue Sharing Account to cover these costs noting that some municipalities such as Hartford had a mil rate of 74. Therefore, he stated the New Revenue Sharing Account would become depleted very quickly; (b) Senate Bill 1242 – Waste Management – would impose a \$5.00 per ton surcharge for all waste that originated from your town that would be hauled out of state. Mayor Allyn noted the State was planning to haul 800,000 – 900,000 tons of waste out of Connecticut to landfills in Pennsylvania and Ohio. He stated if the waste does not go to the incinerator that the Municipality would be required to pay the \$5.00 surcharge per ton and a \$2.00 in-State charge. He stated in speaking to Ledyard's Legislators today that their concerns regarding Senate Bill 1242 was that the money collected would go into the General Fund, and would not be doing anything to remedy the problem the State had with the disposal of the waste stream. He stated that there was still a lot of time remaining in this Legislative Session and that a lot could still happen. He stated that he would continue to keep the Town Council informed on these issues.

Questions to the Mayor -

Councilor Rodriguez addressed the Early Voting Bills noting that she thought initially there were four different Bills, therefore, she questioned what happened to the other proposed Bills. Mayor Allyn explained as the Bills come out of Committee and they get more sponsors to sign-on that those Bills continue to advance. He stated out of the three proposed Bills that there were two Early Voting Bills that came “*Joint Favorable*” noting that both of the Bills required 14-days of Early Voting; one Bill (House Bill 5004) included 4-days of Early Voting for Referendums and Special Elections and the other Bill (Senate Bill 1064) included 10-days of Early Voting for Referendums and Special Elections. He stated municipalities do not know how they could accommodate 10-days for of Early Voting for Referendums and Special Elections. He noted as an example Ledyard's Budget Process, explaining that in the event that the townspeople do not approve the initial budget that they would have to post a 10-day advanced notice for voting again. He explained that the Legislative Session was scheduled to end on June 5, 2023 and that if an Early Voting Bill were to be approved, that it would be implemented for the November, 2023 this Fall.

Chairman Dombrowski addressed the two Early Voting Bills, and he stated per the Town Charter that the Annual Town Meeting for the Budget adjourned to a vote on the voting machines the following day. He stated should the State approve an Early Voting Bill that Ledyard would need to change their Charter to comply with the Early Voting requirements. Mayor Allyn stated the Legislative Session was scheduled to end on June 5, 2023, noting that if a Bill was approved it would be implemented for the November 2023 Election. However, he explained for Special Elections and Referendums that implementation of the new Early Voting Requirements would be delay to after January 1, 2024.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain should House Bill 5004 (Early Voting) be approved by the State Legislature that they already had the language written to amend the Connecticut Constitution and the State Statues to allow the Early Voting. He commented that it was premature to have this work done so far in advance since the House Bill had not yet been voted on. Chairman Dombrowski stated the Legislature would have to have the language ready to vote on very quickly to amend the Connecticut Constitution and the State Statutes in order to support Early Voting Requirements for the November, 2023 Election.

Chairman Dombrowski addressed Senate Bill 1240 - Mil Rate Tax Cap on Commercial and Industrial Property, noting that Apartment Buildings were considered commercial property. He stated this issue was bigger than just commercial properties such as a Better Value Store or Ocean State Job Lot Store. He went on to note that most of the properties in Hartford, New Haven, New London, etc. were rental properties, therefore, he stated as Mayor Allyn mentioned earlier, that he also had concerns that the New Special Revenue Account would become depleted quickly. He commented that the Mil Rate Tax Cap may be part of the “*Affordable Housing initiative*” to drive people away from single family homes. He stated by the time they get to a small town like Ledyard, that there would not be enough funding in the New Special Revenue Account for the State to provide 100% of the delta between the local mil rate and the mil tax cap mil rate, which would mean the tax burden was going to be on single family homeowner. Councilor Saums stated that this would make buying single family homes for Short-Term Rental/Commercial Use a good idea, which would then eat up Affordable Housing.

