



TOWN OF LEDYARD CONNECTICUT TOWN COUNCIL

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway

Ledyard, CT 06339

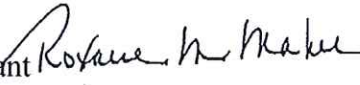
<http://www.ledyardct.org>

Roxanne M. Maher

860 464-3203

Chairman Kevin J. Dombrowski

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 31, 2023
TO: Mayor Fred Allyn, III
FROM: Roxanne M. Maher, Administrative Assistant 
to the Ledyard Town Council

Subject: Annual Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023

Please find attached the Town Council's Annual Report for the period of July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.

I have also e-mailed you both an electronic copy and hard copy of this document for the inclusion in the Town's Annual Report.

Thank you.

Town Council Annual Report
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

KJD/rm



LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

The Twenty-Sixth Ledyard Town Council under Chairman Kevin J. Dombrowski continued to meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month.

The Twenty-sixth Ledyard Town Council was comprised of:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Kevin J. Dombrowski – Chairman | |
| Andra Ingalls | Gary Paul |
| Whit Irwin | S. Naomi Rodriguez |
| John Marshall | Timothy Ryan |
| Mary McGrattan | Bill Saums |

YEAR IN REVIEW

The Ledyard Town Council and Mayor Fred Allyn, III, continued to work with Washington Attorney Perkins Coie and local attorneys Cullina Murtha and Attorney Lloyd Langhammer on tribal recognition issues; taxes and assessment matters regarding the Tanger Outlets retail stores at the Foxwoods Casino.

Again, this year the State Legislature discussed the proposed “*An Act Establishing a Property Tax Exemption for Property Located on Certain Indian Lands*”. The proposed Bill was designed to negate the Towns’ ability to collect personal property tax from the private vendors operating at the Mashantucket Pequot Foxwoods Resort Casino. The Town’s premise was based on the Municipalities winning their case to collect a property tax thru two court proceedings, including the Federal Second Circuit Court. If the State Legislature had approved Bill during the 2023/2024 Session it would have legislatively negated the unanimous judicial decision handed down by the Supreme Court in April 2021. Ledyard would have lost over \$600,000 annually in tax revenue and it would have impacted the level of services the town provided to its residents. The Towns that would have been affected by this Bill prevailed in presenting their case; and the State Legislature did not approve the proposed Bill. Ledyard’s position continues to remain that “*Federally Recognized Indian Tribes are governed by the Federal Laws, and the State should not look to preempt that*”.

Mayor Fred Allyn, III, and Montville Mayor Ronald McDaniel jointly submitted written testimony at a Public Hearing held on March 23, 2023 regarding the proposed Senate Bill #1213 “*An Act Concerning The Mashantucket Pequot And Mohegan Fund*” (aka Pequot Fund). The Senate Bill, which Governor Ned Lamont vetoed on July 10, 2023, would have increased the Pequot Fund disbursement to all municipalities throughout the state to \$139,380,000. When the Pequot Fund was implemented in 1993 the intent was for the State to distribute 85% of the revenues received from the Casino Gaming to the municipalities and for the State to retain 15%. However, the amount of money distributed to municipalities has declined over the years, as monies from the Pequot Fund were being used to address state budget deficits. In 2022 the State retained 90% of the Pequot Fund revenue and only distributed 10% to the municipalities. The Town Council commended Senator Osten and other who were working to turn this funding trend back to the original intent of the Pequot Fund. In the coming year, Mayor Allyn, III, and Montville Mayor McDaniel would be participating in a Working Group along with six members of the State Legislation, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN) Chairman Butler, and Mohegan Sun Tribe Chairman Gessner, Jr., to discussed taxation issues on Indian Lands and how this issue should be handled for next year’s (Fiscal Year 2024/2025) Legislative Session. The distribution of the Pequot Fund is based on a per capita formula, and other municipalities were receiving a larger piece of the Pequot Fund than host communities like Ledyard. This was due in part to the per capita including incarcerated inmates in the formula for communities with prisons; although the inmates were not directly receiving services from the municipality.

