TOWNOFLEDYARD

CONNECTICUT

TOWN COUNCIL

Chairman Kevin J. Dombrowski

MINUTES
LEDARD TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023; 7:00 PM
HYBRID FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

DRAFT

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

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL –

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

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS

- ✓ ***Black History Essay & Poster Contest Winners***

Chairman Dombrowski turned the floor over to Community Relations Committee Chairman Councilor Paul and Councilor Rodriguez to present the awards for the 2023 Black History Essay and Poster Contest.

Councilor Rodriguez provided some background explaining this was the second year the Black History Month Activity was held noting that it involved an Essay Contest for the High School and Middle School Students and a Poster Contest for the Elementary School Students. She stated the Program was open to all students in Ledyard including Magnet School Students and Home School Students. She noted the Contests were voluntary and was held from February 1 – February 22, 2023. She thanked the Contest Judges for participating in the process noting that some of the Judges were present this evening to award the prizes. She introduced the Judges as follows: Library Commission Member Mr. Ralf Hightower, Police Sergeant McKinney, who was being represented this evening by Chief Rich, Board of Education Member Laurel Wiers, and herself. Unfortunately, she stated due to a communication issue no entries were submitted for the High School level essay contest.

Councilor Rodriguez continued by thanking all who participated in the Program and for attending tonight's Town Council meeting. She stated they looked forward to hosting the Black History Month Poster and Essay Contest because of the learning experience. She stated Black History was part of American History, and she stated that she was humbled and grateful for the work the students did in writing their essays, noting that they were inspirational, educational and sincere. She stated the Judges were impressed by the essays noting that it was hard to find

just one winner, and therefore, they had a couple of ties this year. She stated the students, and their parents should be proud of their accomplishments.

Councilor Rodriguez invited Mayor Allyn, III, and the Judges to join her in presenting the prizes as follows:

Ledyard Middle School (Essay Contest)

- ✓ First Place (Tie) $100.00 – Kharma Noel and Rylee Hope
- ✓ Second Place (Tie) $50.00– Hazel Saunders and Evangelos O'Hanlon
- ✓ Third Place (Tie) $25.00 – Riccio Hope and Addison Lacosse
- ✓ Honorable Mention – Bryce Griffin and Sydney Loftus

Councilor Rodriguez stated instead of writing an essay Sydney Loftus wrote a very touching poem; and that the Judges agreed to award her an Honorable Mention. Councilor Rodriguez invited Sydney to read the poem she wrote, noting that she hoped to see Sydney's poem published someday.

Ms. Sydney Loftus read her poem as follows:

What does Black history month mean to me?

A poem by: Sydney Loftus

I think it's a time of month for all people to see
To open the world of curiosity
To learn, to teach
On what this holiday month means
It's important to know all the people who risked their lives For the greatness, For the time
I remember what was given to me
Frederick Douglass
Harriet Tubman
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr
Rosa Parks
George Washington Carver
Just to name a few
These aren't just some people out of the blue
We all remember what we can be
And that is what Black history month means to me

Councilor Rodriguez stated the Poster Contest Winners were announced at their Schools earlier today noting the winners were as follows:

Grades K-2 - Poster Contest

- ✓ First Place – Anika Winterstenn – 2nd Grade - Gallup Hill School– Ms. Florez
- ✓ Second Place – Don Sebastian – 2nd Grade – Gallup Hill School – Ms. Florez
- ✓ Third Place – Pauline Duller – 2nd Grade – Gallup Hill School – Ms. Florez

Grades 3-5 - Poster Contest

- ✓ First Place –Kenzie Aldana – 4th Grade – Juliet W. Long School – 4th Grade – Mrs. Craig
- ✓ First Place – Elyza Covey – 5th Grade – Gallup Hill School – Mrs. Conger

- ✓ Second Place – Lily Dozier – 3rd Grade – Gallup Hill School – Mrs. Torchia
- ✓ Second Place - Brynn Kemble – 5th Grade – Gallup Hill School – Mrs. Teskey

- ✓ Third Place - Vivianna Yepes – 3rd Grade – Gallup Hill School – Mrs. Torchia

Councilor Rodriguez thanked all the students who participated in the contest, Town Council Chairman Dombrowski, the Community Relations Committee, and the Judges for their involvement in the Black History Month Contest.

