Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
LEDYARD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

FINANCE COMMITTEE

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339
http://www.ledyardct.org
Administrative Assistant, Roxanne Maher
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FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025 WORK SESSION
MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2024; 2:00 P.M.
HYBIRD MEETING FORMAT
VIDEO CONFERENCE & IN-PERSON
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ANNEX BUILDING

DRAFT

I. CALL TO ORDER – The Work Session was called to order by Councilor Saccone at 2:00 p.m.

Councilor Saccone welcomed all to the Video Conference Meeting; and he noted that the remote meeting information for the Town Council Finance Committee Budget Work Session and members of the Public to participate in this afternoon's meeting was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town's Website – Granicus/Legistar Meeting Portal.

II. ROLL CALL –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	Remote
Tony Saccone	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person
S. Naomi Rodrigeuz	Town Council Chairman	Present	In-Person
Fred Allyn III	Mayor	Present	In-Person
Ian Stammel	Assistant Finance Director	Present	In-Person
Jim Mann	Director of Emergency Mgt/Fire Marshall	Present	In-Person
Steve Holyfield	Administrator of Emergency Services	Present	In-Person
Jon Mann	Ledyard Center Fire Chief	Present	In-Person
Nick Bozym	Gales Ferry Assistant Fire Chief	Present	In-Person
John Rich	Police Chief	Present	In-Person
Kenneth Creutz	Police Captain	Present	In-Person
Paula Smith	Chief of Dispatch	Present	In-Person
Ed Lynch	Water Pollution Control Authority Chairman	Present	In-Person
Steve Banks	Wastewater Supervisor	Present	In-Person
Joanne Kelley	Board of Education Finance Committee Chairman	Present	In-Person
Roxanne Maher	Administrative Assistant	Present	Remote

Submitted to T. Clerk's Office on:03/21/2023/rm

III. PRESENTATIONS

DEPARTMENTS' PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025 BUDGET

2:00 p.m. Fire Marshall Jim Mann

Department 10120301

Mayor proposed $101,116; an increase of $2,802 or 2.9% over the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget.

Fire Marshall	**No**	**CIP Request Fiscal Year 2024/2025**

2:05 p.m. Emergency Management Director Jim Mann

Department 10120401 Emergency Management

Mayor proposed $20,450; no change from the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget.

Emergency Management	**No**	**CIP Request Fiscal Year 2024/2025**

2:10 p.m. 10120401 Administrator of Emergency Services Steve Holyfield

Department 10120401 Administrator of Emergency Services

Mayor proposed $487,883; an increase of $18,314 or 3.9% over the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget.

➢ ***Admin Emergency Service Capital Requests***

Automated External Defibrillators	$7,500

The Town owns and maintains 38 Automatic External Defibrillators. These defibrillators are assigned to both of the fire companies, the police department, and the Ledyard Schools. Each school has at least one public-accessible unit.

Fi re Apparatus Replacement	$362,552

The Fire Apparatus replacement fund was revised in Fiscal Year 2021/2022 and represented a preliminary estimate for the replacement of all fire apparatus in the fleet projected out through Fiscal Year 2039-2040.

Total	**Admin Emer Serv CIP Fiscal Year 2024/2025**	**$370,052**

2:15 p.m. Ledyard Center Fire Chief Jon Mann and Administrator of Emergency Services Steve Holyfield

Department 10120501 Ledyard Center Fire Department

Mayor proposed $128,000; an increase of $1,87o over the approved Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget.

➢ ***Ledyard Center Fire Department CIP Requests***

Fire Hose replacement	$4,000

The Ledyard Fire Company currently loses 2-5 foot lengths of hose per year due to the age of the hose during annual testing. This funding will allow the department to replenish the lost hose. Due to the cost of the hose it was not feasible to fund this expense through the operational budget.

SCBA Replacement	$12,000

Recently the town of Ledyard received a grant for both fire companies' self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA's). The SCBA's are a critical piece of safety equipment to allow firefighters to work inside hazardous environments.

New Tanker R-14 Equipment	$15,000

Funding to provide equipment to outfit the new Tanker arriving early in the Summer, 2024. The tanker that was going out of service had outdated equipment that was no longer in-service. The equipment would include the following: new radios which would note be covered by the Firefighters Grant, and various small pieces of equipment which also included nozzles, and adapters, various valves, thermal imaging cameras, and hooks and axes.