Perkins Coie Attorney Don Bauer has been working with Ledyard and our neighboring towns since the early 1990’s advising and representing us in legal matters regarding Indian Land and Taxation Issues. He was an expert in Native American Law and a friend to Ledyard often providing our community with pro bono legal counsel. It is with our sincere gratitude we thank Attorney Bauer for his hard work, measured guidance, and dedication to public service, as he passed away on December 15, 2022 to an aggressive cancer. Attorney Bauer’s knowledge and understanding of the Federal position in Indian law and his practical approach to problem-solving made him a valuable resource to our community. We express our deepest sympathies to Attorney Bauer’s family, friends, and colleges.

The Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Capital Improvement Plan included \$1,150,285. This funding, combined with state and federal grants, borrowing, and other funding sources provided for a total CIP in the amount of \$6,258,054. The CIP continued to fund critical road repairs/maintenance, purchase of emergency radio equipment, and reserve fund allocations for emergency services equipment, future vehicle purchases, technology enhancements, improvements to the high school classrooms and bathrooms, Lantern Hill Road/Whitford Brook Bridge repairs, roof replacement for the Gales Ferry School and Juliet W. Long School, including the installation of roof mounted solar arrays, design work for a Multimodal Trail from the High School to Ledyard Center, and design work to extend the sewer line from Ledyard Center to the Waste Water Treatment Facility on Town Farm Road.

The Town Council continued its focus on infrastructure improvements to encourage economic development and to provide pedestrian and vehicular safety in Ledyard Center; and the town continued its work to implement the following initiatives:

- ***Local Transportation Capital Improvement Plan (LOTICIP) \$1.87 million Grant*** - Western & Sampson Engineers continued work to design a Multi-Use Pathway & Sidewalk Extension Project from the High School to Ledyard Center. This project would include crosswalks in the areas of the Library and the Best Way Convenience Store along with sidewalks to connect to the Village Market. In addition, a bike lane/sidewalk would be constructed on the southside of Route 117 providing safety for the High School students to get to Blonders Park/Field and to Ledyard Center. The State Department of Transportation installed “*Walk-Do Not Walk*” signals at the intersection. A meeting was held with residents whose property abutted the Pathway to discuss various components of the project including the level of pedestrians and bicyclists activity during the day, which included the High School kids walking to Colonel Ledyard Park or to the Library. The town received good feedback and a positive response from the 14 – 16 residents who attended the meeting.
- ***Brown’s Crossing Road Bridge Transfer of Ownership to the Town*** – The Brown’s Crossing Road Bridge was a one-lane wooden bridge owned by the Providence & Worcester Railroad that crossed over the railroad tracks along the Thames River to three parcels. The Historical Title Search went back to the early 1800’s naming Carl Brown as the owner. Mr. Brown made a deal with the old New York, New Haven & Hartford Steam Railway, which included the installation of the Brown’s Road Crossing Bridge. The light-weight wooden structure bridge was built for horse and carriages and never met modern highway rating standards. At their February 10, 2021 meeting the Town Council authorized the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the Providence & Worcester Railroad Company to provide a physical replacement of the Brown’s Road Crossing Bridge with the agreement that the Town would take ownership of the bridge and manage the maintenance of the bridge after P&W Railroad replaced the structure with a bridge that met the current highway rating standards. On June 9, 2021 the Town Council voted to accept ownership of the new Brown’s Crossing Bridge, located on Brown’s Crossing Road, Gales Ferry, from the Railroad, contingent upon the completion of construction and certification. After several years of working out the details, the Town officially took ownership of the Brown’s Crossing Bridge on March 7, 2023.
- ***American Rescue Act Plan*** - With the 117th United States Congress approval, President Biden signed the *American Rescue Act Plan* (ARPA) into law on March 11, 2021 which provided funding for the Public Health Emergency, investment in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure, public safety, and other areas that were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Town of Ledyard (Town/General Government) received a total allocation of \$4.327 million; and the Board of Education received a separate allocation of \$2.8 million. The funding was released to local governments in two tranches (the 1st was received around July 1, 2021; and the 2nd tranche around May/June 2022). The federal guidelines required the ARPA funding to be obligated by the end of the 2024 calendar year; and spent (liquidated) by the end of the 2026 calendar year. The Federal Treasury definition of “*Obligated Funds*” meant “*An order has been placed for property and services, or contracts, or some awards were made*”.

