



TOWN OF LEDYARD  
CONNECTICUT  
TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

MINUTES  
LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024; 7:00 PM  
HYBRID FORMAT  
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

**DRAFT**

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building.

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location
April Brunelle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Kevin Dombrowski	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Gary Paul	Town Councilor	Remote	In-Person
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Remote	In-Person
Tony Saccone	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Gary St. Vil	Town Councilor	Present	Remote

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS – None.

V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

**Mr. Steve Munger**, 12 Nutmeg Drive, Gales Ferry, stated he was present this evening to address the following:

- **Election Day – November 5, 2024** - Mr. Munger stated during elections that he stands outside the polling locations and holds the US American Flag and signs. He noted that Councilor Buhle brought her 10-year-old son with her to the polls. He went on to state this year election day was on his birthday, noting that a friend made him Lopia (banana wrapped in filo dough) and asked him how old he was. He stated that he replied stating that he was 70- years old and he noted that Councilor Buhle’s son stated that he did not look 70-years old and that he was going to call him “21” because that was how old he thought he looked. He stated most of the morning all those who were at the polls stood together (democrats and republicans). However, he stated later in the day they split up, noting that his group was all men and that the other group was all woman. He stated Councilor Buhle’s son came over to his group and stated that he wanted to be with the guys, Mr. Munger noted that Councilor Buhle’s son was so cute. He stated at the end of the day when he said goodbye to Councilor Buhle’s son he said, “It was nice to meet you, have a good day kid”; and that Councilor Buhle’s son replied stating “Have a good day kid”. Mr. Munger went on to note that Councilor Buhle’s son went on to state “Mr. Munger was not a kid, but that he was 21”. Mr. Munger stated that he wanted to share this story with the Town Council noting that Councilor Buhle’s son was amazing; and that he made him feel good that day.
- **Flying Third Party Flags on Town Property** – Mr. Munger stated that he was against flying any flag other than the US American Flag on town property. He stated that he was surprised the Democrats wanted to change the town’s practice to only fly the US American Flag, because they called themselves the “Party of Unity”. Mr. Munger stated the town had unity

right now with flying the US American Flag which represented everybody. He stated now they wanted to start flying flags that would automatically be divisive, noting that he was not just talking about the gay flag, noting that any flag would be divisive. He encouraged the town to keep the US American Flag where it should be, so that they all stay united and that they leave the other stuff for meetings like this one.

- **Local Elections for the Town Council and the Board of Education** – Mr. Munger stated the Town Council and Board of Education should work together, without interfering with each other.
- **Trunk or Treat Friday, October 25, 2024** – Mr. Munger stated Trunk or Treat was a great Kids Event in town. He stated he was disappointed and disheartened to see political signs at a Kids Event. He suggested the next time the town does something for the Kids that they leave it for the Kids.

Mr. Munger stated he respected that the members of the Town Council were investing their time; however, he stated that he disagreed with some of the things they were doing. He suggested they take a deep breath and think before making decisions. He thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to address them this evening.

Chairman Rodriguez thanked Mr. Munger for this comments.

VI. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

VII. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Chairman Rodriguez stated the 2024 Presidential Election was behind them. She gave a huge *Thank You* to the Registrars; those who volunteered to work at the polls; and those who worked for two weeks during the Early Voting. She stated that she heard Ledyard residents frequently comment on how much they appreciated the Early Voting opportunity. She went on to thank their Connecticut State Legislators for having the foresight to provide such a wonderful opportunity. She stated that over one-third (36%) of Ledyard's voters took advantage of the Early Voting, and that 85 % of Ledyard's voters cast their ballot in this year's election. She stated that democracy was a team sport, and Ledyard did its part! Chairman Rodriguez again thanked the Registrars and all the volunteers who made Early Voting and Election Day run smoothly.

Chairman Rodriguez went on to congratulate and thank everyone who ran for Office and made our democracy work. She stated that they need to continue to treat each other with dignity and respect, with due sensitivity for the election results, noting that they need to continue living and working together in our community.

Chairman Rodriguez stated small acts of kindness and caring would go a long way over the next few weeks, and she encouraged all to look towards Thanksgiving, and the holidays in December with an eye to those in Ledyard who were less fortunate, noting that for some that the holidays may bring sadness. She stated that there were plenty of opportunities to give and donate, and she encouraged residents to do so as they could afford. She noted the State Legislature would begin its session on January 8, 2025 and she encouraged residents to reach out to Ledyard's delegation with appropriate needs or concerns.

Chairman Rodriguez continued by noting that November 11, 2024 was Veterans Day and that she wanted to say *Thank You* to all of our Veterans in Town. She stated their bravery, courage, sacrifice, and love of country was appreciated. She stated that it was because of our military service members that our country was the Land of the Free and Home of the Brave. She stated that it was because of our Veterans that our great democracy was intact, noting that they were grateful to all of our Veterans, and she again thanked them and their families for their Service.

Chairman Rodriguez concluded her comments by stating that she would also like to thank Ledyard's Beautification Committee for the Veterans Day signs they displayed in town. She stated the signs were a great idea and the families that participated were proud to have the name of their loved ones on a sign, noting that they proudly posted pictures of the signs on social media. She stated at their November 12, 2024 meeting the Beautification Committee agreed to do the signs again next year. She stated *Kudos and Thank You again to the Beautification Committee!*

Councilor Brunelle stated today was *World Kindness Day* and she encouraged people to do something kind for someone today and everyday.

Councilor Brunelle continued by thanking the Ledyard Center Fire Department and her neighbors in the Highlands, noting on Monday, November 11, 2024 at approximately 3:15 p.m. a minor set her lawn on fire. She stated that her neighbor was able to get a picture of the act and that the Fire Department was able to put the fire out quickly, noting that they were fortunate that there was no major damage. She stated when the Police Officers visited the minor they had to bring the individual in for evaluation. She stated if the minor had received the mental health services they needed that perhaps they may not have set her lawn on fire. She stated thankfully, although things were very dry, the fire did not go far.

Councilor Saccone noted Councilor Dombrowski's comments at the Town Council's October 23, 2024 meeting regarding the fire danger. He stated yesterday a Red Flag Warning was issued, which meant there were wind gusts between 30-40 miles per hour. He stated if a brush fire started that it could have spread a mile a minute, as they have seen happening out west. He stated both the Ledyard Center Fire Company and Gales Ferry Fire Company each responded to about a dozen illegal burns. He stated the Red Flag Warnings have been on the news, the radio, social media, in the newspapers, and has been discussed at public meetings such as this meeting. He stated residents should curtail any burning, because the smallest wind gust could become an extreme danger to the people in their town. He urged residents to use caution and not to have campfires for several months.

