



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID FORMAT

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Ledyard, CT 06339

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Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

MINUTES
FINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

5:30 PM

Annex Meeting Room - Video Conference

DRAFT

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

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

II. **ROLL CALL**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location	Arrived	Departed
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Excused			
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Tony Saccone	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:30 pm
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Council Chairman	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Fred Allyn, III	Mayor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Matthew Bonin	Finance Director	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Steve Masalin	Public Works Director/Town Engineer	Present	In-Person	5:07 pm	5:27 pm
Scott Johnson, Jr.	Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Director	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Jim Mann	Director of Emergency Management/Fire Marshall	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm
Brandon Grabner	Board of Education Member	Present	In-Person	5:02 pm	6:01 pm
Jason Hartling	School Superintendent	Present	Remote	5:33 pm	5:35 pm
Earl (Ty) Lamb	Board of Education Member	Present	Remote	5:36 pm	6:01 pm
Joanne Kelly	Board of Education Member	Present	Remote	5:36 pm	6:01 pm
Dennis Maine	Avalonia Land Conservancy President	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:27 pm
Roxanne Maher	Administrative Assistant	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:01 pm

- III. **RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS** – None.

- IV. **PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS** – None.

- V. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION to approve the Finance Committee Meeting Minutes of October 16, 2024
Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

VI. FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Finance Director Matthew Bonin reported the following: (1) Community Speaks Out – Mr. Bonin noted at the Town Council's October 23, 2024 meeting they authorized allocating \$10,000 from the National Opioid Settlement Funding to support the services of Community Speaks Out in Ledyard. He stated that the Town has received the Subrecipient Agreement from Community Speaks Out; (2) Annual Audit Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024 – Mr. Bonin stated CliftonLarsonAllen, LLC was working to complete their Audit work in Ledyard. He stated that he hoped the Auditors would provide a draft report by the end of November. He noted that this was the last of the two-one year contract extensions under the current contract; and (3) Auditing Services for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 – Mr. Bonin stated that he was preparing the specifications to solicit Requests for Proposals (RFP) in January, 2025 to conduct the Annual Audit for the upcoming fiscal year (2025/2026).

VII. FINANCIAL REPORTS

Finance Director Matthew Bonin stated that he provided an updated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects Spreadsheet for discussion this evening.

Mr. Bonin noted that the Budget versus Actual Revenue and Expenditure Reports for the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 were attached to the agenda on the meeting portal. He provided an overview noting the following:

- Revenue Year-to Date Report- Thru September 30, 2024

- ✓ **Municipal Revenue Share** - Mr. Bonin explained because the State's Sale Tax Revenues came in less than anticipated that Municipalities would not receive any Municipal Revenue Share funding this fiscal year (2024/2025). He noted although the town did not budget Municipal Revenue in last year's budget (Fiscal Year 2023/2024) that Ledyard received \$390,000.
- ✓ **Vo-Ag Funding** – Mr. Bonin explained that there were the following two budget revenue lines in the Annual Budget regarding the Agri-Science (Vo-Ag) Program as follows:
 - **Vo-Ag Tuition** – Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Initial Budget Amount: \$764,000; the Revised Budget Amount: \$412,000; a decrease of \$352,000.

Mr. Bonin explained the Vo-Ag Tuition Revenue was funding received from other towns for their students to attend Ledyard's Agri-Science Program. He went on to note that Board of Education Finance Director Kenneth Knight informed him that the State changed the amount the town could bill for students to attend the Program. Therefore, he stated the revised Vo-Ag Tuition Revenue was \$412,000.

- **ASTE Grant Funding** – State Funding – Initial Budget Amount: \$850,000; the Revised Budget Amount: \$1,244,000; an increase of \$394,000.

Mr. Bonin noted that Board of Education Finance Director Kenneth Knight provided the Revised ASTE Grant Funding amount of \$1,244,000. He explained although the additional ASTE Grant Funding would help to equal out the reduction in the Vo-Ag Tuition Revenue line that when the Board of Education requests the additional \$394,000 ASTE Funding be allocated to their budget that the Town Council would need to look at the combination of the Vo-Ag Tuition Revenue line and the ASTE Grant Funding line to determine the true ASTE Grant Funding overage number.