During the year the Town continued to make good progress on our ARPA projects with sixteen projects being completed, twelve projects were in-progress, and nine projects were not yet started, as of the writing of this Annual Report. The projects that made the ARPA List ranged from infrastructure projects such as the Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension project, to supporting our Regional Agency Partners, to facility maintenance projects, the preservation of historical landmarks and park improvements, software upgrades and many others.

With the sewer infrastructure project in Ledyard Center rating high on the ARPA Funding Projects List, the town was disappointed with the April, 2022 notification that their January 12, 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application in the amount \$1.38 million was not approved, delaying the project. The Town Council has continued to work with the Water Pollution Control Authority to identify and seek additional funding sources to help off-set the costs to facilitate this critical infrastructure development; as it is an essential piece for future development in Ledyard Center. We remain committed and hopeful that Ledyard will be successful in obtaining funding that would allow the town to begin this project soon.

The Annual Audit Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 was presented to the Finance Committee and Board of Education by CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) at the Finance Committee's January 18, 2023 meeting. Lead Auditor Nikoleta McTigue presented an unmodified or clean opinion, which was the highest form of opinion CLA could give on the financial statements. CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) provided an *Auditor's Recommendations Document/Management Letter* which included some general comments and recommendations for improvements. Actions were taken to implement the Auditor's recommendations.

In working to close out the School(s) Consolidation/Improvement Project(s)(Middle School and Gallup Hill School) to receive the State's Grant Reimbursement, the town contracted with Colliers Project Leaders (Bid # 2022-10) to prepare and assemble the entire body of evidence that would meet the State's Guidelines. However, with staff changes in the State's Department of Administrative Services (DAS) progress has been delayed and as of the writing of this Annual Report a meeting was being scheduled with the DAS to discuss the release the next Grant reimbursement payment, which would bring the total grant funding up to 95% of the amount the State promised to the Town. With the State holding back grant funding they have placed a significant burden on Ledyard's taxpayers, because the Town has had to carry the entire debt of the project along with the additional costs of the short-term non-refundable borrowing year after year since the project began in 2016.

- ***National Opioid Settlement*** – In 2021 the National Prescription Opiate Litigation Plaintiffs' Executive Committee confirmed that the \$26 billion global opioid settlements were finalized with the "Big Three" drug distributors - AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health, and McKesson and opioid manufacturer Johnson & Johnson for the participation of litigating local governments nationwide. As part of this settlement, Ledyard has received \$60,000 to date, with additional funding expected. The Finance Committee has been working with non-profit Organizations such as Ledge Light Health District - Ledyard Prevention Coalition on the best use of these funds to facilitate programs such as: *Harm Reduction, Emergency Overdose Kits; and Peer Navigator*. These initiatives would include education on how to administer the

medication Narcan should someone experience and overdose, and to support individuals and their families who were living with substance use disorder by providing treatment and recovery support systems involved helping individuals get back into the community. As of the writing of this Annual Report a decision on how to allocate the National Opioid Settlement funding had not been decided.

