



**TOWN OF LEDYARD**  
CONNECTICUT  
TOWN COUNCIL  
HYBRID FORMAT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway  
Ledyard, CT 06339

860 464-3203  
Roxanne Maher

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

**MINUTES**  
**FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

5:00 PM

Annex Meeting Room - Video Conference

**DRAFT**

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

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

- II. **ROLL CALL**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Location	Arrived	Departed
Jessica Buhle	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
Tim Ryan	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
Tony Saccone	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
S. Naomi Rodriguez	Town Council Chairman	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
Matt Bonin	Finance Director	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
Carmen Garcia-Irizarry	Town Councilor	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
April Brunelle	Town Councilor	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
Steve Masalin	Public Works Director/Town Engineer	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:43 pm
Jim Mann	Director of Emergency Management	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
Eric Treaster	Resident	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	5:05 pm
Minna DeGaetano	Resident	Present	In-Person	5:00 pm	6:05 pm
Roxanne Maher	Administrative Assistant	Present	Remote	5:00 pm	6:05 pm

- III. **RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS**

Mr. Eric Treaster, 10 Huntington Way, Ledyard, welcomed the new Town Council Members to the Finance Committee. He stated that he was present this evening to ask for money to support legal costs to address Short-Term Rental properties. He stated that he helped to write an Amendment to the Zoning Regulations that prohibit Short-Term Rentals in Ledyard. He stated writing the Zoning Regulation Amendment was a long arduous process, noting a lot of residents testified who had been impacted by the nuisance factors of Short-Term Rental Properties. He went on to note that he was the Hearing Officer for Zoning Citations; and that he recently learned that although the Town had a prohibition on Short Term Rental Properties that the Zoning Regulations were not being enforced, because of the lack of funding that was budgeted in the Legal Fee Accounts. Therefore, he stated he was present this evening to request the transfer of funds from other Accounts to the Legal Fees Account to provide adequate funding to

enforce the Town's Zoning Regulations in a fair and uniform manner; which included the prohibition on Short-Term Rental Properties. He stated that he was aware of two active Short-Term Rental Properties in town. He stated except for funding for legal fees that the Town had the tools and procedures in-place to enforce the prohibition of Short-Term Rental Properties. He stated due to the lack of funding that the Town was not enforcing the Zoning Regulations prohibiting Short-Term Rental Properties.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS – None.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Minutes of November 1, 2023

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

VI. FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Finance Director Matthew Bonin welcomed and introduced himself to the new Town Council Members of the Finance Committee. He stated he has been in Municipal Finance for thirty-five years, noting that thirty-three years of that time was working as a Municipal Auditor, noting that he previously conducted the Annual Audit for the Town of Ledyard. He stated when the former Finance Director Marcia Hancock retired he took the Finance Director's position, noting that he has been in this role for nearly two years.

Mr. Bonin reported on the status of the Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023. He stated that Auditor CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP provided a Draft Report last week that he was currently reviewing.

VII. FINANCIAL REPORTS

Finance Director Matthew Bonin stated he sent the following Financial Reports out earlier this week and that they were also attached to the Agenda on the meeting portal:

- Revenue Year-to Date Report- October 31, 2023

Mr. Bonin stated because the Finance Department currently had a vacancy that the November Revenues have not been posted yet.

Mr. Bonin noted the following:

- Property Tax Collection was at 57% of what was budgeted.
- Nursing Revenue was projected to fall short of the \$100,000 budgeted.
- Interest on Deposits received \$344,000; which was already \$44,000 over the \$300,000 that was budgeted.

- Expenditure Year-to Date Report- November 30, 2023

Finance Director Matthew Bonin noted the expenditures were fairly normal.