- ✓ **Special Education Tuition** – Mr. Bonin stated the Board of Education was expecting to receive \$82,000; however the State reduced this amount to \$25,500; a decrease of \$56,500.
- ✓ **Non-Resident Tuition** – Initial Budget: \$45,000; Revised Budget increased slightly.
- ✓ **Interest on Deposits** – Mr. Bonin stated the town has already received 55% of the amount budgeted. He stated the interest rates have come down, but that the town was still receiving a good interest rate.

• Expenditures Year-to Date Report- Thru June 30, 2024 – Report date 10/1/2024

- ✓ **Legal Fees Budget** – Mr. Bonin noted at the Town Council’s October 23, 2024 meeting they voted to overspend the account.

Mr. Bonin stated that there were no other significant changes to the General Governments expenditures at this time, noting that the expenditures were tracking as budgeted.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

Next Meeting: 12/04/2024; 5:00 p.m.

III. OLD BUSINESS

MOTION to modify the Agenda to remove Old Business Item #3 from the Agenda as noted below:

~~(3) Discussion and possible action on the MOTION to recommend the Town Council transfer the Board of Education Capital Fund for Non-Bonded Board of Education Capital Items back to the Town’s Capital Nonrecurring Fund (CNR Fund 210).~~

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Councilor Ryan stated the motion was being removed from the agenda because they were taking care of the matter using another route. He stated if the route does not prove, that they would revisit the Motion if necessary.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved to Remove from the Agenda

RESULT: APPROVE TO RECOMMEND 2 – 0

MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES: Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone
EXCUSED: Jessica Buhle

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

Mayor Allyn, III, stated as Finance Director Matthew Bonin reported earlier this evening that the Subrecipient Agreement with Community Speaks Out in the amount of \$10,000 was ready to be signed. He stated that other subrecipients would be coming forward with proposals for the use of Opioid Settlement Funding.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting: 12/04/2024 5:00 p.m.

2. Continued discussion regarding the status and possible changes to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Capital Non-Recurring (CNR) Fund based on the *American Rescue Act* Funding (ARPA) and the process to approve ARPA Projects and expend ARPA Funding.
 - MOTION to recommend the Town Council update the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects List and allocation to add the Town Hall Vertical Lift Project in the amount of up-to \$135,000.

In addition, grant a Bid Waiver to Lifeway Mobility in the amount of \$45,600 for the installation of a Town Hall Vertical Lift, to meet ARPA Projects December 31, 2024 Deadline.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin provided some background stating that the Town Hall lacked an elevator between its two levels, noting that this has been a longstanding need, and has been included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for a number of years at the full cost of an elevator, which was about three-times the cost of the proposed Vertical Lift. He explained not having an elevator has presented a routine hardship to many patrons.

Mr. Masalin stated the Town Hall Vertical Lift Project would use some of the estimated \$232,000 net balance of the ARPA funding available, which included covering the \$89,000 shortfall that had been reflected on the ARPA Projects spreadsheet from some projects that came in over the budgeted amount. He also noted that the Vertical Lift Project would not take any money away from any of the other on-going projects.

Mr. Masalin stated in researching the costs to install an elevator they found that a Vertical Lift was a fully adequate option for a lower cost. He stated the Vertical Lift would have a 750-pound capacity which would be ample for normal use to handle people and other transport needs. He went on to note that the Vertical Lift would also be

less expensive to maintain, because elevators required Periodic Certification Inspections which were expensive to have done. He stated the town currently has two elevators for which they conduct the Periodic Certification Inspections, noting that one elevator was at the Police Department; and one elevator was at the Emergency Services Building.

Mr. Masalin presented the architectural plans, which were attached to the agenda packet on the meeting portal, along with the associated technical documentation and quote. He explained that the cost estimates were based on the architectural design plan. He stated comprehensively they have covered the cost of the enclosure, the vertical lift, and the Heating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) and electrical needs. He also noted that he added a little funding for contingency needs for a cost of \$135,000.

Mr. Masalin stated the Vertical Lift would be installed on the alcove on the side of the Town Hall facing the Police Department. He stated it would be a vertical enclosure that would bump out from the location of the current doorway into the building; and would add another doorway that would be in line with the current doorway to get into the enclosure. He stated the Vertical Lift would be on the left as you walk in and would take people up to the second floor and they would exit the Vertical Lift on the right, noting that they would not enter and exit the Lift on the same side. He stated this was the best use of the space they had available.