Councilor Buhle noted Mr. Munger's comments (see above V. Residents and Property Owners) regarding Election Day. She stated it was a great experience to bring her son to the polls on November 5, 2024. She stated her son asks a lot of great questions about policy, etc. and that he wanted to go to the polls with her and hold signs. She stated it was good for her son to see the kindness between both political parties, noting that everyone was friendly, and it was fun. She stated that she was glad that her son chose to be a part of Election Day.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the Red Flag Fire Warning, and she questioned whether the town could use the digital signs in Ledyard Center and Gales Ferry, and the town's website to post the Fire Danger Alert. Mayor Allyn, III, replied stating that it was his understanding that a message was posted on the digital signs regarding the Red Flag Fire Alert and on the Town's website, but that he would confirm that the message was posted tomorrow.

Councilor Ryan, attending remotely, stated he echoed the sentiments that were said this evening about the Election, Veterans Day, the Red Flag Fire Alert, and the Precautions. He also noted that the Marine Corp Birthday happens the day before Veterans Day every year. He stated it was an important holiday, and he stated Happy Belated Birthday to the Marine Corp.

Councilor Ryan went on to state that he appreciated the efforts of the Registrar's Office this past election. He stated that he had friends that worked in Registrars Offices in surrounding municipalities and that he was hearing about the amount of people flowing into the office and their effort to make sure that it went smoothly. He noted that Ledyard did not have some of the difficulties that were experienced in surrounding municipalities with the early voting and the signing of the ballots. He stated he was grateful for Ledyard's Registrar's Office.

Chairman Rodriguez noted that this year was the Marine Corp's 249 Birthday. Councilor Ryan stated that Chairman Rodriguez was correct, noting that next year would be a milestone birthday for the Marine Corp stating that they would be celebrating 250 years.

Councilor St. Vil, attending remotely, echoed Chairman Rodriguez's comments in expressing his appreciation for the Veterans in our community and in our country who have done so much for all of us. He stated that he also appreciated all the folks who worked hard to make Election Day a success in our Town.

Councilor St. Vil continued by noting that November was Native American Heritage Month. He stated he would like to take this opportunity to honor the heritage and contributions of our Native People. He stated that November was their collective opportunity to recognize and honor the rich history, diverse cultures, and enduring contributions of America's Indigenous People, who have contributed to this country, state, and community.

#### VIII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following:

Public Hearing Minutes of October 23, 2024

Regular Meeting Minutes of October 23, 2024

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski

**VOTE: 9 – 0 Approved and so declared**

#### IX. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Rodriguez stated a Communications List has been provided on the meeting portal for tonight's meeting, and she noted referrals were listed.

#### X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

##### Administration Committee

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening noting that they addressed the following: (1) Several appointments to town committees; and (2) Discussed an Ethics Commission and a Code of Ethics.

##### Community Relations Committee for Diversity Equity & Inclusion

Councilor Brunelle stated the Community Relations Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 20, 2024.

##### Finance Committee

Councilor Saccone stated the Finance Committee met on November 6, 2024 and they have a number of items on tonight's agenda.

##### Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor St. Vil stated the LUPPW Committee met on November 4, 2024 and continued to discuss the following items: (1) Historic Designation of the Spicer Homestead Ruins – Councilor St. Vil stated members of the Historic District Commission attended the LUPPW Committee meeting and he noted that they would be seeking approval to submit a Grant Application to obtain funding to pay for an A2 Survey of the property. He stated the Commission would also be working with the Town Planner, Finance Director, and the Mayor to complete a Grant Application to obtain funding to help pay for the A2 Survey and other costs related to seeking a historic designation. He stated the Historic District Commission would be providing a briefing to the Town Council at a future meeting regarding their desire to apply for grant funding; (2) Blighted properties; (3) Noise issue, and (4) Illegal Dumping issue. Councilor St. Vil stated the Committee would continue to discuss these topics at their December 2, 2024 meeting.

##### Permanent Municipal Building Committee

Councilor Brunelle stated the PMBC met on November 4, 2024; however, she was not able to attend the meeting; and the minutes were not yet available.

##### Fire Departments

Councilor Saccone stated although he did not have anything to report that he wanted to thank the career firemen for the great job they have been doing during this Red Flag Fire Alert, dry season.

#### Ledyard Farmers' Market Committee

Chairman Rodriguez noted that the Farmers Market Committee cancelled their November 4, 2024 meeting.

#### Retirement Board

Chairman Rodriguez stated the Retirement Board will be meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2024.

#### Library Commission

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Library Commission's next meeting was scheduled for November 18, 2024.

#### Board of Education

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Board of Education met on November 12, 2024 and she noted the following was discussed: (1) Late Buses – Students attended the meeting to advocate for the implementation of Late Buses; (2) Annual Audit – Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024 – Superintendent Jason Hartling and Business Manager Kenneth Knight were working with Auditors CliftonLarsonAllen on the Annual Audit; (3) Water Leak Gallup Hill School – A water leak that was caused by a water fountain affected 8-classrooms. During the clean up the classrooms were not used for several days; (4) Annual Budget Fiscal Year 2025/2026 - Budget Letter of Directive – Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted the Board of Education extensively discussed the October 24, 2024 Budget Letter of Directive. She noted although the letter did not instruct the Board of Education to fire teachers, that some members of the Board of Education questioned the language in the following paragraph:

*“While the Town has continued to reduce expenses including the elimination of departments and our workforce, as technology improvements have enabled efficiencies, we are once again asking that we work to continue to approach the preparation of our Fiscal Year 2025/2026 budget with the objective of minimizing expenses wherever we can find an opportunity and ensure that our tax dollars are spent wisely”.*

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that some Board of Education Members questioned whether the Town Council was instructing the Board of Education to fire teachers. She noted that Board Members Kate DiPalma-Herb and Joanne Kelley responded explaining that the Budget Letter of Directive was similar to previous years. She went on to note that Superintendent Hartling stated that he was not intending to fire anyone, because they already did not have enough teachers; (5) Mental Health Clinicians – Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the Board of Education discussed the Mental Health Clinicians that were being paid from the General Government's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted during her Liaison Report that she tried to provide clarification regarding the use of the General Government ARPA Funding for the Mental Health Clinicians. She stated that she explained that there were two ARPA allocations for the Mental Health Clinicians as follows: (a) One Mental Health Clinician was at the Middle School and that she saw students in the Media Center; and (b) The \$90,000 ARPA Funding that was supporting the Child and Family Agency Clinicians at the Juliet W. Long School and the Gales Ferry School. She stated after the Meeting Mr. Hartling spoke with her about the Mental Health Clinician, noting that the Clinician was a Town Employee, and that she was receiving students. She stated that Mr. Hartling also stated that all of the students' needs were being met based on the number of Clinicians they had at each school. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated that she suggested Mr. Hartling send an email to Mayor Allyn, III, and Chairman Rodriguez to clarify the use of the Clinician at the Middle School.

Councilor Brunelle interjected, stating that she also attended the Board of Education's November 12, 2024 meeting, and that during the Public Comment she read the same Mental Health data that she read at the Town Council's October 23, 2024 meeting; and that she also mentioned that her lawn was set on fire. She stated during the Meeting that School Superintendent Jason Hartling brought up the subject of the Mental Health Clinician. She stated Mr. Hartling's statements were confusing, noting that first he said that he has given the Middle School Clinician many referrals; and then he stated that he could give the Clinician referrals, but because she was a Town Employee, and not a Board of Education Employee, that it was not the Board of Education's responsibility to refer students to the Clinicians.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry continued her Board of Education Liaison report as follows: (6) Amendments to Ordinance #100-015 (rev 1) “*An Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Municipal Building Committee*” – Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that School Superintendent Jason Hartling stated with 2 Temporary Members for each project that he did not believe the Board of Education had proper representation because the Board of Education was bringing in the 60% State and Federal Grant Funding for the school projects.