This apparatus would be able to act as an engine I the even it was required which was the reason it needed to be outfitted with common firefighter tools to meet its classification.

Centralized Automated Building Locking System	$23,000

The automated locks would eliminate the need to make copies of keys, and allow better control of who has access to the facilities.

Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment	$10,000

The CIP budget item continues with the necessary turnout gear replacement and procurement for existing and newly recruited firefighters. The Ledyard Fire Company has experienced a surge in membership due to aggressive recruiting this year.

Total	**LCF CIP Fiscal Year 2024/2025**	**$66,000**

2:20 p.m. GFFD – Gales Ferry Fire Assistant Nick Bozym and Administrator of Emergency Services Steve Holyfield

Department 10120551 GFFD – Gales Ferry Fire
Mayor proposed $219,094; an increase of $4,000 or 1.9% over the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget.

Councilor Saccone thanked the Emergency Services Volunteers for their service to the town, noting the training required and their dedication to help the residents during very critical situations was of significant value to their community.

- ***Gales Ferry Fire Company Capital Requests***

Firefighter Personal Protective Clothing (PPE) $13,000

Required by OSHA, protective clothing must now be rotated out for interior firefighting every 10 years under the new National Standards. To save PPW costs the Gales Ferry Fire Department rotates out the 10-year old clothing to non-interior qualified firefighters. This funding was also used to purchase personal protective clothing for new firefighters. The 10-year life span was dictated by NFPA Department required by the State.

Firefighters' Communications Equipment $5,000

Funding for the normal replacement of handheld radios. Radios are constantly changing for greater coverage and communication.

Breathing Air Bottles $3,000

Per the Department of Transportation Firefighting breathing air bottles have a 15-year life "end of use". The replacement of the bottles are within National Fire Protection Association (NPPA) standards.

Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) $13,000

This capital funding request would replace the self-contained breathing apparatus that the firefighters wear to breathe safely in fires and other hazardous situations. Numerous governmental standards now mandate this apparatus. The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus is the firefighters first defense for breathing air during a fire. During the past 25 years advanced and newer technology for these devices has been developed.

Compressor, Breathing Air $12,000

The breathing air compressor produces certified, safe breathing air for firefighters as required by law. Their current compressor 20-years old and coming to the end of its useful life.

Jaws of Life Rescue Tools $4,000

Replacement for the out-of-date equipment (Jaws of Life) used in the rescue and extricating of victims involved in motor vehicle accidents and other hazardous scenarios. Older equipment was not suitable for the new modern vehicles' reinforcement metals. This funding would also be used to purchase new Battery-operated tools.

Fire Station Generator Replacement $8,000

The Gales Ferry Fire Station's emergency generator was used for powering the building during outages and for the apparatus/equipment emergency readiness. In addition, the Fire Station was used for a warming and cooling station for town residents.

Fire Hose $4,000

This capital funding request will manage the costs associated with the replacement of aging and failed firefighting attack and supply hose as a requirement of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards on fire hose. The fire hose was tested annually per the (NFPA).

Firefighting Equipment $3,000

Firefighting equipment must be cycled out on a regular basis. This funding would allow for the purchase of newer state of the art equipment to keep pace with news National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.

Total GFFD CIP Fiscal Year 2024/2025 $65,000

2:30 p.m. Animal Control Officer (ACO) Police Chief John Rich

Department 10120105 ACO

Mayor proposed $99,752; a decrease of $177 or -0.2% over the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget.

➢ ***Animal Control Capital Improvement Plan Requests***

ACO Vehicle Reserve $2,000

Reserve fund for planned replacement of ACO Vehicle. The current balance in FY 22 was $27,000 with a Fiscal Year 2023/2024 allocation of $2,000 the Department would be able to replace the current vehicle with a smaller more fuel efficient van.

Total ACO CIP Fiscal Year 2024/2025 $2,000

2:35 p.m. Emergency Dispatch Center - Paula Smith and Police Chief John Rich

Department 10120103 Emergency Dispatch Center

Mayor proposed $669,249; an increase of $34,448 or 5.4% over the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget.

The Group discussed the budget overrun of the Dispatch Salaries Account, noting that the town moved to the Pitman Schedule to alleviate the pressure that was on the overtime budget. However, the Pitman Schedule did not seem to be correcting the overtime cost issues. It was noted that this was something that they need to continue to discuss in the upcoming contract negotiations.