Mayor Allyn stated the proposed Bills he reported on this evening were the Bills that came of Committee as “*Joint Favorable*” and were now being reviewed by the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA). He stated hopefully the Office of Fiscal Analysis would show the Legislature the impact the proposed Mil Rate Tax Cap on Commercial and Industrial Property would be; and it would derail the Bill. However, he stated it was concerning when a proposed Bill comes out of Committee *Joint Favorable* and seemed to be moving ahead.

XII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT CALENDAR

- *1. MOTION to approve appropriation from the receipt of sales of vehicles and equipment through GovDeals in the total amount of \$11,300 to the Public Works Small Truck CNR Account 21040101-57313.
- *2. MOTION to approve one tax refund in the amount of \$5,085.18; exceeding \$2,400.00 in accordance with tax collector department procedures.

James & Valerie Hazlin - Double Payment - \$5,085.18

Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Saums

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0

MOVER: Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor

SECONDER Bill Saums, Town Councilor

AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Saums

EXCUSED: Marshall, Ryan

Councilor Saums noted Item #1 on the Consent Calendar stating that the town received \$11,300 from the GovDeals on-line auction sale for the 2011 Ford E350 Van, which was formerly the Public Works Department Buildings & Grounds services vehicle. He commented that this was a great deal. Mayor Allyn stated the Van had a lot of bidding activity on it, noting that currently there has been a lot of interest in used vehicles.

Finance Committee

3. MOTION to approve the following proposed project to be eligible for Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) tax credits.

- The ARC of Eastern Connecticut to replace windows at the Group Residence located at 1671 Center Groton Road, Ledyard estimated cost \$26,872.00.

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums stated a Public Hearing was held earlier this evening at which *The Arc of Eastern Connecticut* Penny Newbury, Director of Grants and Communications, presented their proposed project to replace the windows at their group residence located at 1671 Center Groton Road, Ledyard. He stated the Group Home provided round the clock support to six clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities, noting that some have limited mobility and/or were older. He stated that the windows were original to the building and needed to be replaced.

Councilor Saums provided some background noting that *The Arc of Eastern Connecticut*, was a 501(c) non-profit organization that serves to advocate and support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the entire region. He explained as part of the NAA Project Application that the Non-Profit Organization was required to seek support from the town in which the project would be done. He stated there was no cost to the town except for the cost to hold a Public Hearing, which they did earlier this evening; and to take a vote to support the project.

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0

MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor

SECONDER Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor

AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Saums

EXCUSED: Marshall, Ryan

4. MOTION to authorize the Mayor to submit a Grant Application to Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 in the amount of \$14,120 to be used to increase one Van Driver to full-time; with a local match \$8,000 to come from Account# 10130501-51800 (Part-time Wages).

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums stated that Senior Citizens Director Scott Johnson Jr., was present this evening and asked Mr. Johnson to explain this request.

Senior Citizens Director Scott Johnson Jr., explained that the Senior Citizens Center has seen an increase in the demand for transportation services. He stated making one of the Van Drivers full-time would allow the Senior Citizens Center to increase their service hours and accommodate more medical rides. He stated should the merger of the Senior Citizens Commission and the Parks & Recreation Commission move forward, that he had initially proposed moving the funds (\$14,000) from the Community Health & Welfare Programs Account into the Van Driver line to cover the cost for the increased full-time hours. He explained by merging the Senior Citizens with the Parks & Recreation that the revenues from the Senior Programs, that were currently going into the General Fund, would go into the Parks & Recreation Special Revenue Account and the Senior Citizens Programs would then become self-sufficient. However, he stated if the town received the Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 Grant funding that they would be able to increase the Van Driver's hours to full-time next year without having to use the Senior Citizens Community Health & Welfare Program funds.

Mr. Johnson went on to explain that \$8,000 has been included in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget for the Van Driver, which they could use for the town's local match to receive the grant funding. He stated the town would be eligible to apply/receive the Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 Grant for three consecutive years with the percentage of the funding slightly decreasing each year (85%; 80%; 75%). However, he stated once the three-year grant funding ended that the town would take on the entire cost for the full-time Van Driver. He stated it would be the Town Council's decision to apply for the grant and defer the cost to increase one of the part-time van drivers to full-time; or not to apply for the grant and fully fund the increased hours for the full-time van driver, while they had the \$14,000 available in the Community Health

& Welfare Program Account which could be transferred into the Van Driver Account for next year (fy 2/24). However, he stated by moving the \$14,000 from Community Health & Welfare Program Account that they would lose the Senior Program Revenues. He stated if they applied and received the Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 Grant Funding that it would allow the town to ease into fully funding the full-time van driver over a 3 to 4-year period.