- Board of Education - Mr. Bonin noted that the Board of Education has had some staff turnover, noting that they had a new Director of Finance and Human Capital, noting that some expenses have been posted to incorrect accounts and that he was working with the Board of Education Staff to correct the postings.
- Utilities – Expenses were trending in a good direction. Mr. Bonin stated the town was currently paying less for propane than last year.
- Nursing Expenses – Mr. Bonin stated the Nursing Expenses were over budget. He explained with the closure of the Ledyard Visiting Nursing Association that there were some expenses such as contracts that needed to be paid off, stating that some contracts extended into 2025, but that they were able to get a discount on those contracts. He stated Nursing Administrator Karen Goetchuis and Office Assistant Jean Dutton were still working in the Office.

**RESULT: DISCUSSED**

## VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Capital Non-Recurring (CNR) Fund based on the *American Rescue Act* Funding (ARPA) and the process to approve ARPA Projects and expend ARPA Funding.

Finance Director Matthew Bonin noted that he provided an updated ARPA Projects Spreadsheet which was attached to the Agenda packet on the meeting portal. He stated the ARPA Funding had to be obligated to a project by December 31, 2024 and that the funding had to be fully Expended by December, 31, 2026. He stated any ARPA Funding that was not used by December 31, 2026 would have to be returned to the Federal Treasury.

Mr. Bonin went on to explain 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*”. He stated just saying that the funds were going to be used for a particular project, was not considered “*Obligated*” and did not meet the Treasury’s definition. He stated once the funding was “*Obligated*” they had about two years to fully expended the funds.

Councilor Ryan stated even if the Town had contracts in place by the end of 2024 that they needed to make sure that they were invoiced and paid by 2026.

Councilor Buhle noted that the ARPA Spreadsheet showed that the town had \$225,962.49 that has not been specifically obligated to a project. Councilor Ryan cautioned that they do not confuse “*obligated*” with “*committed*” explaining that the town had ARPA Funds

committed to certain uses, however, they had not yet been obligated because the town has not signed any contracts yet. Therefore, he noted all the Projects on the ARPA Spreadsheet listed as *“Not Started”* did not have contracts, stating that those funds could be used for other things that the Finance Committee may want to suggest. Mr. Bonin explained that there were also some ARPA Projects that were completed under budget, and therefore, those funds needed to be repurposed for something else.

Councilor Ryan stated that Mayor Allyn, III, has been providing the Finance Committee an update on the status of each of the ARPA Projects.

**RESULT: DISCUSSED**

**Next Meeting: 01/03/2024 5:00 p.m.**

2. Potential uses of the revenue received from Public Act No.21-58 *“An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management”* in accordance with *“Resolution Regarding Revenues Received from Beverage Container Surcharges”* adopted on June 8, 2022.

Councilor Ryan stated the Finance Committee has been discussing ideas for the use of the Surcharge Revenues, which included establishing a *“Adopt a Highway/Road”* Program that would allow Non-Profit Organizations to adopt a road to clean-up and they would be paid for the nip bottles collected from the Surcharge Revenues. He explained that the State disburses the Surcharge Revenues to the Town twice a year (six months) and that there was no deadline that the funds had to be used by. However, he stated that the funds could only be used for the following purposes:

- (1) Environmental measures intended to reduce the generation of solid waste;
- (2) Reduce the impact of litter caused by such solid waste, including, but not limited to, the hiring of a recycling coordinator
- (3) The installation of storm drain filters designed to block solid waste and beverage container debris or
- (4) The purchase of a mechanical street sweeper, vacuum or broom that removes litter, including, but not limited to, such beverage containers and other debris from streets, sidewalks and abutting lawn and turf

Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated the Town sold its Streetsweeper and used some of the Surcharge Revenues to lease a Streetsweeper this year to clean the roads.

Councilor Buhle addressed the *“Adopt a Highway/Road Program”* and she questioned:

- Whether the Town was ready to move forward with the *“Adopt a Highway/Road Program”*.
- Whether an amount to pay the Non-Profit Organizations been established.

- Whether the Program was based on road milage or the amount of trash that was collected.

Councilor Ryan stated that Councilor Buhle’s questions were the types of details that would need to be addressed in drafting a proposal to establish and to adopt the “*Adopt a Highway/Road Program*”.