Mr. Masalin went on to explain that they would use a State Bid for the enclosure portion of the project; Air Temp HVAC was under a State Bid Contract, and that the electrical work was under \$5,000. However, he stated for the lift itself, they have selected the lowest quote from the four options they obtained. Therefore, he stated that he was requesting a Bid Waiver to Lifeway Mobility in the amount of \$45,600, which was about \$20,000 lower than the State Bid, for the installation of the Vertical Lift.

Mr. Masalin continued by stating with the use of the requested \$135,000 for the Town Hall Vertical Lift that the ARPA Funding would have an approximate balance of \$100,000. He stated that they would have one more Finance Committee meeting on December 2, 2024 to reevaluate the ARPA Projects List relative to how projects have unfolded and the reallocation of remaining funding, noting that they would have a better idea of how projects were coming in.

Councilor Ryan stated with moving forward with the \$135,000 for the Vertical Lift that the ARPA Projects Spreadsheet would reflect a nominal balance of about \$100,000. Mr. Masalin stated Councilor Ryan was correct.

Mayor Fred Allyn, III, addressed the importance of installing a Vertical Lift at the Town Hall noting with Early Voting, and No Excuse Absentee Voting there has been more foot traffic in Town Hall. He went on to note the handicap accessible parking spaces were behind Town Hall and on the north side of Town Hall explaining from those parking spaces that residents would come into the Town Hall at the lower level and need to access to the second floor where the Town Clerk's Office was located to get their Absentee Ballot. He also stated that they were seeing more people with wheelchairs and walkers coming into Town Hall.

Councilor Ryan questioned whether the Town Hall was American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliant. Mayor Allyn stated that the Town Hall was ADA Compliant, noting that the Vertical Lift would also be of help to those with mobility issues.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVE TO RECOMMEND 2 – 0

MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

SECONDER: Tony Saccone, Town Councilor

AYES: Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

EXCUSED: Jessica Buhle

The Finance Committee reviewed with Finance Director Matthew Bonin, Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin, and Parks, Recreation, & Senior Citizens Director Scott Johnson, Jr. the following ARPA Projects:

- **Phase III Sewer Line Extension Project \$950,000** – Mr. Masalin provided an overview of Phase III of the Sewer Line ARPA allocation as follows:
 - ✓ \$82,730 was committed for the design phase
 - ✓ \$860,370 was encumbered for the construction work
 - ✓ 6,900 not committed – contingency costs\$950,000 Total Cost

Mr. Masalin stated Phase III of the Sewer Line Project would be within the \$950,000 original allocation.

Councilor Ryan stated Phase III would be coming in at budget; not under budget. Mr. Masalin stated Mr. Ryan’s understanding was correct.

Councilor Ryan noted that based on the most recent spreadsheet that \$2.2 million was earmarked for Phase I and Phase III of the Sewer Line Extension Projects. Mr. Masalin explained the encumbered value does not include Phase I Construction, noting that Phase I already exceed the original allocation. Therefore, he stated the spreadsheet was showing a balance in the amount of \$125,000 for Phase I for contingency.

- **Sidewalk In-Fill \$35,000** – Mr. Masalin stated this allocation was used for the engineering work to fill-in the sidewalks along Colonel Ledyard Highway, where there were gaps. He stated there would be a few thousand dollars remaining. He also noted that there would be some funding remaining from other projects that the Finance Committee was still deliberating on.

Councilor Ryan noted any ARPA Funding that was not committed, meaning contracts in place, by December 31, 2024 would need to be returned to the Federal US Treasury. Mr. Masalin stated that he was working with Finance Director Matthew Bonin to have contingent contracts in place. He went on to explain that the engineering work for Phase II of the Sewer Project was approved using funding from the Capital Non-Recurring (CNR) Undesignated Account, noting that the town could allocate any remaining ARPA Funding toward this work.

- **Erickson Park Improvements \$55,000** – Parks, Recreation, & Senior Citizens Director Scott Johnson, Jr., explained that a lot of work has been done at the Erickson Park to redirect the water to prevent the boat launch from washing out, noting that swales, rift raff and a rain garden have been installed.