Chairman Dombrowski stated on behalf of the Town Council he would like to thank all those who participated in the Black History Month Contest, and he congratulated all the winners. He stated it was great to see all the talented young people Ledyard has and he encouraged them to keep up the good work. He concluded by thanking the Community Relations Committee and Councilor Rodriguez for their work and time involved in planning and hosting the Black History Month Essay and Poster Contest.

V. RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS – None.

IV. COMMITTEE COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS – None.

VI. COMMENTS OF TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Paul thanked and recognized Councilor Rodriguez for all the work she did noting that she organized the entire Black History Month Essay and Poster Contest this year. He stated that he appreciated the work that she has done and that he believed the town also appreciated her hard work. He stated the town as a community was better because of the work Councilor Rodriguez has done. He concluded his comments by stating that he loved to see all the kids, noting that Sydney Loftus' poem said exactly what needed to be said.

Councilor Ryan stated that he wanted to echo Councilor Paul's comments regarding the Black History Month Essay and Poster Contest. He stated that they could not underestimate the impact that recognition has. He stated he hoped that they continued to recognize Ledyard's students and their achievements, noting that it was a motivator for the students who received awards this evening and for the other students when they see the recognition.

VII. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Minutes of February 22, 2023
Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Ingalls VOTE:
7 – 0 Approved and so declared

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

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

X. COUNCIL SUB COMMITTEE, LIAISON REPORTS

Administration Committee

Councilor Ingalls stated the Administration Committee met earlier this evening and addressed the following: (1) Job Description Updates for the following positions: (1) MIS Director; MIS Technician, Administrative Assistant – Library; and Library Technician II - Youth Services; (2) New Appointments and a number of Reappointments to the Town's Committees/Commissions/Board; and (3) *"Resolution Establishing A Committee To Transform The Budget Process"* – Councilor Ingalls noted because it has been several years since the town reviewed their budget process, that they believed it was time to stand-up this Committee again, noting that last Budget Transformation Committee submitted its final Report on October 16, 2016.

Community Relations Committee

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee has not met since the last Town Council Meeting. He noted the next Community Relations Committee meeting was scheduled for March 15, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Finance Committee

Councilor Saums stated the Finance Committee met on March 1, 2023 and in addition to the items on tonight's agenda he reported the following: (1) Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Preparation – Councilor Saums stated that Finance Director Matthew Bonin reported that work continues on the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Preparation. He also reported on the projected Healthcare Costs for next year, noting that the State of Connecticut revised their estimated increase for the Partnership 2.0 Healthcare Plan to 7.5% for next fiscal year. He also noted that Administrator of Human Resources Don Steinhoff has been talking with Brown and Brown Insurance, who was handling a consortium of towns that left the State's 2.0 Partnership Healthcare Plan. He stated if the Brown and Brown Healthcare Consortium Plan could provide a comparable insurance plan to what Ledyard currently had that the town may be able to join their Healthcare Consortium which would be about a 4% - 5% increase in healthcare costs for the town; (2) Budget Work Sessions have been scheduled as follows: March 9, 13 & 20, 2023. Councilor Saums stated the Work Sessions will be held from 12 Noon – 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers and will be available via Zoom for those would like to attend remotely. He stated the public was welcome and encouraged to attend.

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Councilor Paul stated the LUPPW Committee met on March 6, 2023 and continued their work to update the List of the Assignment of Administrative Control of Town Owned or Town Lease Properties.

Water Pollution Control Authority

Councilor Saums stated the WPCA met on February 28, 2023 and addressed the following: (1) Ledyard Center Sewer Extension Project – Work was scheduled to begin Spring, 2023: (2) Solar Panels – Waste Water Treatment Facility – Councilor Saums stated the WPCA had not received an update regarding the discussion with the Attorney and the Solar Company; (3) Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Easement Request – Councilor Saums stated the WPCA has not received any further correspondence from the Department Public Health (DPH) regarding the new SCWA Ledyard Division Well, other than to suggest a meeting regarding SCWA's request to grant them a 150-foot radius easement over Town-owned property to support a new well for their Ledyard Center system; (4) Ledyard's Water and Sewer Assets – Councilor Saums stated the WPCA has not received any further communications from Groton Utilities' regarding their offer/interest to purchase Ledyard's Water and Sewer System Assets.