Councilor Saccone noted as a Fire Chief that he had concerns regarding the safety of people walking on busy roads to clean up nip bottles and litter, noting that he thought it was dangerous. He stated although it was a great idea that they needed to address how they would protect the volunteers who were doing the roadside clean-up.

Councilor Buhle stated that she has participated in roadside clean-ups with the Ledyard Rotary. She explained for volunteer organizations to clean-up state roads that they had to obtain approval from the State and comply with their requirements, which included being over the age of sixteen, they had to sign a waiver, and wear safety vests, etc. However, she stated taking all of the State’s required safety precautions, that cleaning up Route 12 still felt dangerous.

Councilor Ryan stated the town would have to provide the same level of safety noting that some of the Surcharge Funding could be used to purchase the reflective safety vest, traffic cones, maybe having a police cruiser to alert motorists that roadside clean-up was taking place. He stated that the Finance Committee would have to work through all of these types of details. He stated that other than renting the streetsweeper the Town has not expended Surcharge Funding. He stated that Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin would know how much funding was needed to rent the streetsweeper twice a year; and that would help the Finance Committee understand the amount of funding they had to use for other efforts.

Councilor Saccone questioned how the nip bottles were impacting the storm drains. Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated that although the nip bottles were getting into the catch basins that he would hesitate to say that it was a lot.

Finance Director Matthew Bonin noted that the Surcharge Account had a balance of about \$45,000.

**RESULT: DISCUSSED**

**Next Meeting: 01/03/2024; 5:00 p.m.**

## IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. MOTION to recommend the Town Council appropriate \$12,707.59 to Account #21020301-57300-G0015 (Fire Marshall - New Equipment- State Grant).

In addition, authorize the expenditure of up to \$12,707.59 for the purchase of various equipment (Computers, SMART Board, etc.) for the Emergency Operations Center.  
Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Councilor Saccone provided some background stating in a letter dated July 3, 2023 the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) approved Ledyard's request for Grant funding to support the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). He noted that Director of Emergency Management Jim Mann was attending the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Councilor Ryan noted that the DEMHS Grant Program was received annually to support the purchase of equipment upgrades for the EOC.

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

**RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0**

**MOVER:** Tony Saccone, Town Councilor

**SECONDER:** Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

**AYES:** Jessica Buhle, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

2. MOTION to recommend the Town Council authorize a bid waiver for Gerber Construction Inc. for Bid No. L071-0001 (Ledyard High School Multi-Use Pathway and Sidewalk Extension) due to lack of three bids, in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance for Purchasing*".

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin explained that the Town solicited bids for the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Plan Grant Program (LoTCIP) for the Ledyard High School Multi-Use Pathway and Sidewalk Extension Project, which also included the installation of the sewer main piping along most of the length of the pathway.

Mr. Masalin explained in response to Bid #L071-001 (Ledyard High School Multi-Use Pathway and Sidewalk Extension) the town only received two bids as follows: (1) Gerber Construction, Ellington, CT \$3,023,168; and (2) B&W Paving & Landscaping from Oakdale, CT \$3,818,805. He stated in accordance with Ordinance #200-001 (rev 1) "*An Ordinance for Purchasing*" a Bid Waiver was being requested because the town did not receive the required three bids for the project.

Councilor Ryan questioned whether their Consulting Engineers had any insight regarding the disparity between the two bids received. Mr. Masalin stated it would have been nice to have received more than two bids. However, he stated that he was not alarmed by the disparity between the two bids that were received, noting that they typically have an outlier, and that the higher bid could have been the outlier if they had others to compare to.

Mr. Masalin went on to note that Weston & Sampson, Consulting Engineers, reviewed the two Bids received and in a letter issued on November 3, 2023 recommended the town proceed with the low bidder Gerber Construction, explaining their Bid Proposal was within the expected range, and that it did not go outside the boundaries of what the State allowed. He also explained that Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) was the regional manager of these LoTCIP Grant Projects, and that Gerber Construction Proposal met their criteria.