Councilor Dombrowski addressed Mr. Hartling’s comments regarding the Board of Education’s Temporary Members on the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC). He explained that State Statute dictates otherwise, noting that *House Bill 5524*, which was signed by the Governor this Legislative Session and became effective on July 1, 2024 stated the following:

“§ 168 — *SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP*  
*Requires that school building committees established to undertake a school building project as defined in Section 10-282 include the school board chair or a designee.*”

Councilor Dombrowski went on to explain that State Statute does not give the Board of Education control of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee or the funds.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry continued by stating during the Board of Education meetings that they discuss a lot of misinformation relative to the Town Council. She stated that she would be happy to clarify the misinformation; however, she stated the Board of Education Members do not ask her questions, noting that the Board of Education was not using her attendance at their meetings to their benefit. She went on to state that she has tried to extend an olive branch and that she has suggested that it would be nice if the Board of Education Members attended the Town Council meetings, because they could answer questions in real-time and eliminate the misinformation. She noted that she appreciated that Board of Education Member Mr. Grabner regularly attended the Town Council meetings.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry went on to note Mr. Munger’s comments earlier this evening (see above V. Residents and Property Owners) and she stated that some Board of Education Members believe that the Town Council was meddling in the affairs of the Board of Education. She stated as the stewards of the taxpayers money that Town Council was responsible to make sure the money was being utilized properly. She stated that it almost comes across that the Board of Education was its own entity, however, she stated the schools were part of the Town; and at the end of the day the Town Council and the taxpayers were the ones who approved the Annual Budget (General Government and Board of Education).

Councilor Brunelle noted before the Board of Education went into executive session at their November 12, 2024 meeting, she mentioned that during Town Council meetings if there was a representative at their meeting that the Town Council would ask whether they had anything to add to the discussion; or whether they wanted to clarify, noting that the Town Council welcomed their comments. Therefore, she questioned the reason the Board of Education does not ask the Town Council Liaison to respond to their questions; or to provide clarification during their meetings. She stated the Board of Education Members responded stating that she had a good point.

Chairman Rodriguez addressed Councilor Garcia-Irizarry’s Board of Education Liaison Report noting the following:

- ***Annual Budget Letter of Directive*** – Chairman Rodriguez stated the *Budget Letter of Directive* has been sent to the Mayor and the Board of Education every year to start the budget process. She stated the Finance Committee reviews the letter, which was basically a boiler plate outlining the components of the budget and they provide some updates based on the current economic climate and financial impacts to the town; and that some recommendations were made. She stated the Finance Committee votes to forward the Budget Letter of Directive to the Town Council for action, noting that the Mayor has reviewed the letter, and the letter was on the meeting portal for members of the public, including the Board of Education Members, to read and to provide comments via email or letter. She stated the

Budget Letter of Directive, and this process was a standard practice, noting that former Town Council Chairman Dombrowski could attest to that.

Chairman Rodriguez stated nowhere in the Budget Letter of Directive for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 did it say to fire teachers. She stated that this statement was misinformation and miscommunication; and should not have been said.

Councilor Dombrowski noted as Chairman Rodriguez stated, the Annual Budget Letter of Directive was a boiler plate letter that has been used with some minor edits depending on the budget cycle for the last 14-years he has served on the Town Council. He stated the following language was suggested by the 2008 *Budget Review Transformation Committee* and has been used ever since:

*“While the Town has continued to reduce expenses including the elimination of departments and our workforce, as technology improvements have enabled efficiencies, we are once again asking that we work to continue to approach the preparation of our Fiscal Year 2025/2026 budget with the objective of minimizing expenses wherever we can find an opportunity and ensure that our tax dollars are spent wisely”.*

Councilor Dombrowski explained that the language noted above was asking if Departments had increases to consider other areas to provide some off-sets. He stated nowhere in the Budget Letter of Directive does the Town Council direct the Mayor or the Board of Education to fire or remove employees. He stated that it may suggest that if they had duplicate agencies doing the same work that they consider combining those duties/responsibilities to gain efficiencies to make better use of the funds that were available. He stated this language was in the Annual Budget Letter of Directive when he served as the Town Council Chairman and when Chairman Linda Davis, Chairman John Rodolico, and Chairman Sean Sullivan served in this capacity. He stated the Budget Letter of Directive stated that they were aware that there were contractual increases that have been negotiated, and that living expenses for utilities and materials cost more today than in previous years. Therefore the Town Council was asking that they look for savings to reduce the increases.

Mayor Allyn, III, addressed the Budget Letter of Directive noting that he echoed Councilor Dombrowski’s comments. He went on to state that the letter was actually condensed from what it once was. He stated in terms of staffing the letter leaves it up to the leaders of each unit to determine the appropriate staffing level.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry provided clarification, noting that the points that Councilor Dombrowski made regarding the Budget Letter of Directive were also made by Board of Education Members Kate DiPalma-Herb and Joanne Kelley, noting that they have both been on the Board of Education for a longer period of time than some of the other Members.

Chairman Rodriguez noted on July 17, 2024 she received an email from Board of Education Chairman Anthony Favry in which he suggested Quarterly Leadership Meetings be held with himself, the Superintendent of Schools, Mayor Allyn, III, and herself. She stated they all thought it was a great idea, noting that Mayor Allyn suggested they go with Chairman Favry’s schedule because he traveled for work. However, she stated because no Quarterly Leadership Meetings were scheduled, that she took the initiative to organize a meeting, noting although Chairman Favry was not able to attend, that she along with Mayor Allyn and Superintendent Hartling met on September 23, 2024. She stated that she would reach out to Chairman Favry through a letter stating that they should meet again and that they would plan for any date that Chairman Favry was available, noting that she would make herself available. She questioned whether Mayor Allyn agreed with her suggestion. Mayor Allyn stated that he agreed.