Councilor Ingalls commented that Groton Utilities has been interested in purchasing Ledyard's Water and Sewer System Assets for a couple of months. Mayor Allyn, III, stated the Town has not received any communication regarding Groton Utilities' interest to purchase Ledyard's Water and Sewer System Assets.

XI. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Allyn, III, reported on the following: (1) Winter Operations – Mayor Allyn stated the area had its first measurable snow this winter on February 27 – 28, 2023, which was incredible, noting how late it was in the winter season. He stated Councilor Saums did a ride-along with one of the plow drivers, noting that the experience provides a very different perspective; (2) School(s) Consolidation/Improvement Project(s) (Middle School & Gallup Hill School) – Mayor Allyn stated he attended another School(s) Construction Close-Out Meeting on February 28, 2023 with their Consultant Colliers. He stated based on Colliers's work to date the State owed the Town $9.4 million. However, he stated more importantly, that Colliers reported that the State owed the Town $5 million right now. He stated there has been some changes in the State's School Construction Leadership and that Ledyard would be immediately seeking payment from the State for the $5 million, noting that the Town has been doing Short-Term Borrowing, and making interest payments to carry the debt of the construction project(s); (3) Multi-Model Use Pathway – Mayor Allyn stated a Public Meeting was held on March 1, 2023. He stated the Multi-Model Use Pathway would be constructed from Valentinos Restaurant across Colonel Ledyard Highway and along the northside of Colonel Ledyard Highway to the High School. He stated about 14 – 16 residents' whose property abutted the Pathway attended the final meeting as well as Councilor Saums, noting that overall they received good feedback and a positive response. He stated the only negative comment they received was questioning the need for the new Pathway. He stated they spent a couple of hours with the property owners discussing various components of the project including the level of pedestrians and bicyclists activity of during the day which included the High School kids walking to Colonel Ledyard Park or to the Library. He stated Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin mentioned that once the Pathway was built that people would use it; (4) MIS Director Retirement – Mayor Allyn stated MIS Director Regina Brulotte retired on March 2, 2023 after 20 years and nine months of service to the town. He stated Justin Dube has accepted the