Mr. Johnson went on to explain when they looked into paving the designated area of the parking lot at the Erickson Park to provide additional parking spaces, they found that the absorption area for the water would be eliminated; and that it would cause more drainage issues. He also noted that if they expanded the parking lot they would need to install a retaining wall; which would add to the cost. Therefore, he stated he was suggesting that they abandon the adding additional parking spaces at the Erickson Park and redirect the \$55,000 ARPA Funding to facilitate the following projects:

✓ Gales Ferry Tennis Court Repairs	\$22,478.00
✓ Gales Ferry Basketball Court Repairs	\$9,930.00
✓ Gales Ferry Fence Replacement	\$11,556.00
✓ Senior Center Floor Main Room	\$11,255.00
✓ Senior Center Kitchen Floor	\$3,629.00
✓ <u>Senior Center Vestibule Floor</u>	<u>\$1,028.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$59,876

Mr. Johnson and the Finance Committee reviewed the proposed projects as follows:

- ✓ Gales Ferry Tennis Court Repairs - \$22,478.00 – Repair cracks in the surface, install new sleeves, posts and tennis nets. The contractor for the crack repairs was a Sourcewell Contractor.
- ✓ Gales Ferry Basketball Court Repairs \$9,930.00 – Repair cracks in the surface.
- ✓ Gales Ferry Fence Replacement \$11,556.00 - Repair cracks, and fence footings. A new fence would not be installed.
- ✓ Senior Center Floor Main Room - \$11,255.00 - Remove the tile and install the epoxy concrete flooring material, similar to what they did at the Public Works Garage.
- ✓ Senior Center Kitchen Floor - \$3,629.00- Remove the tile and install the epoxy concrete flooring material, similar to what they did at the Public Works Garage. The epoxy flooring was being done by a vendor who was on the State Bid List.
- ✓ Senior Center Vestibule Floor \$1,028.00 - Remove the tile and install the epoxy concrete flooring material, similar to what they did at the Public Works Garage.

Mr. Johnson went on to explain that the Senior Center received a separate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) disbursement from the State to be used specifically for Senior Centers. He stated that these funds would be used to replace the carpet and a number of other improvements. However, he stated under the Senior Center ARPA Funding they did not have enough money to address the flooring in the Main Room, Kitchen and Vestibule. He stated redirecting the Erickson Park Improvement Funding to replace the tile flooring in the Senior Center would bring that entire area of the building up to date.

Councilor Saccone questioned the status of constructing the Pickleball Courts at Winthrop Park. Mr. Johnson explained that Winthrop Park was comprised of two separate properties: (1) Town-owned parcel; and (2) Town leased a parcel from the Gales Ferry District. Therefore, he stated because there were too many setbacks that the Parks and Recreation Commission would be considering alternate sites. He stated an Informal Conversation has been scheduled for tomorrow night (11/7/2024) at the Gales Ferry Community Center to present ideas to residents and to obtain their feedback.

Councilor Ryan questioned whether there were other improvements that could be made at Erickson Park. Mr. Johnson stated that Parks and Recreation recently did a number of enhancements, noting that they cleared the brush line, redirected and put in a stone dust path, etc. He stated that he believed the \$55,000 could be better utilized, rather than adding a few extra parking spaces to accommodate an one-day event that happens once a year.

Mayor Allyn, III, explained that the Erickson Park Enhancements originated from an idea from a Navy Mom, who mentioned that when a group of Navy Moms got together once a year at Erickson Park that the parking was limited. However, he stated as Parks, Recreation, & Senior Citizens Director Mr. Johnson mentioned that other issues would prevent them from adding additional parking. Mr. Johnson stated although the parking improvements at Erickson Park may be worth looking at, that before they moved forward with such a project that it would be helpful to have a Site Plan.

Councilor Saccone questioned if they do not allocate the ARPA Funding for the replacement of the Kitchen and Vestibule Floor at the Senior Citizens Center whether Mr. Johnson planned to include the projects in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Mr. Johnson stated that he believed there could be a cost savings by doing all the floors together because of the cost to rent the equipment to strip the floor, etc.