## XI. MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Mental Health Clinicians – American Rescue Plan Act Funding (ARPA) – Mayor Allyn stated at the November 6, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting that he informally floated the idea to take the remaining ARPA Funding from the Middle School Mental Health Clinician and reallocate it to extend the contract with the Child

and Family Agency to provide services for the 2025-2026 School year. He stated the amount of funding remaining may not be enough to pay for the full school year, but that it would help. He stated that the Finance Department was working on a Contract Amendment to extend the Child and Family Agency's services. He stated the Child and Family Agency Program has been well received by both the schools (Juliet W. Long & Gallup Hill School) and staff. He stated the General Government was reaching across the aisle to provide funding for a need at the schools, however, he stated it was not within their purview, and was obviously not well received, noting that they would need to try another route; (2) Early Voting 2024 Presidential Election – Mayor Allyn stated 3,626 or 35.7% of Ledyard voters cast their Vote Early, 368 or 3.6% Absentee Votes were cast; and there were 303 Same Day Registration (SDR) voters. He stated Ledyard cast 4,319 votes before Election Day. He noted that they would expect the Absentee Votes to increase next year with the new “No Excuse Absentee Ballot”. He stated the State-Wide Average Turnout was 74.17% ; Ledyard's turnout was 83.21%; East Hampton had the highest voter turnout with an 89.64%; and Hartford had the lowest voter turnout with 43%. He stated Ledyard had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest voter turnout within their 10-area towns; (3) Demolition 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway – Mayor Allyn stated the town received this property through a foreclosure for the non-payment of multiple Blight Liens that had been placed on the property. He stated the house was demolished and removed from the site. He stated the town was working on the final preparations to convey the property to Avalonia Land Conservancy as part of the Founders Preserve conveyance. He noted the townspeople approved the transfer of the property to Avalonia Land Conservancy at the October 28, 2020 Special Town Meeting; (4) Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project Phase I – Mayor Allyn stated all the pipe was in the ground and has been pressure tested. He stated the paving would be done on Monday, November 18, 2024; which would include the Gallup Hill Intersection and some portions of the Multi-Use Pathway. He stated work continues on the retaining wall; (5) Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project Phase III (from Ledyard High School to Pennywise Lane) – Mayor Allyn stated this work was scheduled to begin on November 30, 2024. He stated that he along with the Town Engineer, Town Planner, and the Contractors met with the Board of Education to review the aerial view photos, where the sewer lines would lead, and how the construction work would affect the High School Property, before moving onto Gallup Hill Road; (6) Energy Assistance Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) – Mayor Allyn stated Ledyard was an intake site for residents to apply for Energy Assistance. He explained that the town does not have funding to assist residents with energy, noting that TVCCA was the funding source. He stated to date over 5,200 Energy Assistance Applications have been received, which was more than half of the Applications TVCCA received last year, noting that they were just beginning the heating season; (7) Connecticut Main Street Center Webinar – November 4, 2024 – Mayor Allyn explained that the Connecticut Main Street Center was a subset of the Federally Funding Main Street USA Program to try to stimulate downtown growth in all 169 Connecticut towns. He stated Connecticut Main Street Center would be in Ledyard between December 14, 2024 and January 14, 2025. He stated they would do a walking tour of Ledyard Center from the Post Office to the Bill Library; and a driving tour in Gales Ferry from the area of the Dollar Store to Long Cove Road and Route 12. He stated Connecticut Main Street Center understands that Ledyard has two downtown centers, noting that they would be working on both areas conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, and provide information which may tie in with the Route 12 Corridor Study that the town was conducting; (8) School Roof Projects – Mayor Allyn noted the following: (a) Juliet W. Long School Roof Project has been completed; and (b) Gales Ferry School Roof Project was continuing to have major issues. He explained that the Roof Material Company came up from Florida and based on their inspection that was done on November 11, 2024 they identified that the installation of the roof material was improper, noting that a lot of the roof panels would have to be removed from the building. He stated this information would be put in a letter to the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC) and that they were going to start to address the issues; (9) School(s) Consolidation Improvement Projects (Middle School & Gallup Hill School) – Mayor Allyn stated the State Auditors were at Town Hall on November 12, 2024 to begin their work. He stated they collected information and went back to their State Offices to work on the final figures. He stated Colliers Consultant did a great job with putting all the data together and that they were hopeful that the State Audit would go smoothly, noting that the State owed Ledyard about \$2 million in grant funding for the projects. He stated once the State released the funding to Ledyard that the town would then go out to obtain the Final



Bonding for the School Project(s); (10) United Way Asset Limited, Income Constricted, Employed (ALICE) Report – Mayor Allyn noted that 31% of Ledyard Residents fall within the ALICE classifications, noting that this was up from 21% that was reported in the 2020 Report. He stated Ledyard was ranked 11<sup>th</sup> tied with East Lyme. He explained the drivers of ALICE were housing costs, utility costs, healthcare costs; grocery costs, and childcare costs; (11) Groton Utilities Public Announcement - Water Services – Mayor Allyn stated Groton Utilities will be repairing a 12” water main tomorrow night (November 14, 2024). He stated Water Services would be shut off from Lorenz Parkway north from 10:00 p.m. – 5:00 a.m. on Friday, November 15, 2024; (12) Property Revaluation – Mayor Allyn stated per State Statute Ledyard’s Property Revaluation was scheduled for next year explaining that the field surveys would begin this year. He stated Tax Assessor Adrianna Hedwall informed him that the Field Auditors began work this week and that the work would be completed by Spring 2025. He went on to explain in accordance with State Statute that Revaluation Forms would be mailed to every property owner in November, 2025 noting that both the old assessment and new assessment would be included on the Revaluation Form. He stated that property owners would have the opportunity to dispute their new assessment through the Board of Assessment Appeals; (13) Burning Leaves – Mayor Allyn stated that it staggered him to see how many people were burning leaves in windy conditions, noting that burning leaves was illegal in the entire state of Connecticut; especially with the dry conditions and the Red Flag Alert Warnings that have been issued. He stated there have been 150 brush fires in the State. He stated residents could bring their leaves to the Transfer Station for free, they could mulch them up, compost them, or give them to someone else to compost.... But do not burn your leaves.

### **Questions to the Mayor**

Councilor Saccone addressed the dry conditions and the Red Flag Alert Warnings, noting that last night he saw someone flick a cigarette out the car window. He stated that he could see the sparks bounce off the road. He stated if those sparks made it to the dry vegetation along the side of the road it could have been a problem.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that Public Works Director Steve Masalin was present this evening and she questioned how the PILOT Compost Program was going relative to the participation, etc. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated since the PILOT Program began in July, 2024 that he has paid two Blue Earth Compost Invoices. He stated Blue Earth Compost was servicing 4 – 6 carts per month. He stated for October Blue Earth Compost picked up 750 pounds of Food Waste from Ledyard’s Transfer Station, which was lower than the amount that was collected in September. He stated the cost to compost the Food Waste was costing ten-times more than sending it out with the household trash.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated the original arrangement with Blue Earth Compost was supposed to be \$196 per month, regardless of the Food Waste weight. She stated that she has posted on her social media page that there were still some compost pails available at the Transfer Station for Free; and that residents could purchase extra compostable bags and extra pails at the Transfer Station. She stated that there have been a number of positive comments regarding the PILOT Compost Program, however, she stated that some residents were having difficulty bringing their Food Waste to the Transfer Station during the regular hours of operation. She stated that she was looking for ideas on how the town could increase the participation and solutions that would provide residents with a bigger window on when they could bring their Food Waste to the Transfer Station.