Mr. Masalin also noted that as part of the LoTCIP Grant Program the Town had to send to the State the Bid Data that showed that the Bid met the target value. He explained with the receipt of the Bid Data the State issued a Project Authorization Letter, which

the Mayor signed off on earlier this week. He stated the next step was for the State to issue to the Town an “*Authorization to Award*”. He stated the only reason they were coming to the Town Council was to request a Bid Waiver because the Town did not receive the required three bids.

Mr. Masalin stated the Ledyard High School Multi-Use Pathway and Sidewalk Extension Project has been talked about for a couple of years, explaining the lengthy Grant Application/Approval process for projects seeking State Funding which began in July, 2019. He provided a brief description of the project noting it would begin between the Bill Library and the Congregational Church and would run parallel to Ray Holdridge Circle to Colonel Highway, noting that the cul-de-sac (circle) would be eliminated and there would be a “T” type of traffic flow. He stated there would be a pedestrian sidewalk that would go across the Ray Holdridge Intersection and Colonel Ledyard Highway to Route 117; where the State has already replaced the traffic lights, installed a cross walk and *Walk-Do Not Walk* Signal Station. He stated the sidewalk on Route 117 would be extended from Valentino’s Restaurant to Best Buy providing pedestrian access. He stated the impervious areas would be reduced and they would cut down on the stormwater drainage in that area. There would be a ten-foot-wide asphalt Multi-Use Pathway (pedestrians & bicyclists) on the north side of Colonel Ledyard Highway that would go to the intersection at Gallup Hill Road. The Gallup Hill Road intersection would be reconstructed changing the traffic pattern from a “Y” to a “T” to help slow the traffic both coming and going onto that road. The pathway would go across the Gallup Hill Road new intersection on the High School side and run up that side to the egress point coming out of the High School (close to the building). Mr. Masalin stated there would be Trailheads at the High School, between the Bill Library and the Congregational Church, with bicycle stations and other things to support bicycling; as well as some other crosswalk stations on Colonel Ledyard Highway (Board of Education Building, Wolf Ridge Gap).

Mr. Masalin stated weather permitting that they would begin to see some preparation work this winter with the clearing and removal of brush in some areas and possibly some grading work.

Councilor Ryan stated the Multi-Use Pathway and Sidewalk Extension Project was a great initiative, noting that it would provide a safe accessible path for residents to use and for recreational purposes. He questioned how a project of this size would impact the Public Works maintenance work, and whether the town would be clearing snow from Multi-Use Pathway. Mr. Masalin noted that Ordinance #600-005 “*An Ordinance Concerning Municipal Liability for Ice and Snow on Public Sidewalks*” which as a general rule puts the onus to clear the sidewalk on the adjoining property owner. However, he stated the one present exception was the sidewalks on Gallup Hill Road and Town Farm Road for the kids that walk to school. He stated the Town worked with the Board of Education Staff to clear/maintain those sidewalks. He continued by addressing the ten-foot-wide asphalt Multi-Use Pathway on the north side of Colonel Ledyard Highway that would go to the intersection at Gallup Hill Road, explaining that it has been made clear from the time they began discussing *the Multi-Use Pathway and Sidewalk Extension Project* that the Town would assume the liability and maintenance,

including snow removal, of that area. He stated the Town has improved their equipment that would help them to be efficient in the snow removal for this area of the pathway. He stated at this time he did not anticipate that additional staff would be required. However, he stated that going forward the towns infrastructure could grows at an accumulative rate where they may need more manpower.

Councilor Buhle noted the sewer line extension line that would be installed under the *Multi-Use Pathway* and she questioned whether that would create additional maintenance costs. Mr. Masalin stated theoretically any infrastructure would create additional maintenance costs. However, he stated the sewer line would be brand new and would be constructed to current standards, therefore, it would not be an issue for many years.

Finance Director Matthew Bonin noted that the sewer line that would run under the Mult-Use Pathway was being paid by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding and that the bids came in well under the dollar amount that was earmarked for that Phase of the Sewer Line Extension Project; which would free up some ARPA Funding to be used toward other initiatives.