MOTION to recommend the Town Council update the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects List as follows:

- Remove the Erickson Park Enhancements \$55,000 from the ARPA Projects List.
 - Add the following Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Center Projects to the ARPA Projects List:
- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| ✓ Gales Ferry Tennis Court Repairs | \$22,478.00 |
| ✓ Gales Ferry Basketball Court Repairs | \$9,930.00 |
| ✓ Gales Ferry Fence Replacement | \$11,556.00 |
| ✓ Senior Center Floor Main Room | \$11,255.00 |
| ✓ Senior Center Kitchen Floor | \$3,629.00 |
| ✓ <u>Senior Center Vestibule Floor</u> | <u>\$1,028.00</u> |
| TOTAL: | \$59,876 |

In addition, reallocate the \$55,000 from the Erickson Park Improvements plus an additional \$4,876 for a total allocation in the amount of \$59,876 for the Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Center Projects. Source of additional ARPA funding transfer to be determined.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone
 Discussion: See above.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVE TO RECOMMEND 2 – 0
MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES: Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone
EXCUSED: Jessica Buhle

ARPA Funding Discussion Continued:

- **Youth Mental Health Clinician - \$180,465** – Finance Director Matthew Bonin stated this initiative had a \$74,642 balance, noting that \$90,888 was allocated to the Child and Family Services Agency. Therefore, he stated the Finance Committee would need to make a decision regarding the reallocation of these funds, otherwise they would be in jeopardy.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated the Clinician that was hired has not been used at a level that they initially thought that they would be used. He went on to note in response to an email from Youth Services Director Karen Goetchius to the Town of Groton that Groton Director of Human Services Marjorie Fondulas replied as follows:

“Our last remaining Youth Counselor retired in January 2024; and we did not hire a new Counselor because the counseling referrals have been decreasing over the years to now none. Because of the School Based Health Care (SBHC) in each of the Groton Schools, including Grasso Tech; Groton’s Youth and Family Services Division is no longer in our town or any Groton budget. For Youth and Family Services that Counseling had been their primary service....”

Mayor Allyn noted this response from Groton’s Director of Human Services further supported what Ledyard has been seeing. Therefore, he stated if the intent was to use the remaining \$74,642 for counseling services that he would suggest amending the existing Agreement with the Child and Family Agency to extend the Agreement into the following school year (2025/2026). He stated the initial appropriation to the Child and Family Agency would provide services through August 2025. He stated it was his understanding that the Child and Family Agency services was well received at the schools and was being used.

Chairman Rodriguez questioned how long it would take to get an extended Agreement with the Child and Family Agency in place. Mayor Allyn stated that it should only take a few days.

Councilor Ryan suggested the Finance Committee revisit the Youth Mental Health Clinician balance at their December 4, 2024 meeting to extend the Agreement with the Child and Family Agency. He also suggested they also have the list of the “Ready to Go Projects” to be voted on at that meeting as well, so that the town will not lose any funding from projects that came in below their initial allocations.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting: 12/04/2024 5:00 p.m.

Removed from Agenda (see above action)

~~3. MOTION to remove from the Table the MOTION to recommend the Town Council transfer the Board of Education Capital Fund for Non-Bonded Board of Education Capital Items back to the Town’s Capital Nonrecurring Fund (CNR Fund 210).~~

~~• Discussion and possible action on the MOTION to recommend the Town Council transfer the Board of Education Capital Fund for Non-Bonded Board of Education Capital Items back to the Town’s Capital Nonrecurring Fund (CNR Fund 210).~~

- Continued discussion regarding upcoming potential Grant Opportunities.

Mayor Allyn, III, stated a Developer who was looking to do some work in Ledyard Center has offered to write a grant for the town (Community Investment Fund and other sources) for the town to obtain funding to complete Phase II Sewer Line Extension Project (from Bill Library that would go almost up-to the Post Office). He stated the Developer has been successful with getting some high-profile grants.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting: 12/04/2024; 5:00 p.m.