Mayor Allyn questioned how many residents cannot get to the Transfer Station on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Saturday. He stated if it was a small number of residents that he would ask how many residents owned or rented a house where they could have a Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resource Recovery Authority (SCRRA) composting bin in their back yard to compost their food waste at their home. He stated for those living in an apartment having a SCRRA composting bin in their back yard was not an option. Councilor Garcia-Irizarry noted that 10-15 residents have brought to her attention through social media their issue about getting to the Transfer Station during the operating hours. She questioned whether they could try placing a Food Scrap Collection container in an area that was available 24/7 for a period of time. She stated if they did not see an increase in participation then they could go back to what they had been doing.

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated that he was not prepared to speak about the Compost PILOT Program this evening. He explained that he believed that to operate a Transfer Station that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) required everything to be secured behind fencing. However, he stated he did not know how much flexibility they would have. He stated there were 23 complementary Compost Starter Kits remaining from the original 100 Kits. He stated because he expected the PILOT Program would go past the initial 100 Starter Kits that he spent money and purchased an additional 50 more Starter Kits. Therefore, he stated based on the number of Kits that have been picked-up that the town had 77 participants in the PILOT Program.

Councilor Buhle noted the social media posts regarding the Revaluation Field Inspections. She stated as a Military Community there were a lot of Military Spouses that were home while their partners were deployed or at work; and she explained that many were not comfortable with allowing someone into their home. Therefore, she questioned what would happen if someone were to decline the Revaluation Field Inspector to enter into their home. Mayor Allyn, III, stated that the property owner did not have to allow the Revaluation Field Inspectors into their home. However, he explained that the Revaluation Company would then send a *Data Mailer* that would ask the property owner to provide information regarding their home such as: the kitchen, bathrooms, were they dated, were they new, did the home have hardwood floors, central air conditioning, etc. He stated once the form was completed the property owner would be required to sign and attest to authenticity of the information and that they would be required to return the *Data Mailer* to the Revaluation Company. He stated the revaluation would be based on the information the property owner provided in the *Data Mailer*.

Chairman Rodriguez stated that she has heard some residents say that they were not going to let the Revaluation Field Inspectors into their house, because their taxes would go up, noting that they made improvements to their home without obtaining the proper building permits. She noted the resident stated if they do not allow the Revaluation Field Inspectors into their house that the town would not find out about the improvements until they sold their house.

Mayor Allyn stated Municipalities were statutorily required to conduct a Revaluation of property every five years. He stated he saw a social media post that said the town should mail notices to every household to inform them about the Revaluation. However, he stated the Revaluation was similar to the Annual Budget Referendum. He stated the town voted on a Budget every year, and that Property Revaluations were conducted every five years, and that they have for the past 75-years. He stated that he has seen a lot of angry responses about the Revaluation, noting that he only learned yesterday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. that the Revaluation Field Inspectors were already working in Ledyard. He went on to note that the next Revaluation was going to be done in four years, because the Governor adjusted the next cycle to try to get a number of towns on the same Revaluation schedule to try to save money.

Chairman Rodriguez questioned what would happen if the property owner was not home when the Revaluation Field Inspector stopped by. Mayor Allyn stated that they would leave a note on the door stating that Vision Appraisal stopped by their home, and would allow the people to make appointments for them to revisit the property to see the inside of their home.

XII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

Administration Committee

1. MOTION to adopt proposed amendments to Ordinance #100-015 (rev.1) “*An Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Municipal Building Committee for the Town of Ledyard*”.

DRAFT *9/11/2024*

Ordinance # 100-015 (*rev.1*)

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING  
A PERMANENT MUNICIPAL BUILDING COMMITTEE  
FOR THE TOWN OF LEDYARD

Be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Ledyard

Section 1. Authority

Pursuant to Chapter IV, Section 7 of the Town Charter, a Permanent Municipal Building Committee is hereby established.

Section 2. Purpose

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall have continued responsibility for the execution of ~~major-select~~ construction and maintenance projects for the Town of Ledyard *as assigned by the Town Council*. The Permanent Municipal Building Committee will oversee and supervise the design, construction, renovation, demolition and removal of Town and Board of Education buildings *that fall within the approved budget*, as well as any significant installation, renovation or upgrade of service equipment and major systems as provided herein.

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee may have responsibility for the execution of buildings or infrastructure projects associated with the provisions of water and/or sewer, if deemed appropriate by the Town Council.

*For projects whose total project cost is estimated to exceed \$500,000, an Owner's Representative and/or Consulting Engineer shall be hired through a quality-based selection process to assist the Permanent Municipal Building Committee with management and oversight of such project(s). The Owner's Representative or Consulting Engineer shall not have authority to make decisions, approvals, or otherwise act on behalf of the Permanent Building Committee unless specifically designated to do so by contract. The Owner's Representative or Consulting Engineer shall be required to have the requisite experience, knowledge, qualifications, personnel and capacity necessary to manage such a project.*

*The selection of an Owner's Representative or Consulting Engineer shall be publicly advertised through a Request for Proposal to solicit proposals from interested parties. The Request for Proposal shall provide a clear scope of services that specifies the roles and responsibilities of the Owner's Representative or Consulting Engineer. Where possible, it shall clearly specify the level of oversight during construction so that proposals from multiple firms can be clearly leveled during the evaluation process.*

*The selection of the Owner's Representative or Consulting Engineer shall be awarded to the firm that provides the best value to the Town of Ledyard. The best value is defined as the firm providing the highest quality, expertise, and knowledge for the proposed project. This shall also include the quality of referrals from a minimum of three references provided by the proposers. It shall also consider the fee for the work; however, the fee shall not be the sole basis for award.*

*When a project involves the purchase of replacement equipment costing more than \$500,000, a waiver to bypass the solicitation of bids for the engagement of an Owner's Representative or Consulting Engineer may be approved by the Town Council; as requested by the Permanent Municipal Building Committee prior to purchase and installation of the equipment.*

*The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall comply with provisions provided in Ordinance 200-001 (rev.1) (An Ordinance for Purchasing) with regard to the competitive bid process; and shall interview a minimum of two firms prior to selection. Should only one firm be determined qualified to perform such work, the Permanent Municipal Building Committee may request a waiver for such a requirement should the firm's proposal be reasonable for the proposed scope of work.*

*The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall make a written recommendation to the Town Council for the award of such services. The recommendation shall include a summary of proposers, a weighed ranking sheet for the selection, and reasons why the Permanent Municipal Building Committee is recommending such a firm.*

*The final decision of award will lie with the Town Council. The Town Council possesses the authority to reject the recommendation and refer it back to the Permanent Municipal Building Committee for further action relative to making another recommendation for the award of such services in the best interest of the Town of Ledyard.*

*Where external funding sources are used to fund the project, such requirements of the funding authority shall apply to the selection process as well. Where conflicts occur between this ordinance and the funding authority's requirements, the most stringent requirement(s) shall be applicable as determined by Mayor or their designee.*

*The Requests for Proposals for Owner's Representatives or Consulting Engineers is subject to review by the Town Director of Finance. The Director of Finance is responsible for ensuring that all required local and state purchasing requirements are met and that all insurance requirements are included in the Request for Proposal.*

From time to time, the Permanent Municipal Building Committee may be asked to undertake certain studies or projects by the Town Council. In case of multiple projects, the Town Council may form a separate building committee for a particular project.