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

**RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0**

**MOVER:** Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

**SECONDER:** Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor

**AYES:** Jessica Buhle, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

3. MOTION to recommend the Town Council extend the Standing Bid waiver for Police Vehicles to include the purchase of general pool vehicles for the Town’s fleet for various Departmental needs.

Moved by Councilor Saccone, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin explained in years past the Town was previously able to purchase used State vehicles directly from their assets that had been retired to surplus. He stated being able to purchase the State’s retired surplus vehicles provided the town with consistent value and favorable pricing, without exceeding the town’s \$5,000 bid limit. He noted as an example that the Jeep he has been using was purchased from the State Surplus Vehicles for \$1,275; noying at that time the Jeep had 22,000 miles on it and that it currently had 93,000 miles on it. However, he stated the State has changed their approach to a third-party auction process with no opportunity for towns to independently purchase vehicles and equipment, noting that this was a similar trend to what the town has done with selling their surplus equipment on GovDeals.com.

Mr. Masalin stated with the State changing to a third-party auction site to sell their surplus vehicles that the town’s cost to purchase used vehicles has dramatically increased beyond the \$5,000 bid threshold, which has complicated the process. He went on to explain that purchasing used vehicles was not suitably managed through the standard bidding process, and therefore, he stated that more flexibility was needed to make spontaneous decisions when opportunities arise.



Mr. Masalin stated in taking advantage of the State's surplus vehicles sales that the Town had been able to maintain their fleet of pooled vehicles that were used by town employees to conduct town business, at a low-cost. However, he stated when the State ended their program to sell their used surplus vehicles to municipalities that the town has been working to stretch the life of the pool vehicle fleet by frequently reassigning vehicles among the departments to meet their needs as best as possible.

Mr. Masalin went on to explain that the town has now arrived at the point where only three of the six (minimum) needed pool vehicles were safe for the road, noting that the vehicles were at the end of their useful life with high mileage and mechanical or frame failures, which were safety issues. He stated to bring the fleet up to the town's needed inventory, they would need to purchase vehicles that was going to exceed the town's \$5,000 bid limit.

Mr. Masalin stated each year the Town Council approved a Standing Bid Waiver List noting that the List included the Police Department to purchase vehicles to meet their fleet needs. Therefore, he stated for this year that he was requesting authorization to piggy-back on the standing bid waiver assigned to the Police Department to purchase vehicles to replace the vehicles in the town's pooled fleet. He stated that he planned to submit a request to include the purchase of the town's pooled vehicles next year's Standing Bid Waiver List.

Councilor Ryan noted the Fiscal Year 202-2024 Standing Bid Waiver List included Police Cruisers. Therefore, he noted for clarification that tonight's request would add "*Public Works*" to the column that cited the "*Police Cruisers*". Mr. Masalin stated that Councilor Ryan's understanding was correct, and he noted for next year (FY 24/25) that he would request that Town Vehicles Fleet be included as its own item on the Standing Bid Waiver List.

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

**RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0**

**MOVER:** Tony Saccone, Town Councilor

**SECONDER:** Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

**AYES:** Jessica Buhle, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

4. MOTION to recommend the Town Council approve appropriations from the receipt of sales of vehicles and equipment through GovDeals in the total amount of \$4,650 as follows:

- \$4,650 to the Public Works Heavy Equipment CNR Account #21040101-57311.

Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle

Discussion: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin stated as he mentioned during the previous Agenda item (Item # 3) the town has been selling its

surplus equipment on GovDeals.com. He stated recently the town sold the 30-year Drive-on Truck Lift which was at the Public Works Highway Garage using the GovDeals.com on-line auction site and received \$4,650, noting that Public Works has moved to a more efficient type of car lift at the Town Garage. He stated the Town Council has previously appropriated the revenues from the sale of surplus equipment to the respective capital reserve fund to supplement/offset budgetary appropriations to meet lifecycle replacement costs and other needs.

Councilor Ryan stated that he would echo Mayor Allyn's comment that he included in the background on the Legislative File, which was that the town has received a tremendous value for a piece of equipment that was 30-years old. He stated using the GovDeals.com on-line auction site has enabled the town to boost the revenue received from the sale of its old surplus equipment.