MIS Director position. He stated Mr. Dube has been with the town serving as the MIS Technician for thirteen years. He stated Mr. Dube was very knowledgeable, he was a great hands-on-person, gets in the field and gets the job done. He stated the MIS Technician position has been posted and they have received one application to date. He stated this was a fulltime "in the field" position and he encouraged interested parties to apply, noting that there were a number of open positions posted in Town Hall; (5) Administrator of Human Resources Retirement – Mayor Allyn stated Administrator of Human Resources Don Steinhoff would be retiring on April 6, 2023. He stated they have completed interviews to fill the position and extended an offer to Ms. Marisa Ianella-Rodriguez. He stated they hoped to receive a response from Ms. Ianella-Rodriguez within the next few days. He noted Ms. Ianella-Rodrigeuz was no relation to Councilor Rodriguez; (6) Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget – Mayor Allyn stated he delivered his proposed Fiscal Year 2023/2024 on Monday, March 6, 2023 (first Monday in March) in accordance with Chapter VII; Section 3 of the Town Charter. He stated they had some minor technical difficulties with the cloud-based software Clear Gov. He stated this was a good example of when you use Cloud-Based Software, and the cloud goes down. However, he stated they were able to get the budget together and filed on-time. He stated the proposed $65,476,753 was an increase of $3,254,548 or 3.19% over the current year's budget and would call for a 35.04 mil rate for a 1.22 mil increase. He noted the proposed budget was comprised of a General Government budget in the amount of $29,568,385 and a Board of Education budget in the amount of $35,908,368. He stated there were still some changes that could occur in the budget that could save the town money, however, he explained that they were not prepared to make those changes at the time was budget was due. Therefore, he stated that there was more work that the Finance Committee could do to bring the mil increase down to a 0.8 mil increase; (7) Linda C. Davis Food Pantry – Mayor Allyn thanked Mr. Mike Lamb and Ms. Tammy Darvey for their very generous donation of 280 pounds of ground beef to the Food Pantry. He stated the Food Pantry and Social Services have been very busy, noting that they have had some challenging needs over the past few months, explaining that people have been coming in to seek assistance after their heating fuel tank was already empty, which makes for a very difficult situation, especially when you know someone was out of heating fuel and it was going to be cold over the next few days. However, he stated donations from people like Mr. Lamb and Ms. Darvey go a long way because the residents who were struggling to fill their heating fuel tank also use the Food Pantry; (8) 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway – Mayor Allyn provided some background noting in-lieu of foreclosure the Town received the deed for 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway on January 25, 2023. He stated they conducted a tour of the property, noting that Councilor Saums participated in tour. He stated the house was condemned noting several floor joists were rotted; and because of the unsafe condition of the structure, they did not view the upstairs of the house. He stated he has been in discussions to convey the property to Avalonia Land Conservancy to be used as a parking area to access the Founders Preserve property. He explained because Avalonia Land Conservancy cannot accept a property with a structure on it that the town would demolish the house prior to the conveyance. He stated that he would be submitting a request to the Finance Committee to obtain a demolition permit, noting that the Public Works Department had a new Large Wheel Excavator that had a large bucket and was equipped to take the structure down. However, he stated the town would have to pay to dispose of the structure; (9) Ledge Light Health District Representatives – Mayor Allyn thanked Mr. Kevin Serpa for serving as one of Ledyard's Representatives on the Ledge Light Health District Board of Directors. He stated Mr. Serpa was a very bright Pfizer employee; however, he stated after several years of serving on the Board that he has stepped down. Mayor Allyn stated he appointed Mr. Steve Buttermore to fill Mr. Serpa's vacancy. He stated Mr. Buttermore comes to the Ledge Light Health District with a very different view, noting that Mr. Buttermore was a septic system installer, repair and pumper; (10) Geographic Information System (GIS) System – Mayor Allyn stated the update to Ledyard's GIS System has been completed and he encouraged people to visit the town's website, noting that they have added a new active "*OpenSpace"* layer to the system. He stated when you click on the two open space links that the GIS System would put a hash tag (#) over all of the open space parcels on the map; (11) Black History Month Poster Contest – Mayor Allyn stated as Councilor Rodriguez mentioned earlier this evening, he was present for the photos and the awards to the winners at the Juliet W. Long School and Gallup Hill School earlier today. He stated Councilor Rodriguez did an awesome job, noting that the kids were thrilled; (12) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding – Electronic Message Boards ($75,000 Gales Ferry and Ledyard Center) – Mayor Allyn stated the Bid Opening for the LED Electronic Message Board was held earlier today. He stated the town received four bids and that two bids came in under the dollar amount allotted for the two message boards. He stated a selection would be made soon, noting that the message boards would be in-place by Memorial Day.

Questions to the Mayor -

Councilor Rodriguez questioned the cost to demolish 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway. Mayor Allyn that he would estimate the cost to be about $15,000, explaining that the Public Works Department had a new Large Wheel Excavator that had a large bucket and that they would take the structure down. He stated the cost would be for leasing of the roll-off dumpsters and for the cost to dispose of the waste tonnage. He stated the Public Works Department has estimated that the project would be a three-day job. He stated the Public Works Department would also collapse the foundation and fill it with gravel and compact the area so that the parcel would be ready to be conveyed to Avalonia Land Conservancy.

Councilor Ingalls noted that the Founders Preserve was the property that did not have good public access at this time. Chairman Dombrowski stated the townspeople approved to convey the Founders Preserve to the Avalonia Land Conservancy at a Special Town Meeting held on October 28, 2020. However, he stated the property transfer has not yet taken place because there was not adequate access to the property. Mayor Allyn stated that was correct and he explained at one time the property boundary lines were changed putting 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway directly in front of the Founders Preserve. Therefore, he stated the town would be changing the property boundary lines for 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway back to the original property lines noting that the portion of the property where the detached two car garage sits would go back to the property located at 332 Colonel Ledyard, which the town also owned. He stated by separating 332 Colonel Ledyard Highway from the Founders Preserve and conveying 334 Colonel Ledyard Highway to Avalonia Land Conservancy that they would gain enough space for a parking area for about 12 cars. He also stated the town could then sell the property located at 332 Colonel Ledyard Highway and recover some of the back taxes that were lost on both Colonel Ledyard Highway properties: 332 (foreclosure) & 334 (blight lien).