### Section 3. Membership

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall consist of the following members appointed by the Town Council:

Regular Members: Five (5). These members, to the extent possible, shall include those with experience in finance, engineering, architecture, project management, or the building trades. They shall be appointed *by the Town Council* for a term of three (3) years.

Temporary Members: For each municipal project, up to two (2) temporary members who are a member or representative of the Proposing Body shall be appointed by the Town Council.

For Board of Education projects, at least one *of their two* temporary members shall be ~~the a~~ Board of Education *Chairman or their designee* ~~member.~~ *Board of Education Temporary Members shall be appointed by the Town Council.*

*Temporary Members shall serve for the term of the project they have been appointed for.*

Temporary members shall have the right to vote on the activities of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee only with respect to the particular project for which such members were appointed.

Ex-Officio Members: The Town Finance Director, *Public Works Director*, Board of Education Business Manager and/or his designee, *Board of Education Director of Facilities and Grounds*, Town Engineering Technician, Town Planner and the Permanent Municipal Building Committee's Town Council Liaison shall be non-voting ex-officio members.

Quorum: A quorum shall consist of a majority of *Regular* voting members.

### Section 4. Terms of appointment

Regular members shall be appointed by the Town Council for a term of three (3) years. 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.

Any vacancy in the Permanent Municipal Building Committee other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the Town Council. The Town Council may remove members for cause and fill the vacancy per Chapter IV, Section 6 of the Town Charter.

Cause for removal shall include, but is not limited to, unexcused absence from three (3) consecutive regular meetings and any intervening duly called special meeting.

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

It shall be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee to notify the Town Council when a member has not properly performed his duties.

Annually, the regular members of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall elect a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Any vacancy in any such office shall be filled by the Permanent Municipal Building Committee from its regular membership.

#### Section 5. Powers and Duties

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee is authorized to develop design plans and drawings for municipal building projects directed by the Town Council, primarily in accordance with the Town's Capital Improvements Projects List.

*The Permanent Municipal Building Committee is authorized to recommend to the Mayor to retain the services of architects and/or engineers for the purpose of planning, designing, building and administrating major capital projects. The process shall utilize a quality-based selection similar to that outlined in Section 2 for the Owner's Representative or Consulting Engineer. Such selection shall be based on experience, knowledge, capacity and expertise as well as the fee for performing such work.*

~~The Permanent Municipal Building Committee is authorized to interview architects and/or engineers for the purpose of planning, designing, building and completing municipal building projects, and based on said interviews and cost estimates, to hire suitable candidates.~~ *When an Owner's Representative is required for the project, the Permanent Building Committee shall provide a recommendation for the hiring of an Owner's Representative prior to selecting the architect and/or engineer, so that the Owner's Representative may assist with the development of the Request for Proposal, the selection process, project control budgets, project schedules, contracts and other material necessary to properly solicit comprehensive proposals by interested firms.*

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee is authorized to develop schedules and ~~cost estimates~~ *budgets* for municipal building projects. *However, when an Owner's Representative is required, the Owner's Representative shall be responsible for drafting such schedules and budgets; and shall be approved by the Permanent Municipal Building Committee. The Owner's Representative shall also be responsible for developing a project cash flow projection for review by the Town Director of Finance, as approved by the Permanent Municipal Building Committee.*

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee is authorized to recommend to the Mayor the execution of municipal building project contracts as may be approved by the Town Council.

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall have authority over all change order requests. The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall also coordinate all applications for grants and other financial assistance documents *except for school construction grants through the Department of Education. Such grant applications are the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.* The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall submit change orders and grants/financial assistance documentation to the appropriate authority in a timely manner and with timely notification to the Town Council. The Town Council is the authority to modify or change the scope of the project.

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall at least quarterly report its activity to the Town Council and to the Proposing Body, if applicable; and shall submit a final report upon completion of each project. The Permanent Municipal Building Committee is also authorized to conduct periodic reviews and audits of the physical condition of all municipal

and school buildings and grounds, including service equipment and major systems and make recommendations to the Town Council for inclusion into the Town’s Capital Improvements Projects List and should work with the Mayor’s Office and the appropriate boards and commissions and agencies.

It is understood that the agencies assigned responsibility for specific buildings, grounds, capital, and facilities shall assess, prioritize, seek funding and actively support administration of projects assigned to the Permanent Municipal Building Committee.

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee shall, with assistance from the Proposing Body ensure that projects are completed, including the close-out of required reports, in a timely manner.

Section 6. Spending Funds

The Permanent Municipal Building Committee may expend such funds as the Town Council, or if required the Town Meeting, may appropriate to carry out its duties as described herein. There shall be no intermingling of funding between projects.

Section 7. Definitions:

For the purpose of this Ordinance, the following definitions shall apply:

1) “Major maintenance” shall include capital building/improvement projects and projects that are capital in nature; that is, having a useful life of five or more years.

“Major maintenance” shall not include routine maintenance and upkeep of a building or other structures, or its service equipment, which is performed on a regular basis.

2) “Service equipment and major systems” shall include boilers, elevators, generators, HVAC systems, septic systems, fire alarms, electrical service including wiring and fixtures, major plumbing service, building skin (roofs, gutters, masonry, windows, exterior paint, floor covering, etc.) It shall not include information system technology (computers and computer systems).

3). “Proposing Body” means the Town of Ledyard appointed or elected board or commission sponsoring or requesting a construction or major maintenance project or for a project initiated by the Permanent Building Committee itself, the board or commission whose facility would be the recipient thereof.

Section 7. Severability

If any provision of this Ordinance shall be held invalid by a court having competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect any of the other provisions of this Ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision and for this purpose the provisions of the Ordinance are hereby declared severable.

Section 8. 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.

Amended, Adopted and Renumbered by the Ledyard Town Council on: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman

Approved/Disapproved on: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fred B. Allyn, III, Mayor

Published on:

Effective Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia A. Riley, Town Clerk

\*\*\*\*\*

Revisions: Ordinance #119 *“An Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Municipal Building Committee for the Town of Ledyard”* Adopted March 26, 2008; Ordinance #138 *“An Ordinance Amending an Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Municipal Building Committee for the Town of Ledyard: Adopted June 24, 2015; Effective: July 31, 2015; **Ordinance renumbered from Ordinance #138 to Ordinance #100-015 as part of the Town Council’s 2017-2019 Ordinance Update Initiative; September 25, 2019.***

History:

The Twenty-fourth Town Council (2017- 2019) Ordinance Update Initiative: Renumbered Ordinance #138 to Ordinance #100-015.

2015: Removed the project threshold of \$25,000 requiring all capital building/improvement projects and projects that are capital in nature; that is, having a useful life of five or more years be assigned to the Permanent Municipal Building Committee.

2019: Title – Removed “Ordinance Amending” – Per Town Attorney not required. Section 4 added language regarding members attendance relative to resignation/replacement. Removed Section 9 *“Cancellation”* - Per Town Attorney the *“Cancellation Section”* was not needed. The *“Revisions”* and *“History”* paragraph indicates that the previous ordinance has been updated and replaced. Added new Section 9 *“Effective Date”* to be consistent with Town Ordinance format.