- ***Beverage Surcharge Revenues – Nip Bottles-*** With the State Legislature’s adoption of Public Act #21-58 “*An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management*” the Town Council adopted a ***Res 003-2022/June 8 “Resolution Regarding Revenues Received From Beverage Containers”*** to establish a separate account for the surcharge revenues the Town would be receiving from the State. This year the Town received \$24,690 from the beverage container revenue surcharge disbursement. In working to keep these bottles from littering our roads, from finding their way into catch basins, and from flowing into the Thames River, the Finance Committee has been discussing potential incentive roadside clean-up programs to benefit our local non-profit organizations. Ledyard would also be working with area towns to bring awareness to our State Representatives concerning the littering of the nip bottles.
- ***Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program \$284,000*** – Under the guidance of Administrator of Emergency Services Steve Holyfield, Ledyard applied for and received the Assistance to Firefighters Grant in the amount of \$284,000, to replace mobile radio equipment. This grant program required a 5% local match (\$14,000 town commitment). The mobile radio equipment would bring town’s radios into conformance with the State’s system; allowing Ledyard to communicate with the State and surrounding towns.
- ***The American Library Association - Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities Grant \$20,000*** – Library Director Jennifer Smith joined Ledyard’s staff in May, 2022 and has been working to update job descriptions and seek funding opportunities to expand the Library’s programs. This \$20,000 grant funding would be used to serve individuals with disabilities and included the purchase books, programming, and building improvements.

The Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Public Hearing and Annual Budget Town Meeting were presented in a hybrid format enabling residents to attend in-person or by video conference; and the Referendum regarding the Annual Budget was held in-person on May 16, 2023 at the Town Hall Annex, for all districts.

At the Annual Budget Referendum, the voters approved a \$64,540,940 Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget comprised of a \$28,632,572 General Government budget and a \$35,908,368 Board of Education budget; with 147 voting *Yes*; and 55 voting *No*. The Town Council expressed disappointment that only 2.1% of registered voters turned out to cast their ballot.

With the 2022 property valuation, Ledyard saw an increase of \$16,194,771 or 1.28% in the Grand List (total net Grand List \$1,263,622,146). In the coming year, revenue from non-tax sources was projected to decrease by 3.32%. Ledyard anticipated the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) from the State to remain flat, and there continued to be concern over the funding methodology for Special Education (SPED). In addition, Ledyard expected to see the same level of funding from the State in areas such as Town Aid Road (TAR), Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) and the Pequot Funding.

On June 14, 2023 the Town Council approved to set Fiscal Year 2023/2024 a Real Estate and Personal Property Mil Rate of 34.56 and a Motor Vehicle Mil Rate of 32.46. This was the second year two separate mil rates were set in accordance with the State's Car Tax Cap of 32.46 mils. The Legislature included funding the State's Budget to offset all of the municipal car tax losses to towns, such as Ledyard, whose mil rate was over the State's 32.46 mils Motor Vehicle Cap.

Each year as the Town Council works to provide a responsible but lean budget local officials have to consider the role of local government, which include what services the town was legally required to provide versus the services the town was not required to provide; but has provided for decades because they were nice to offer to our residents. With each passing year this task has become more challenging because there were fewer areas for reductions. This year was particularly difficult as the financial history of the Ledyard Visiting Nurses Association (LVNA) was not sustaining their operational costs, as large healthcare organizations have dominated the home healthcare market during the past decade. This shortfall in LVNA revenues has fallen to the taxpayers, with the hope that this revenue slide would reverse itself. As all of our budgets were being squeezed by the inflationary environment, it was imperative that we continue to mitigate the tax burden to our residents.

The Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget did not provided funding to support the LVNA. We value our local home healthcare providers as our Ledyard Visiting Nurse Association has been recognized in the National Top 100 Elite Home Health Care Providers and in the Top 25 Home Health Care Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers. With the close out of the Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget the Ledyard Visiting Nurse Association closed its doors on June 30, 2023. We expressed our sincere thanks and gratitude to Nursing Director Karen Goetchuis and her amazing staff for the outstanding professional and personal care they have provided to our families, friends, and neighbors. The Ledyard Visiting Nurse Association was a valued part of our community for the past 75 years; and would be missed.