Chairman Dombrowski noted as mentioned during the Public Hearing earlier this evening regarding proposed Amendments to Ordinance #100-016 (rev 1) *“An Ordinance Combining Parks And Recreation Commission and Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard”* that the merger of the two Commissions was independent of the operational costs.

Chairman Dombrowski continued by addressing the funding to increase one part-time Van Driver to full-time. He stated based on Mr. Johnson’s description that it sounded like they were doing shell game where they were moving \$14,000 from one account to another account to pay for a full-time van driver. However, he stated because they were artificially filling what they were taking out of the budget with grant funding to pay for the additional full-time hours; that the following year the town would have to pay the entire cost for the full-time van driver. He stated that he did like paying for salaries with grant funding because the next year the town would be responsible to pay the full cost of the salary. He stated although it would look better this year, that the long-term the town would have to pay for the entire salary the following year.

Councilor Saums stated that they had the following options:

- Apply for the Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 this year;
- Apply for the Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 for the following two years with a decrease in grant funding;
- If the town does not receive the grant funding for the following years they could reduce the one full-time Van Driver back to part-time.

Chairman Dombrowski stated he intended to vote “No” on this Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 Grant Application to support the additional hours to increase one Van Driver from part-time to full-time for the follow reasons:

- Funding was already available in the budget to pay to increase one of the Van Drivers to full-time.
- A full-time Van Driver was needed.
- The budget would remain consistent in the following years to keep the full-time Van Driver.
- The revenues received from Senior Citizens Health and Welfare Program would be going into the Parks & Recreation Special Revenue Fund and not into the General Fund.

Mr. Johnson stated because the \$14,000 was already in the budget (fy 23/24) to increase one Van Driver to full-time that he was now leaning toward not applying for the grant. He stated if they cut the \$14,000 out of the budget and fill it with the grant funding, as Chairman Dombrowski stated, that the following year’s budget (fy 24/25) would need to be increased to cover the cost. He also explained in continuing to review the Application and subsequent reporting requirements for Senior Resources Agency on Aging -Title 3 Grant Program that he was not sure if receiving this grant funding would be worth the time and resources needed to comply with the month reporting.

VOTE: 0 - 7 Motion Failed

Chairman Dombrowski referred the funding to increase one Van Driver to full-time back to the Finance Committee.

Councilor Saums thanked Mr. Johnson for all the work he put into this proposal

RESULT: FAILED 0 - 7

MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor

SECONDER Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor

AYES:

NAYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Saums

EXCUSED: Marshall, Ryan

5. MOTION to authorize overspending Account #10110205-53610 (Specialty Approved Counsel) through June 30, 2023.

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums stated that the Specialty Approved Counsel Account covered labor attorney fees, land use attorney fees, tax attorney fees and other specialty counsel. He stated the Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget included \$30,000 for these expenses. He stated to date the Account had an expended balance of \$31,086; which did not include the outstanding invoices for February from both Shipman & Goodwin (labor); and Fahey & Landolina (land use).

Councilor Saums explained that the Land Use Department incurred significant costs this year for the rewriting of the Zoning Regulations as well as the Subdivision Regulation rewrite. He also noted that there were several technical applications that required legal counsel and that labor counsel was also required for several outstanding labor issues.

Councilor Saums went on to state although he did not like to overspend accounts that the town's practice for these types of expenses has been not budget everything they might spend because companies look at municipal budgets. He stated by authorizing to overspend an account, when needed, that it kept the law firms guessing on what the town was willing to spend and it kept everyone honest.

Councilor Ingalls stated that she would repeat the comments that she made at the Finance Committee's April 5, 2023 meeting noting that if Councilor Ryan was present this evening his point would be that they were voting "yes" on an increase without stating a budget number; and therefore, she wanted to say it for him.