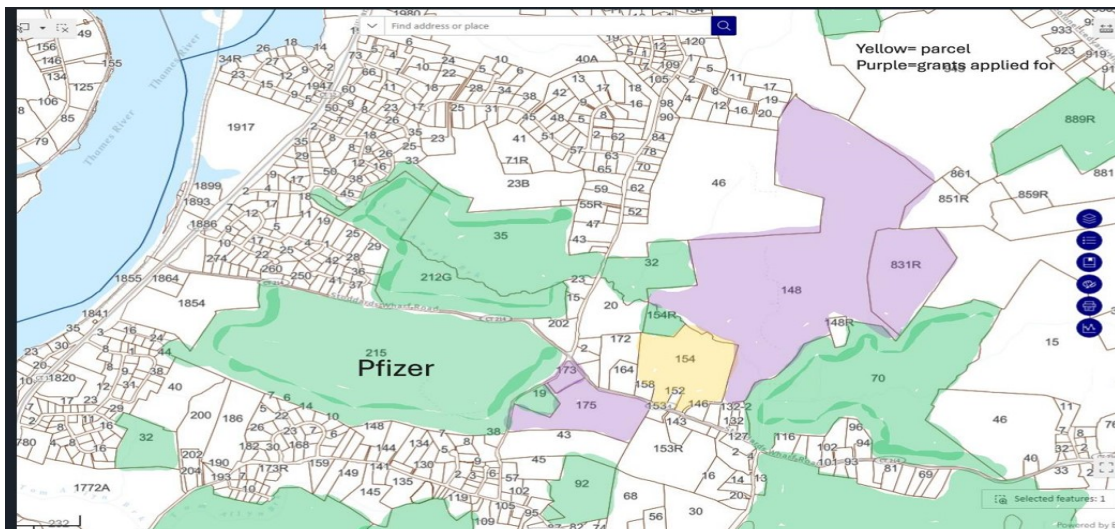
- Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee.- None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- MOTION to recommend the Town Council authorize the Mayor to issue a “Letter of Commitment” to Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc., in response to their request of \$80,000 from Account #210-101210-12101-58920 (Open Space Fund) to provide financial support with the acquisition of 154 Stoddard’s Wharf Road 35.95+/- acres of Open Space; to be payable to Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc, Seller or closing law firm at the time of the closing.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated a few months ago he brought this Avalonia Land Conservancy opportunity forward to the Town Council, noting that Avalonia Land Conservancy has worked to make the acquisition of this property a real opportunity. He provided an overview of the map below:



Mayor Allyn noted the yellow parcel was 154 Stoddard’s Wharf Road, the green parcels were open space parcels, and the purple parcels were properties that Avalonia Land Conservancy was actively pursuing. He stated this was a great greenway area and the acquisition of these properties would provide an opportunity to tie into the Tri-Town Trail (Bluff Point to Preston Plains Park).

Mayor Allyn, III went on to state in accordance with Ordinance #200-009 “*An Ordinance Providing for a the Transfer of Certain Revenue from Real Estate Conveyance Tax to Specific Town of Ledyard Funds*” that “.....A sum equal to forty percent (40%) of the money thus received shall be deposited to Fund 8, the Parks and Recreation Capital and Non- Recurring Expense Fund; an additional forty percent (40%) of said money shall be deposited to Fund 6, Capital and Non-Recurring Funds, to be used only for capital/infrastructure expenses; and the **remaining twenty percent (20%) of said money shall be deposited to Fund 6, Capital and Non Recurring Funds, with an Acquisition of Open Space Allocation.**”

Mayor Allyn noted that the Open Space Account had a \$501,000 balance. He stated the town has provided financial support to Avalonia Land Conservancy to acquire open space in the past. He stated Avalonia Land Conservancy President Dennis Main was present this evening to answer questions.

Avalonia Land Conservancy President Dennis Main stated that their non-profit organization has been partnering with Ledyard with others such as Groton Utilities for about a decade noting that they have done several projects and obtained funding from sources such as the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant (OSWA). He stated since the Covid-19 Pandemic and the transition to Zoom Remote Meetings that he has not attended a meeting in-person for a while, noting that it was good to see everyone this evening.