XII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Finance Committee

1. MOTION to appropriate $51,838 to Account #21050101-58790-G0015 (Library Capital - New Equipment - Misc. State Grants) upon the receipt of a State Library Grant for the same amount.

In addition, authorize the funds to be expended for the Gales Ferry Library E-fiber installation.

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls
Discussion: Councilor Saums provided some background noting the at their January 12, 2022 meeting the Town Council authorized the Mayor to submit an application for E-Rate funds and a matching State Library grant to cover the installation cost of a fiber network at Gales Ferry Library along with a request for E-Rate funds to supplement up to 50% of the annual maintenance and internet cost, noting that the cost to install the fiber was about $90,000. However, he stated since that time Frontier Communications has been installing fiber all over town. Therefore, he stated they questioned whether they should discuss the option to connect the Gales Ferry Library to the Frontier Communications fiber. He stated Mayor Allyn, III, contacted the Frontier Communications Enterprise Manager to discuss the costs for the Gales Ferry Library to connect to Frontier. He explained although there would be no cost to install the equipment or to run the line that the monthly fee would be $1,000 because they consider a Municipality a commercial business and that it would fall under the Enterprise pricing.

Councilor Saums went on to explain that the Grant funding would pay 100% of the $90,000 cost for the fiber installation for the Gales Ferry Library to connect to the Connecticut Education Network (CEN) and after the E-Rate discount, which would pay for 50% of fiber maintenance fee, that the cost for the Gales Ferry Library would be $3,600 per year, minus the current $828, (cable internet) for a net annual cost of $2,772 for each year of the 20-year contract, noting that there would not be a monthly fee. Therefore, he stated moving forward with this grant opportunity was the best option for the Gales Ferry Library. He stated the CEN fiber would provide much better internet access for the resident that use the Gales Ferry Library. He noted Library Director Jennifer Smith was present this evening via Zoom if anyone had any questions.

Councilor Ryan questioned whether the two grants would cover all the costs or whether there would be a cost to town for the Connecticut Education Network (CEN).

Library Director Jennifer Smith stated both parties have signed off on the Connecticut State Library Grant totaling $51,838. She stated this funding included half of the expense for the 20year Dark Fiber IRU Lease, and the full cost of all network equipment, fiber operations and

maintenance, along with any additional equipment needed. She stated the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) has committed $36,950 to this project for the remaining half of the fiber lease. These funds would be paid directly to the Connecticut Educational Network (CEN) and would not flow through the town. She went on to explain with the E-Rate discount, which would pay for 50% of fiber maintenance fee that the Gales Ferry Library cost for the annual maintenance would be $3,600 per year. She stated they were currently paying about $75.00 per month for the Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) internet service for a total annual cost of $828 for the DSL. She stated subtracting the Library's current internet cost of $828 that the that the net annual net cost for the Gales Ferry Library would be $2,772 for each year of the 20-year contract.

Councilor Ryan stated an annual net cost of $2,772 for each year of the 20-year contract with no escalation was a good deal.

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0
MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums EXCUSED: Marshall, Irwin

2. MOTION to appropriate $13,000 to Account #21020301-57300-G0015 (Fire Marshall – New Equipment – State Grant).

In addition, authorize the expenditure of up to $13,000 for replacement of copper cable running to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with fiber cable.

The funding source for this project is the Town of Ledyard's FY 2023 Nuclear Safety Emergency Program Funding Allocation (2022-44).

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Councilor Saums stated last year the town received Nuclear Safety Emergency Funding for the technology upgrades at the Emergency Operations Center Technology (EOC). However, he stated because they were still having issues with the data flow to the Connecticut Educational Network Fiber (CEN) that Director of Emergency Management Jim Mann worked to investigate the source of the connectivity issues and found that when they moved the School's Management Information Systems Room (MIS) to its new location, about ten years ago, to provide space for the relocation the Emergency Operations Center to the High School that 165-foot section of the line was copper cable instead of fiber, which was the source of their data flow problems with the CEN connection to the EOC.

Councilor Saums stated in soliciting quotes to address the problem that Mr. Mann was able to get two venders to come look at the project. He stated although both vendors provided a quote that only one vendor, CBS Company, was willing to take on the project to replace the copper cable with a fiber, explaining that the second vendor stated because they would not interface with other persons work they were not willing to take this project explaining that they had proprietary equipment.