Councilor Saums stated that he would agree with Councilor Ryan's position that this appeared to be an open check book. However, he stated it was not an open check book and they could always vote down a request to overspend an account.

Councilor Rodriguez questioned whether the Town Council could go into executive session to discuss the legal fees. Councilor Saums stated that legal fees for these expenses did not meet the criteria to enter into executive session. He noted that they could enter into executive session for the following reasons:

- Appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee;
- Strategy and negotiations with respect to Pending Claims or Pending Litigation.
- Matters concerning security strategy;
- Selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate;
- Discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records, or the information contained therein;
- Selection of a candidate or candidates for an executive-level employment position.

Chairman Dombrowski stated as Councilor Saums' mentioned, that although the action to overspend an account gives the appearance of an open check book, that it was not an open check book. He stated expenses were scrutinized and monitored by the Finance Committee, Mayor, and the Finance Director and was based on expensed incurred and projections on known cases.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated the town does not rewrite the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations every year. He stated this was a significant amount of work, noting that Land Use Attorney Carl Landolina was very involved in the process.

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0

MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor

SECONDER Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor

AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Saums

EXCUSED: Marshall, Ryan

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

6. MOTION to adopt a “Fair Housing Resolution - Town of Ledyard” as contained in the draft dated ~~March 15~~ **April 10**, 2023.

DRAFT: ~~3/17/2023~~ **4/10/2023**

Res:004-2023/Apr 12

**FAIR HOUSING RESOLUTION
TOWN OF LEDYARD**

WHEREAS, All persons are afforded a right to full and equal housing opportunities in the neighborhood of their choice; and

WHEREAS, Federal Fair Housing laws require that all individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, **veteran status**, or national origin, be given equal access to all housing-related opportunities, including rental and homeownership opportunities, and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut fair housing laws require that all individuals, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, age, lawful source of income, familial status, **veteran status**, learning disability, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression be given equal access to all housing-related opportunities, including rental and home ownership opportunities, and be allowed to make free choices regarding housing location; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Ledyard is committed to upholding these laws, and realizes that these laws must be supplemented by an Affirmative Statement publicly endorsing the right of all people to full and equal housing opportunities in the neighborhood of their choice.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town of Ledyard hereby endorses a Fair Housing Policy to ensure equal opportunity for all persons to rent, purchase, obtain financing and enjoy all other housing-related services of their choice on a non-discriminatory basis as provided by state and federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the chief executive officer of the Town of Ledyard or his/her designated representative is responsible for responding to and assisting any person who alleges to be the victim of an illegal discriminatory housing practice in the Town of Ledyard and for advising such person of the right to file a complaint with the State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or to seek assistance from the CT Fair Housing Center, legal services, or other fair housing organizations to protect his or her right to equal housing opportunities.

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on April 12, 2023

Kevin J. Dombrowski, Chairman

I Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk of the Town of Ledyard, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the Town Council held on April 12, 2023, and that such resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked, and is at present in full force and effect:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF: The undersigned has affixed his signature and corporate seal on this _____ day of _____ 2023.

(Town Seal)

Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk

Moved by Councilor Paul, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez
Discussion: Councilor Paul stated for the Town to be eligible to apply for and receive certain Grant Funds to support fair housing that the town was required to annually adopt a "*Fair Housing Resolution*" to be in compliance with state regulations. He stated the draft Resolution was the same as previous years.

Chairman Dombrowski stated since the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee’s April 3, 2023 meeting they realized that “*veteran status*” should have been included in the protected class in the Resolution. Therefore, the Resolution was updated to include “*veteran status*” as presented in the draft dated April 10, 2023 for tonight’s meeting.

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0	
MOVER:	Gary Paul, Town Councilor
SECONDER	S. Naomi Rodriguez, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Saums
EXCUSED:	Marshall, Ryan

General Discussion

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

XV. ADJOURNMENT

VOTE: Councilor Rodriguez moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Paul
7 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 7:59 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 12, 2023.

Kevin J. Dombrowski, Chairman