At its June 28, 2023 meeting the Town Council appointed members to the *Committee To Review The Budget* Process and the role of local government. With the current inflationary environment and uncertain State funding from year to year; the town's ability to maintain the services our residents have become accustom too has become more challenging. Increased costs in heating fuel, gasoline, electricity along with many other expenses have impacted the town's operational costs and its ability to conduct business. This was a short-term (4 month) assignment; with the Committee's final report due to the Town Council by October 27, 2023 in preparation for the next year's (fy 24/25) budget work.

- **Early Voting** – On June 5, 2023 the State Legislature approved House Bill #5004 “*An Act Implementing Early Voting*” to be implemented beginning in early 2024 for certain primaries, special elections and referenda. The new law will require 14-days of Early Voting for Regular Elections; 4-days of Early Voting for Referendums, and for Special Elections. The State agreed to provide funding to Municipalities for the added costs for two-years. Thereafter, Ledyard would be required to include funding in our local budget to support the Early Voting such as poll worker salaries, meals and other related expenses. Based on the size of Ledyard our community would be required to have one Early Voting location.

After forth-two years of service to the Town of Ledyard, Registrar of Voters Ms. Hazel Gorman was recognized at the Town Council's January 23, 2023 meeting receiving Proclamations from Mayor Fred Allyn, III, Governor Ned Lamont, Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz, and Citations from the State of Connecticut's Senate and House of Representatives presented by State Senator Cathy Osten and State Representative Kevin Ryan. Ms. Gorman was elected by her fellow townspeople 21 consecutive times to serve her community. When Ms. Gorman began her career in the Registrar's Office in 1980 typewriters, pencils, pens, and rulers were the tools available to accomplish the job. Ms. Gorman embraced the age of technology and the new digital world successfully implementing the state's administrative improvements for voter integrity and in conducting secure elections during her time as the Democratic Registrar. Ms. Gorman was humbled and honored to be recognized, stating it was truly her honor to serve the Town of Ledyard for all these years, noting she seen so much change within the job during that period of time stating: *"We need to reflect on the fact that we are so lucky to live in the United States of America, and one of the best privileges we have --- and it truly is a privilege --- is to vote, and to exercise the opportunity whenever we have a chance to do it."*

In response to the first *"National Faith and Blue Weekend"* that was designed to pro-actively bring together and engage community members, faith-based organizations, civic organizations, and law enforcement by participating in activities to facilitate a safer and stronger community, Ledyard held a *First Responders Clam Chowder-Fish Fry* on Sunday, October 10, 2022. The event was well attended and supported by the following: Police Chief John Rich and the Ledyard Police Department; the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (MPTN) Police Department and Fire Department, the Ledyard Congregational Church who opened their doors to community, Boy Scout Troop #16 tended the fire at the Chowder House, and the Community Relations Committee.

The Ledyard Farmers Market kicked-off their fifteenth Season on June 5, 2023. The Market was held each Wednesday afternoon from 4- 7 p.m. thru September 20, 2023; and Ms. Lauriann Hary was the Market Manager. With the new concrete floor in the Pole Barn at the Lower Town Green via Fairway Drive off Colonel Ledyard Highway it was a great venue. The Summer Market Season included live music, children's crafts, April's Balloon Creations, and family-fun entertainment. The Market continued to offer fresh and local fruits, vegetables, meats, cheese, bread, coffee, pickles, eggs, and much more, with favorites such as Breton Farms, Smith's Acres, and New Curds on the Block returning to the Market. In addition, there were plenty of treats that included donuts, cupcakes, cookies, cannoli, ice cream, and more. Ledyard's Farmers' Market has become one of the largest and most successful Markets in Southeastern Connecticut drawing crowds of over 1,200 visitors each week. The *Connecticut Magazine* Listed Ledyard's Farmers Market as one of the *Top Three Farmers Market's in the State*.