Councilor Saums went on to state that in a letter dated February 23, 2023 that Mr. Mann appealed to the Nuclear Safety Emergency Program (NSEP) to request $13,000 for the necessary upgrades to replace the copper cable with fiber in the Emergency Operations Center. He stated the NSEP Region 4 replied to his letter in an e-mail stating that they would provide 100% reimbursement to the town for the cost to correct the issue. He noted that Director of Emergency Management Jim Mann was present this evening via Zoom if anyone had any questions.

Director of Emergency Management Jim Mann stated because the second vendor was proprietary that going forward they would be the only vendor who could work on the line going forward. Therefore, he stated that he believed using the vendor who used universal equipment was the best approach for the town, noting that anyone could work on it going forward if they were to have any issues. He stated the Nuclear Safety Emergency Program (NSEP) has agreed to refund the town 100% for the cost to replace the copper cable with fiber to correct the connectivity issue. He stated the town would be required to pay the bill upfront and that once he submitted the invoice to NSEP that they would refund the town for 100% of the cost.

Chairman Dombrowski stated that he agreed with Mr. Mann's approach not to use a sole source propriety vendor, when they had the option of using universal vendor. He stated that he

appreciated Mr. Mann's efforts to upgrade the technology at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), noting that he has been working on this for quite a while.

Mr. Mann stated with the completion of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) technology upgrades that all communications in town would now be together, explaining that the EOC could pick-up for Ledyard Dispatch and vice versa, or should the Dispatch Communications transmitters go down they could use the EOC transmitters, etc. He stated it was a great set-up.

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0
MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums EXCUSED: Marshall, Irwin

3. MOTION to recommend the Town Council grant a Bid Waiver to Marineland, Spectrum Brands Pet, LLC of Blacksburg, Virginia in the amount of $32,590 due to receiving fewer than the required three bids in response to Bid #LPS 22-10 (Ledyard Public Schools Agricultural Science Small Animal Habitat); in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance for Purchasing*".

Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor Saums

Discussion: Councilor Saums stated Board of Education Director of Buildings and Facilities Wayne Donaldson solicited Requests for Proposals Bid #LPS 22-10 (Ledyard Public Schools Agricultural Science Small Animal Habitat) and that he also did a lot of work in calling and sending e-mails to vendors to try to obtain proposals to purchase equipment and cabinets to house small animals such as birds, ferrets, reptiles. However, he stated only one vendor replied and they only sent price lists. He stated after talking with Mr. Donaldson last week, that he went back to the vendor and confirmed that their pricing was as contained in the Pricing Sheet and that they would honor those prices. He also explained that in researching the equipment needed that Mr. Donaldson found that Marineland, Spectrum Brands Pet, LLC., was the only vendor that makes enclosures that would fit into the classroom. Therefore, he stated the Board of Education has requested a Bid Waiver to purchase the necessary equipment to house the small animals in the Agri-Science Lab. He noted that Mr. Donaldson was present this evening via Zoom if anyone had any questions.

Councilor Saums went on to explain that the small animals was a new Agri-Science (Vo-Ag) Program stating that they have done away with the large animals such as horses and cows program and have replaced it with the small animal program. He stated the small animal program would teach the Agri-Science students how to groom dogs and take care of reptiles and birds, etc. He stated this equipment would house the small animals. He stated this equipment would be paid from the Agri-Science Grant funding noting at their September 14, 2022 meeting the Town Council authorized the Board of Education to spend up to $146,558 from Account #21070101-5826 (BOE CNR ASTE) as outlined in the Board of Education Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Supplemental Spending Plan for Agri-Science Program.

Board of Education Director of Buildings and Facilities Wayne Donaldson explained the biggest issue in trying to purchase this equipment was the dimensions of the Agri-Lab Classroom, noting that the ceilings were low and doors were narrow. Therefore, he stated Marineland, Spectrum Brands Pet was the only company they could find who made cabinets that would fit into the room.