➢ ***Dispatch Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Request:***

Dispatch CAD/RMS System Replacement $90,000

Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management Systems provide public safety agencies with the ability to create and maintain digital records of all department activities and also provide modules for report writing, evidence and property management, prisoner processing and monitory, and crime reporting to state and federal agencies.

The department DAD/RMS System, administered by Central Square Technologies, is antiquated, outdated, and the company is sunsetting the product in the next two-years. Therefore, the Department needs to invest in an updated CAD.RMS System.

Base Station Replacement Reserve $8,500

Reserve Fund for Dispatch Base Station Radio replacement and repair as needed. This is a reserve fund that has been in effect for several years to update equipment used for police, fire, and EMS emergency communications.

Total Dispatch CIP Fiscal Year 2024/2025 $98,500

2:45 p.m. Police Chief John Rich and Captain Kenneth Creutz

Department 10120101 Police Department

Mayor proposed $3,007,655; an increase of $256,135 or 9.3% over the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget.

The Finance Committee and Chief Rich discussed: (1) Overtime costs; (2) Staffing; (3) Vehicle replacement schedule; and (4) the addition of a Canine.

- ***Police Department Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Requests***

Police Vehicles	$114,055

Planned Replacement of Police Vehicles. The department proposed the replacement of two patrol vehicles in Fiscal 2024/2025 (Car 57 & Car 51) based on current mileage and usage of the patrol fleet.

CALEA Accreditation Reserve	$13,850

Public Act 20-01 requires all CT police agencies to obtain CALEA accreditation by year 2025. CALEA was the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies Accreditation. The accreditation process involved a year long process.

Police Psychological Exam Reserve	$1,375

Public Act 20-01 Requires all law enforcement officers to have a psychological evaluation at least once every 5 years.

Office Chair Replacement	$12,904

The Department requests an allocation to replace Office Chairs in common areas (Training Room, Kitchen). Chairs in the Police Facility have broken and/or were worn to the point of needed to be replace for safety reasons. the Charis were used on a daily basis for all three shifts.

In-Car Video	$1,800

The Police Department implemented in car cameras in Fiscal Year 2018/2019. The Program required maintenance and software and updates. The cost was $1,800 annually

Police Body Worn Cameras	$7,050

The Police Department implemented body-worn cameras in Fiscal Year 2021/2022 in accordance with Public Act 20-01; Section 19. The Program required maintenance and software and updates. The cost was $7,500 annually

Total	**Police CIP Fiscal Year 2024/2025**	**$251,160**

3:00 p.m. Water Pollution Control Authority Chairman Ed Lynch and Waste Water Supervisor Steve Banks

Chairman Ed Lynch presented the Water Pollution Control Authority's proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget as follows:

Water Operations Budget:

Water Operations: $1,517,183.62; a slight decrease of $1,540.70, from the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget.

Mr. Lynch stated that Groton Utilities notified the WPCA that they would be increasing the cost of water by 5% to commence on October 1, 2024. He noted that the WPCA would be scheduling a Public Hearing sometime in April, 2024 to present the 5% water rate increase to the Ratepayers; as it would be included in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Water Operations Budget.

Mr. Lynch went to explain although the following account lines saw increases the overall budget decreased slightly, noting that some debt would be paid off during the current fiscal year:

- ✓ Contingency – increase of $35,476.44
- ✓ Water Usage Charge - increase of $19,128.40

Sewer Operations Budget:

Sewer Operations: $671,749,.3452 a decrease in the amount of $35,278.17 from the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget.

Mr. Lynch and Wastewater Treatment Supervisor Steve Banks noted the following:

- Wastewater Treatment Facility – Wastewater Supervisor Steve Banks thanked the Town Council and Mayor for appropriating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding for the $99,414.00 for the Sewer Feed Pump System Replacement - Highlands Wastewater Treatment Plant. He stated Russel Resources, Inc., C/O Smith & Loveless of Maine installed the Sewer Feed Pump System Replacement - Highlands Wastewater Treatment Plant, last May, 2023; noting that the feed pump was part of the Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project. However, he stated that they could use an additional $500,000 for additional expenses such as a portable generator, and an additional control panel, etc.

- Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project - WPCA Chairman Ed Lynch addressed the Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project noting that the sewer line would run from the High School to Ledyard Center (along Route 214/Route 117 to Colonel Ledyard Highway) and would construct an estimated 2,450 linear feet of sewer line. He stated the sewer line would support additional economic development behind the former Ledyard Center School, as well as support existing businesses in Ledyard Center. He stated the new Developments would spread the costs to operate the Wastewater Treatment Facility over a larger number of sewer customers.

- ✓ ***Phase I – American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) $1,200,000***-: Mr. Lynch stated the piping would be installed along Route 117 while they were constructing the Multi-Model Pathway. He explained that there has been some savings because they have coordinated this work with the construction of the Multi-Use Pathway (pedestrian and bicycle) along Colonel Ledyard Highway, which was being paid for by the by LoTCIP Grant funding (Local Transportation Capital Improvement Plan). Therefore, he stated the work to lay the pipe under the Multi-Use Pathway has come in $731,668 under the estimated $1,200,000 amount that was initially assigned for Phase I of the Sewer Line Extension Project.

  Mayor Allyn, III, noted that the Multi-Use Pathway work began on March 4, 2024, with the clearing of the land, with an expected completion date of November 30, 2024. He continued by addressing the importance to provide construction oversight of the Sewer Line Extension Project. He stated the cost to hire a Clerk of the Works, who would be in the field on a daily basis to witness and oversee that work the was being done properly and that the pipes/connections etc. were being tested, etc., would cost $50,000.

- ✓ ***Phase II: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) $950,000*** would bring the sewer line from the High School to Pennywise Lane.

  Mayor Allyn noted Mr. Lynch's email in which he stated that Weston & Sampson Engineers provided a cost of $381,900 for the engineering work for Phase II. He stated at their March 6, 2024 Meeting the Finance Committee thought that it seemed high and questioned whether the $381,900 was only for the engineering work or if it included other work related to Phase II of the sewer line extension project. Mr. Lynch stated that he would follow up with Weston & Sampson Engineers to obtain additional information

The Finance Committee discussed the importance to get these projects moving explaining that the Federal Treasury definition of ***"Obligated Funds***" meant ***"An order has been placed for property and services, or contracts, or some awards were made***" by December 31, 2024; otherwise, the funds would have to be returned to the US Federal Treasury. Therefore, he stated that the town needed to make sure they had their projects lined up with contracts in place. In addition, per the ARPA Guidelines that the projects needed to be completed by December 31, 2026.

- New Developments – WPCA Chairman Ed Lynch noted that the Planning & Zoning Commission has indicated that the Habitat for Humanity 35 – 40 Affordable Homes Project planned for Colby Drive would be coming forward soon, noting that Habitat for Humanity was finished a project in Norwich and has turned their attention their project in Ledyard. He stated the piping would be installed along Route 117 while they were constructing the Multi-Model Pathway. Therefore, he stated to avoid tearing up a newly paved road that he would like to have the T and Stub installed for the Colby Drive Project.

  Mayor Allyn agreed with Mr. Lynch with regard to the installing as much pipe as they could. He suggested they amend the contract to run the pipe up Fairway Drive to the Colby Drive intersection, noting that this would bring the sewer line halfway to the Habitat for Humanity house and halfway to the proposed Apartment Development , noting that it that it would require about 740 linear feet of pipe.

  It was noted that stated per Ordinance #400-001 that "*The Town Council shall approve the water system budget. This shall be provided to the residents at the Annual Town Meeting on the budget."* He explained although the Town Council was interested in the Sewer Operations Budget that per the Ordinance that the Town Council was not required to approve the Sewer Operations Budget, noting that it was provided for informational purposes only.

2:00 p.m. Budget Work

During the work sessions the Finance Committee asked questions about line items in each budget category. The Committee also explained to each Department that should there be any changes in State Revenues proposed by the Governor's Budget, that they may want to meet again with the Finance Committee to offer alternatives, suggestions and recommendations as the Finance Committee works to put forwarded a recommended Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget.

The Committee commented that as they have been working thru the Budget Work Sessions that they were pleased to see that Department Heads worked to off-set General Government contractual increases with reductions in other expenses to find efficiencies. They also noted that it was apparent that the Mayor and his staff were well prepared to answer the Committee's questions and that they appreciated the level of detail they provided.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget Work Session adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Saccone, Sr.
Committee Chairman
Finance Committee