In addition, the Farmers' Market provided a great venue at which the Community Relations Committee hosted Booths under the new Town of Ledyard Tent providing valuable information to residents such as live demonstrations from our First Responders (Fire Departments and Police Department) including the Police Body Worn Cameras, information regarding the *"Green and/or Blue Envelope"* for drivers with Autism or Hearing Impaired, Library Services, Information to Prepare for Winter such as support for utilities and heat assistance, home delivery meals for homebound residents, the Linda C. Davis Food Pantry, and many other programs. The Community Relations Committee also presented information

regarding Mental Health Support from organizations such as Brian's Healing Hearts of Niantic, and SERAC of Norwich who offered programs and services to reduce the impact of substance abuse, problem gambling, and mental health challenges. The Community Relations Committee also handed out information regarding how residents could volunteer to serve the community as a volunteer firefighter, or to serve on one of the town's committees using the new Granicus/Legistar meeting portal to apply on-line.



The Linda C. Davis Food Pantry and its volunteers, continued their work to meet the increased level of food insecurity that was exacerbated by the inflationary environment increasing the cost of food, heating fuel, gasoline and electricity making it even more challenging for families in-need to make ends meet. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding was used to replace the roof on the Food Pantry and the vinyl siding would be replaced along with other improvements which would include a 12' X 8' covered weather overhang with a concrete pad for the "Market Cart". These building improvements would help keep our dedicated volunteers out of the weather when providing curbside pick-ups and in receiving deliveries. Their dedication to the community is greatly appreciated.

The Yale/Harvard Regatta, was once again held on the Thames River in Gales Ferry on June 10, 2023. The Economic Development Commission, worked with the Parks & Recreation Commission along with many organizations including the Lions Club, Rotary Club, the Gales Ferry and Ledyard Center Fire Departments, Ledyard Police Department, a number of community businesses including Charlene Johnson from Sweet Hill Farm, along with local Food Trucks participated in the *Regatta Festival* bringing crowds to cheer on this oldest intercollegiate sporting competition in the country and to enjoy all that our community had to offer. Town Councilor Gary Paul set-up a large screen inside the Pavilion for folks who could not get down to the Thames River to see the Race. We thank EDC Commissioner Jessica Buhle who was instrumental in organizing the Regatta Festival.

Yale won three of the four races at the 156th Yale-Harvard Regatta.

The Economic Development Commission began work to create a Marketing Video featuring the Ledyard's commercial business, scenic parks, historic properties, and Ledyard's hometown characteristics, making our community a great place to live and do business. Initially \$7,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding was set-a-side to create the marketing video. However, the EDC was able to get the video at no cost with the help from

town business who purchased advertising space on the video. When the work has been completed the video would be published on the towns website and other marketing platforms in an effort to grow our community and increase our commercial tax base. We thank Economic Development Commissioner Pete Hary who was instrumental in the organization and development of the Marketing Video.

The Historic District Commission continued their work to maintain and preserve Ledyard's historic properties which included the Up-Down Sawmill and the Nathan Lester House. The Up-Down Sawmill was built in 1869 by Israel Brown and was the only known operational mill of this type in the state and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. The Nathan Lester House was built in 1793, and under the Commission's tutelage was a well-preserved example of an unpretentious late 18th-century farmhouse, and one of the few houses of that age left in Ledyard.

This year the Historic District Commission was approached by Yale Entertainment: Jordan Yale Levine, Jordan Beckerman, Michael Day, and Scott Levenson who requested the use of the Nathan Lester House for the filming of a portion of their latest movie *Fog of War* starring John Crusack, Brianna Hildebrand and Jake Abel. The spy-thriller movie was a story about an injured World War II American pilot and his OSS agent fiancée who retreat to a remote estate in Massachusetts with top-secret documents related to the D-Day invasion. Our own Mayor Fred Allyn, III, had a cameo part as a doctor and we all hoped that his scene would make the movie. The film company made a \$13,000 donation to the Nathan Lester House for the use of the property. In May, 2023 the Historic District Commission began providing tours of the property for the public to see how it was staged for the World War II era film and to talk about the actors and actresses that were in the scenes that were filmed inside the Nathan Lester House. The movie was expected to be released in theaters in March-April 2024.