Councilor Ryan noted the backup information included an e-mail from Mr. Donaldson expressing concern about the freight/shipping and pallet charges that would be in addition to the equipment cost of $32,590. Therefore, he questioned whether they should increase the Bid Waiver amount to provide for the additional freight and pallet charges. Councilor Saums stated they asked the vendor to stand by their Pricing List; however, he stated the vendor was not responsible for the and had no control over freight/shipping and pallet charges. Therefore ,he stated the Bid Waiver was not to exceed the $32,590 and would pay for the equipment, explaining that they may need to revisit this request to find the money to pay for the freight/shipping and pallet charges, noting at this time they do not know what those costs were. Councilor Ryan noted the shipping time was about thirteen weeks, therefore, they would have time to revisit this should they need to. VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0
MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER Andra Ingalls, Town Councilor
AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums EXCUSED: Marshall, Irwin

4. MOTION to set the Mayor's salary at $107,000 Retroactive to July 1, 2022.
Moved by Councilor Ingalls, seconded by Councilor McGrattan
Discussion: Councilor Saums stated setting the Mayor's Salary was governed by Article XIX of the Connecticut Constitution (amending Article Xl.), which was passed in 1982, noting that it stated the following:

The compensation of an elected official of a political subdivision of the state *whose term of office is four years or more may be increased once after such official has completed two years of his term by the legislative body of such political subdivision.*

Councilor Saums stated the Mayors Salary has not been increased since 2019; explaining that per Article XIX of the Connecticut Constitution because the Mayor serves a four-year term, the compensation may be increased only once after the completion of two years of a term. He stated the requested salary represented a 3.16% increase per year for a total of about 12.63% increase. He stated that the Town Council was mindful that the salary for Ledyard's Mayor was less than Mayors' in surrounding towns. He stated 3% salary increases was where the town was with the last round of union bargaining negotiations; and therefore, he thought this salary increase was reasonable and fair in light of salary increases with their bargaining units.

Councilor Rodriguez asked them to explain to residents who may be listening or viewing the video recording of this meeting the reason the salary increase was retroactive to July 1, 2022. Mayor Allyn explained as an elected Mayor that the salary could only be adjusted one-time halfway thru the four-year term, which should have been in 2021. However, he stated they were only making the salary increase retroactive back to July 1, 2022.

Mayor Allyn went on to state that he supported the request not just for himself, (though he will benefit) but also for those that seek this role in the future. He stated that it was important to have a wage that would attract interest from the most qualified people who had the right skill sets for the role as Mayor such as leadership qualities, management qualities, finance background, public speaking, interest and or willingness to work both day and at night and on weekends. He stated there was a lot rolled up in the position of the Mayor and that the town needed to make sure they get people who want to do the job.

Councilor Ingalls stated the Mayor was a lifestyle job noting that when you are elected that you are never "*Not the Mayor"* noting that it was a 24/7 job stating you are the Mayor at 3:00 a.m., etc. She stated the town needed to attract the right professional, noting that in years past people have laughed off the possibility to run for the position of Mayor when they found out how low the salary was for the work and commitment involved. She stated she agreed with the skill set Mayor Allyn mentioned this evening and she stated that the Mayor was the face of their town. She stated that this was part of the reasons so many towns were moving toward Professional Town Managers, who have gone to school for municipal management.

Chairman Dombrowski stated in addition to the skill set Mayor Allyn mentioned which included finance background, leadership qualities, management qualities, public speaking, that the person in the role of Mayor needed to understand what they were legally and statutorily allowed to do, noting that the Connecticut General Statutes were overwhelming and were not exactly abundantly clear. He went on to state as members of the Town Council they sometimes have difficulty understanding all of the State Statutes, when to refer to the Town Charter, or refer to the Town Procedures, Policies, Ordinances or Resolutions. However, he stated the Mayor has to live this everyday.

Councilor Ryan stated that salary increase for the Mayor was more than fair compared to other municipalities with the same population. He stated the salary chart that was provided in the backup information was misleading noting that total percentage increase from $95,000 to $107,000 was 12.63% was compounded; however, he stated the prior salary increases were abstract raises.

VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED 7 - 0
MOVER: Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER Mary McGrattan, Town Councilor
AYES: Dombrowski, Ingalls, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan, Saums EXCUSED: Marshall, Irwin

General Discussion

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

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Rodriguez moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Paul VOTE: 7 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

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

I, Kevin J. Dombrowski, Chairman of the Ledyard Town Council, hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Town Council Meeting held on March 8, 2023.

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Kevin J. Dombrowski, Chairman