2024: Section 2 “Purpose” Paragraph 1 replaced the word ~~major~~ with *“select” and* Added Paragraphs 2 – 6.

Section 3: *“Membership” Added: “.....Chairman or their designee. Also, the following language was added for clarification: **Board of Education Temporary Members shall be appointed by the Town Council”***

*“Public Works Director, Board of Education Director of Facilities and Grounds.*

**Section 5 “Powers and Duties”:**

**Paragraph 2- The following language was replaced: ~~The Permanent Municipal Building Committee is authorized to interview architects and/or engineers for the purpose of planning, designing, building and completing municipal building projects, and based on said interviews and cost estimates, to hire suitable candidates.~~ “When an Owner’s Representative is required for the project, the Permanent Building Committee shall provide a recommendation for the hiring of an Owner’s Representative prior to selecting the architect and/or engineer so that the Owner’s Representative may assist with the development of the Request for Proposal, the selection process, project control budgets, project schedules, contracts and other material necessary to properly solicit comprehensive proposals by interested firms”.**

Paragraph 3: Replaced: ~~cost estimates~~ with *“budgets”* Also added: *“However, when an Owner’s Representative is required, the Owner’s Representative shall be responsible for drafting such schedules and budgets. The Owner’s Representative shall also be responsible for developing a project cash flow projection for review by the Town Director of Finance*

**NEW Paragraph 4**

**Paragraph 5 Added the following language: *except for school construction grants through the Department of Education. Such grant applications are the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.***

Moved by Councilor Garcia-Irizarry, seconded by Councilor Brunelle  
Discussion: Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated a Public Hearing was held on October 23, 2024, noting that one resident inquired about the availability of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee to help other town commissions with their Capital Improvement Projects.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry went on to note that Ordinance #100-015 (rev.1) “*An Ordinance Establishing a Permanent Municipal Building Committee for the Town of Ledyard*” was being amended to provide language for the hiring of an Owners Representative or Consulting Engineer for Projects exceeding \$500,000. The intent of this provision was to provide support and oversight of the process and to review the activities on a daily basis, working in conjunction with the volunteer members of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee (PMBC). She explained by having professionals regularly on the construction site would help to ensure that timelines were followed, and to enable problems that arise to be addressed and adjudicated in a timely fashion. In addition, the amendments provided additional clarification.

**VOTE: 9– 0 Approved and so declared**

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

Finance Committee

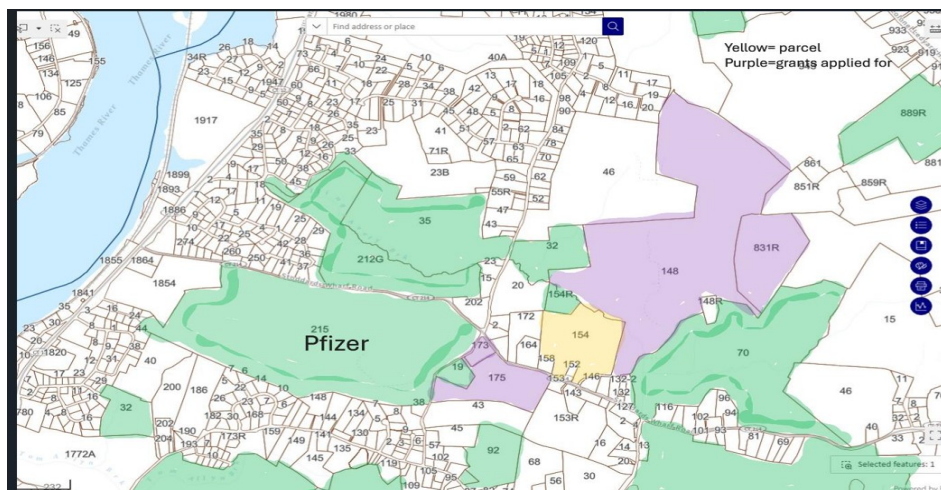
- MOTION to authorize the Mayor to issue a “*Letter of Commitment*” to Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc., in response to their request of \$80,000 from Account #210-101210-12101-58920 (Open Space Fund) to provide financial support with the acquisition of 154 Stoddard’s Wharf Road 35.95+/- acres of Open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

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, explained 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 that the town had previously allocated funding from the Open Space Account to Avalonia Land Conservancy to help with the acquisition of a property that Avalonia Land Conservancy did not end up acquiring. However, he stated Avalonia Land Conservancy President Dennis Main approached the town to seek financial assistance for Avalonia Land Conservancy acquire 154 Stoddard’s Wharf Road 35.95+/- acres of Open Space.

Mayor Allyn reviewed the map below explaining that 154 Stoddard’s Wharf Road was identified as the yellow parcel and that the green parcels were currently open space. Therefore, he stated the acquisition of this parcel was in a good location for the connection of the Tri-Town Trail (Bluff Point to Preston Plains Park). He noted that Avalonia Land Conservancy President Dennis Main was attending tonight’s meeting via Zoom and he invited him to provide additional information regarding the acquisition of this parcel.





Avalonia Land Conservancy President Dennis Main, attending remotely, thanked the Town Council and Mayor Allyn, III, for their support and for considering the funding request to assist with the acquisition of 154 Stoddard's Wharf Road 35.95+/- acres to be preserved as Open Space. He stated Avalonia Land Conservancy was looking to create some Greenways and Habitat Connections by daisy chaining the parcels in that area. He stated 154 Stoddard's Wharf Road would also help the Tri-Town Trail Association to eventually get their connectivity.

Mr. Main continued by thanking the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee for their work with the Historic District Commission to obtain a Historic Preservation Designation of the Spicer Homestead Ruins. He stated that his Grandmother's Grandfather, Price Spicer, was the last descendent of a long line of Spicers that lived at that Homestead.

Mr. Main also addressed the demolition of 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway, as Mayor Allyn reported earlier this evening. He stated the Founders Preserve was going to be a great Preserve, noting in his recent visit to the property he counted 23 Great Blue Herons, including chicks that were nesting. He stated it was an awesome habitat where the Old Paint Mill Pond was. He stated being able to offer bow hunting on the Founders Preserve Property to more constituents, as allowed by Ordinance#100-018 (rev. 1) "*An Ordinance Providing Archery Hunting on Certain Town Owned Lands and Certain Open Space Properties*", would be something new for Avalonia Land Conservancy. He stated he would like to take a moment to remember Virginia Lamb who recently passed away from cancer, noting that she grew up next to the Founders Preserve Property. He stated Ms. Lamb was the Valedictorian of the First Ledyard High School Graduating Class of 1967; and that her mother Ellen worked at Town Hall for many years.

Mr. Main concluded his remarks by again thanking Mayor Allyn, III, and the Town Council for their support of Avalonia Land Conservancy.