On June 22, 2021 Governor Lamott signed Senate Bill #1201 "*An Act Concerning Responsible and Equitable Regulation of Adult-Use Cannabis*" which would allow the retail sale of cannabis to begin in Connecticut by the end of 2022. At the November 8, 2022 Election the townspeople voted in-favor to allow the sale of recreational marijuana in Ledyard. Until June 30, 2024, the Bill prohibited municipalities from granting zoning approval for more retailers or micro-cultivators than a number that would allow for one retailer and one micro-cultivator for every 25,000 municipal residents, as determined by the most recent decennial census. Thereafter the number and locations of cannabis retailers could be determined through local Zoning Regulations.

On April 26, 2023 the Town Council adopted amendments to Ordinance #100-016 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance Combining Parks And Recreation Commission and Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard*". For budgetary purposes the Parks & Recreation Department relocated from its home on Blonders Boulevard to the Senior Citizens Facility on Van Tassel Drive in 2020. Combining the two Commissions would allow the two departments to share staff, streamline daily operations providing both financial and space benefits, as well as enable them to support additional programs and events. Other benefits include the use of Parks & Recreation capital funds received in accordance with Ordinance #200-009 "*An Ordinance Proving for the Transfer of Certain Revenues from Real Estate Conveyance Tax to Special Town of Ledyard Funds*"; and Ordinance #200-012 "*An Ordinance Creating a Municipal Parks and Recreation Capital and Non-Recurring Expose Fund for the Town of Ledyard*" to make improvements and to maintain the shared facility on Van Tassel Drive.

After receiving residents comments at a Public Hearing held on January 25, 2023 regarding a proposed *“Lease Agreement between Robert and Mary Graham and the Town of Ledyard”* ; the Town Council approved to *enter into a 99-year lease for approximately 0.8-acre +/- parcel on Bush Pond (Lantern Hill Valley Park) for ten dollars (\$10.00) per year for access to about 550 linear feet of the pond frontage.* The Town will use the parcel as a waterfront park providing residents the opportunity to enjoy passive recreation activities on this beautiful property. The property was placed under the Administrative Control of the Parks and Recreation Commission who made minor improvements which included a picnic pavilion, weatherproof picnic tables, boat launch, and sign, allowing for fishing, picnicking, canoeing and kayaking. The Town Council expressed its appreciation and sincere gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Graham for their generosity to our community and to our future generations to come.

With the new fiscal year, the town moved away from its former meeting portal I-Compass and transitioned to the Granicus-Legistar meeting portal on July 1, 2023. The Granicus-Legistar was considered the *“Cadillac”* of meeting portals providing on-line access to agendas, minutes, meetings materials including important background and meeting history for the town’s committee volunteers and providing transparency for the public.

In other actions the Town Council held the following Town Meetings and Public Hearings:

Town Meetings

- ❖ May 15, 2023 - Annual Town Meeting presented the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget in a hybrid format enabling residents to attend in-person or by video conference, and Adjourned to a Referendum.
- May 16, 2023 – Adopted a Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget in the amount of \$64,540,940 .

Public Hearings

- November 9, 2022 – Received comments on the proposed Nathan Lester House Lease located at 153 Vinegar Hill Road, Gales Ferry – *“Lease Agreement Between the Town of Ledyard and Sharon E. and Matthew S. Primett”*.
- December 14, 2022 – Received comments on the proposed amendments to Ordinance #300-027 (rev 2) *“An Ordinance Regulating Parking and Other Activities in Town Roads And Rights-of-Way And Providing Penalties for the Violation Thereof”*
- April 12, 2023 - Received comments on the following:
 - (1) Neighborhood Assistance Act Project for The ARC of Eastern Connecticut to replace windows at the Group Residence located at 1671 Center Groton Road, Ledyard; estimated cost \$26,872.
 - (2) Proposed amendments to Ordinance #100-016 (rev.1) *“An Ordinance Combining the Parks and Recreation Commission and Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard.*

(Public Hearings Continued):

- April 17, 2023 – Received comments on: Proposed Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget.
- June 28, 2023 – Received comments on the a Neighborhood Assistance Act Projects for the Habitat for Humanity Project for the full rehabilitation at 42 Laurel Leaf Drive, Gales Ferry; Total cost \$143,752.08 with \$20,000 requested.