Mr. Main continued by explaining that 154 Stoddard’s Wharf Road was a key parcel because it was located in the middle of a number of other open spaces parcels. He stated last year Avalonia Land Conservancy submitted an Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant (OWSA) to acquire the Rowley Property (223 acres) and that they were working to close on that property, which would tie into the Tri-Town Trail (Bluff Point to Preston Plains Park) going north. He stated Avalonia Land Conservancy would also be looking for financial support from the Town of Ledyard to acquire 173 – 175 Stoddards Wharf Road (30.30 acres) (purple), noting that they would be submitting an OWSA Grant on December 2, 2024. This parcel would provide the capability to get to Pine Swamp going down Avery Hill Road Extension. He stated there was also the possibility of working with Groton Utilities (GU easement in front of the Pfizer Property) to go to the Middle School and Juliet W. Long School on Route 12 in Gales Ferry. He stated in continuing to work with the town that the possibilities for passive recreation opportunities were great, noting that the State also provides funding through the OWSA Grants. He stated Avalonia Land Conservancy has been successful in obtaining 13 OSWA Grants that were each about \$428,000, noting that they were bringing in a good amount of state funding to help acquire these properties.

Mr. Main went on to explain that the Glacial Kettle Hole was 4.97 acres, and that Avalonia Land Conservancy would look to incorporate this area so all the trails could be put together, noting that currently the trails go nowhere. He stated in 1983 they received a Land and Water Grant from the Federal Government which still had to be monitored. He stated with the acquisitions of the parcels he described this evening that Avalonia Land Conservancy would be able to tie all the trails together.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

The Finance Committee thanked Mr. Main for attending tonight’s meeting.
Mr. Main left the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVE TO RECOMMEND 2 – 0

MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES: Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone
EXCUSED: Jessica Buhle

2. MOTION to recommend the Town Council appropriate \$27,950 to Account 21020301-57300-G0015 (Fire Marshall – New Equipment – State Grant).

In addition, authorize the expenditure of up to \$27,950 for radio equipment upgrades to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The funding source for this project is the Town of Ledyard’s FY 2025 Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Funding Allocation (2025-44 to 2024-45).

Moved by Councilor Ryan , seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Director of Emergency Management/Fire Marshall Jim Mann stated about a year ago the Fire Departments obtained a Grant to switch their radio system over to 800 Meg. However, he stated, unfortunately did not include funding to upgrade the Emergency Dispatch Communication Center or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Therefore, he stated the Fire Departments could not talk with Dispatch or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). He stated that he used some funding that he had to upgrade the Dispatch Center, but did not have enough money for the Emergency Operations Center.

Mr. Mann went on to explain that he submitted a Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Grant to upgrade the equipment at Emergency Operations Center, which was located in the basement of the High School. He stated last week he received notification that the Grant was approved, noting that it would pay 100% for everything except for one radio system, which he planned to include in his next Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Grant Application.

Councilor Ryan stated the funding source was the Nuclear Safety Emergency Program. Finance Director Matthew Bonin explained that the town would need to purchase the radio equipment and then send the invoices to the State, and they would reimburse the town. Mr. Mann stated that this was a good deal, noting that once the radio system were all upgraded they would not need to install any antennas.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVE TO RECOMMEND 2 – 0

MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Tony Saccone, Town Councilor
AYES: Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone
EXCUSED: Buhle

3. MOTION to recommend the Town Council transfer and appropriate \$100,446 to CNR account # 21012103-53305 Revaluation from CNR account # 21090305-58915 Undesignated.

Moved by Councilor Ryan , seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated in accordance with State Statutes Ledyard was required to conduct a full Revaluation this year. He stated in preparation for the Revaluation they had been allocating funding to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the past few years. He stated based on an estimated cost for the Revaluation they had a total budget of \$187,000 to conduct this work. He stated because the town only received two bids at their August 14, 2024 meeting the Town Council granted a Bid Waiver to Vision Government Solution.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain that both bids received came in higher than the \$187,000 that was allocated. He noted Vision Government Solutions bid was in the amount of \$257,000; and was both the better value and lower cost. Therefore, he stated this request was to appropriate \$100,446 to provide adequate funding to cover the cost of the Revaluation.

Mayor Allyn stated if the housing market remained as it is that they would see a significant increase in housing values. Councilor Ryan explained that seeing an increase in property values did not necessarily mean residents would see an increase in taxes because they would be adjusting the mil rate.

VOTE: 2 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVE TO RECOMMEND 2 – 0

MOVER: Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

SECONDER: Tony Saccone, Town Councilor

AYES: Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

EXCUSED: Buhle

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

X. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Saccone moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Ryan.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Saccone, Sr.
Committee Chairman
Finance Committee