**VOTE: 9- 0 Approved and so declared**

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

3. MOTION to 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 (2025-45).

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, noted that Director of Emergency Management/Fire Marshall Jim Mann apologized that he was not able to attend tonight's meeting, noting that he was still out doing inspections this evening.

Mayor Allyn noted that this was a Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Funding (NSEF) Grant, and he explained that the town was required to purchase the equipment and that the NSEF Program would reimburse the town 100%.

Councilor Saccone stated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was located in the basement of the High School explaining that the radio reception at the EOC was poor. He stated this upgraded equipment would help with better reception during the use of the Emergency Operation Center.

**VOTE: 9- 0 Approved and so declared**

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

4. MOTION to 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 Buhle, seconded by Councilor Saccone

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated the Town has included \$400,000 for the installation of an elevator for Town Hall in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for many years. He stated the proposed Vertical Lift was a less costly alternative to accomplish their essential needs. He stated the Vertical Lift had a capacity rating of 750 pounds which was a little less than an elevator; and would handle the Town Hall needs on a routine basis. He stated that architectural plans were ready, and the plans and project has been reviewed by the Building Inspector.

Mr. Masalin went on to explain that the Town had a Sourcewell Bid to construct the \$135,000 structure which included funding for the electrical, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) modifications, and other contingency costs. He noted that a bid waiver in the amount of \$45,600 was being requested for the Vertical Lift that would go inside the structure.

Mr. Masalin described the Vertical Lift explaining that an external structure would be built on the Town Hall where the out-cove was between the Town Hall and the Police Facility. He went on to note that a Vertical Lift was an economical alternative to an elevator because in addition to the \$400,000 cost to install an elevator, that there would also be routine Certification Inspection costs that were also high, noting that an elevator would require a separate mechanical room, hydraulics, etc. He stated although he was not familiar with Vertical Lifts that Building Foreman Shawn Ruszyk and the Architect researched the options that would meet the needs of Town Hall; and also comply with American Disabilities Act (ADA).

Mayor Allyn, III, noted the Vertical Lift would be a tremendous help for residents who come into Town Hall with walkers, wheelchairs, and other mobility issues especially with the new *No Excuse Absentee Ballots*, noting that residents would still need to come into Town Hall to get an Absentee Ballot Application.

Chairman Rodriguez stated while on vacation in Maine that she saw something that looked like an elevator on a building that was adjacent to the hotel property, but the structure was not an elevator. She stated because she had not seen a Vertical Lift before that she was curious to see how it worked. She stated that the Vertical Lift worked wonderfully for them and that she was pleased to see they were installing a Vertical Lift at the Town Hall. She thanked the Public Works Department for coming forward with the idea.

**VOTE: 9- 0 Approved and so declared**

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

5. MOTION to 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:	\$59,876.00

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 Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Parks, Recreation, & Senior Citizens Director Scott Johnson, Jr., attending remotely, addressed the proposal to expand the parking area at the Erickson Park. He 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 that they found that they would be eliminating the absorption area for the water; and also found that expanding the parking lot would cause more drainage issues. He went on to explain that if they expanded the parking lot they would need to install a retaining wall, which would add to the cost of the project. Therefore, he stated he was suggesting that they abandon the Erickson Park Parking Lot Improvement Project and redirect the \$55,000 ARPA Funding; and allocate an additional \$4,876 for a total allocation in the amount of \$59,876 to facilitate the Projects listed above.

Mr. Johnson continued by reviewing the following projects:

- ✓ 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 thanked Mr. Johnson for his work in putting this Project List together in a short amount of time to redirect these ARPA Funding before the December 31, 2024 deadline. He stated the Projects List Mr. Johnson presented included some great projects that have been in need of repair/replacement for a number of years. He stated using the ARPA Funding was a great opportunity to fulfill those needs.

Mayor Allyn, III, addressed abandoning the Erickson Park Enhancement Project to expand the Parking Lot, explaining when the Contractors visited the site they determined that cutting the grade out would lead to more drainage runoff and potentially blow out the new boat launch. He also noted that because they would need to build a retaining wall that it would eliminate the ability for the mowers to drive up to that area. He stated in assessing the Erickson Park Enhancement Project to expand the parking lot they found that a lot more would be required to mitigate the drainage and other issues, noting that it was not going to be a cost-effective project.

Councilor Dombrowski stated he was not opposed to abandoning the Erickson Park Enhancement Projects; or with moving forward with the projects presented this evening. However, he questioned whether \$55,000 for the Erickson Park Enhancement Project; or these additional projects were included in the Capital Improvement Plan, noting that the ARPA Projects List was included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that was approved as part of Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget.

Councilor Ryan responded to Councilor Dombrowski stating that the ARPA Projects List was included in the overall budget plan; noting that that he would need to look back to check on how the ARPA Projects were handled relative to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He went on to state that some of the Erickson Park Enhancement Projects were completed. However, he noted as Mayor Allyn explained, they found that any additional work to the Parking Lot area would be detrimental to the work that was already done at Erickson Park.

Councilor Dombrowski explained that the Planning Commission was the authority that reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), not the Town Council. Therefore, he stated that he wanted to make sure they were not bypassing that process. Mr. Johnson stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission approved and put some projects forward for Erickson Park which included the stone dust path and redirecting the path to allow the parking lot project to take place with the use of the ARPA Funding. However, he stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission did not approve the projects through their Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Mayor Allyn stated the following Parks and Recreation projects were included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); Storage Container, Pickleball Court; Automated Locks; Blunders Park Basketball Court Repairs; and Judge Crandall Park Door. He stated the Projects presented this evening were not included in the Capital Improvement Plan. Councilor Dombrowski stated based on the list of projects that were included in the Capital Improvement Plan that he was comfortable with the motion as presented this evening.

**VOTE: 9- 0 Approved and so declared**

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

- MOTION to transfer and appropriate \$100,446 to CNR account # 21012103-53305 Revaluation from CNR account # 21090305-58915 Undesignated.  
Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle  
Discussion: Mayor Allyn, III, stated as he reported earlier this evening (see above XI Mayor's Report), that in accordance with State Statute Ledyard was required to conduct a full Revaluation this year. He stated based on an estimated cost of \$187,000; and in preparation for the Revaluation that funding has been allocated to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the past few years.

Mayor Allyn went on to explain that because the town only received two bids, at their August 14, 2024 meeting the Town Council granted a Bid Waiver to Vision Government Solution. He stated both of the bids received came in higher than the \$187,000 that was budgeted noting that Vision Government Solutions in the amount of \$87,446 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.

**VOTE: 9- 0 Approved and so declared**

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

General Items

7. MOTION to cancel the Town Council’s Regular Meeting of November 27, 2024 for the Thanksgiving Holiday.  
Moved by Chairman Rodriguez, seconded by Councilor Dombrowski  
Discussion: None.

**VOTE: 9- 0 Approved and so declared**

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

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Buhle moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Brunelle  
**VOTE: 9 - 0 Approved and so declared.** The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

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

I, S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman of the Ledyard Town Council,  
hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and  
correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Town Council  
Meeting held on November 13, 2024.

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S. Naomi Rodriguez, Chairman