Ordinances

- Ordinance #300-027 (rev 2) “*An Ordinance Regulating Parking and Other Activities in Town Roads And Rights-of-Way And Providing Penalties for the Violation Thereof*” and Revised its Appendix A; Adopted: January 11, 2023
- Ordinance #100-016 (rev.1) “*An Ordinance Combining the Parks and Recreation Commission and Senior Citizens Commission for the Town of Ledyard*”; Adopted: April 26, 2023.
- Revised “*Appendix – Qualifying Income Schedule*” January 11, 2023; pertaining to Ordinance #200-005 (rev. 1) “*An Ordinance to Provide Property Tax Relief for Certain Homeowners Age Sixty-Five or Over or Permanently and Totally Disabled (rev.1)*”

Resolutions

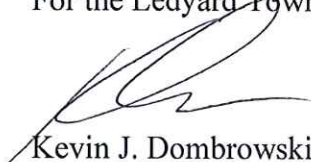
- ✓ ***Res #001-2023/Feb 22*** “*Resolution Establishing Administrator/Department Head Benefits*” Adopted: February 22, 2023.
- ✓ ***Res #002-2022/Dec 14*** “*Resolution Authorizing Term Adjustments for the Ledyard Beautification Committee*”; Adopted December 14, 2022.
- ✓ ***Res #002-2023/ Mar 22 – (Rev 1)*** “*Resolution Establishing a Committee to **Transform Review** the Budget Process*” Adopted: March 22, 2023
- ✓ ***Res #003-2022/Oct 26*** “*Authorizing Resolution of the Ledyard Town Council – State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection – Upgrades to the Whitford Brook Bridge and Bush Pond Dam*”; Adopted on October 26, 2022.
- ✓ ***Res #003-2022/Oct 26 (Rev 1)*** “*Resolution Amending An Authorizing Resolution of the Ledyard Town Council – State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection – Upgrades to the Whitford Brook Bridge and Bush Pond Dam*”; Amended and Adopted on November 9, 2022.
- ✓ ***Res #003-2020/Mar 11*** “*Certified Resolution of Applicant Small Cites Program, Kings Corner Manor, Senior Housing – Restated: November 9, 2022*”; Adopted November 9, 2022; Restated June 11, 2022 and Restated November 9, 2022.

(Resolutions Continued):

- ✓ ***Res #004-2022/Nov 9*** “Resolution of the Ledyard Town Council to Opt-Out of Public Act 21-29 Regarding Parking Spaces and Accessory Apartments;” Adopted on November 9, 2022.
- ✓ ***Res #004-2023/April 12 10*** “Fair Housing Resolution”; Adopted on April 12, 2023.
- ✓ ***Res #006-2022/Oct 26*** “Authorizing Resolution of the Ledyard Town Council State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security”; Adopted on October 26, 2022.

The Town Council continued to televise their bimonthly meetings on the Public Access Channel (Channel 12 on Comcast Cable) on the following Friday at 8:00 p.m. and on Sunday at 5:00 p.m. Their meetings were available live and on-demand on the town’s web page. Residents could access the Town Council’s agendas, minutes, and videos by visiting the town’s Media Portal at www.ledyardct.org and clicking on the “Agendas and Minutes” tab; or by visiting: <https://ledyardct.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

For the Ledyard Town Council,



Kevin J. Dombrowski
Chairman