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

<b>RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0</b>	
<b>MOVER:</b>	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
<b>AYES:</b>	Jessica Buhle, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

The Finance Committee thanked Mr. Masalin for attending tonight's meeting.  
Mr. Masalin left the meeting at 5:43 p.m.

5. MOTION to recommend the Town Council approve a Letter of Directive to the Mayor and Board of Education for the preparation of the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget, as contained in the draft dated November 8, 2023.  
Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan  
Discussion: Councilor Saccone noted that Chairman Rodriguez has prepared the draft budget "*Letter of Directive*" for review and consideration this evening.

Councilor Ryan explained that to begin the Annual Budget Process the Town Council issued a "*Budget Letter of Directive*" to the Mayor and Board of Education, which outlined the preparation process, as provided in the Town Charter.

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

<b>RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0</b>	
<b>MOVER:</b>	Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
<b>AYES:</b>	Jessica Buhle, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

6. MOTION to recommend the Town Council approve the Town Council Department Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget in the amount of \$191,356.  
Moved by Councilor Ryan, seconded by Councilor Buhle  
Discussion: Councilor Saccone noted that the Town Council Department's proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget was attached to the Agenda packet on the meeting portal and he asked whether anyone had questions.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher explained as part of the Fiscal Year Budget Preparation process the Town Council was required to approve a Town Council Department Budget to be included in the Mayor's proposed budget. She stated the Town Council's Department proposed Budget would come back to the Finance Committee for another review as part of their Annual budget deliberation preparation process.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher went on to explain that the Town Council Department Budget proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 was in the amount of \$191,356; which was an increase of \$1,815 over the current year's budget due to an increase in Auditor's Fee. She stated the Town Council Department's proposed budget included salaries for employees, funds for the Annual Audit Report, legal fees pertaining to on-going matters regarding the Taxation of Non-Tribal Property at the Mashantucket Foxwoods Casino and other related issues, as well as other operating expenses. There were no major changes to the expenses.

Councilor Ryan commented on the Legal Fees noting in the Town Council's Department budget were for issues pertaining to taxation and other related issues. He stated each year the Town Council included a nominal amount to pay for legal fees. He explained as they approach the budget limit that they have authorized an over expenditure to cover the legal fees for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Finance Director Matthew Bonin stated that the Mayor's Office Budget included two other Legal Fee accounts for General Legal Support and Specially Approved Legal Counsel. He stated the Specially Approved Legal Counsel was almost fully expended for this fiscal year (2023/2024).

VOTE:

3 – 0 Approved and so declared

**RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0**

**MOVER:** Tim Ryan, Town Councilor

**SECONDER:** Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor

**AYES:** Jessica Buhle, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

7. MOTION to recommend the Town Council approve the Town Council Department Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Capital Improvement Budget in the total amount of \$1,500.

Moved by Councilor Buhle, seconded by Councilor Ryan

Discussion: Councilor Saccone noted the Town Council Department Capital Improvement Plan in the amount of \$1,500 was for the purchase of laptop computers for members of the Town Council.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher explained as part of the Fiscal Year Budget Preparation process the Town Council was required to approve a five-year Capital Plan for their Department. She stated with the transition to the cloud-based meeting portal in 2011 providing for paperless meetings, the Town Council began planning for their technological needs by allocating funding into a Capital Account to purchase and replace laptop computers for Councilors to conduct town business and access the meeting portal. She stated in past years some Councilors have chosen to use their own device. She noted with the November 7, 2023 Election that three new laptop computers were being purchased/provided, bringing their Capital Account Balance to \$3,058.

VOTE:

3 – 0 Approved and so declared

**RESULT: RECOMMEND TO APPROVE 3 – 0****MOVER:** Jessica Buhle, Town Councilor**SECONDER:** Tim Ryan, Town Councilor**AYES:** Jessica Buhle, Tim Ryan, Tony Saccone

## 8. Preliminary Budget Work Session Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

The Finance Committee reviewed Preliminary Budget Work Session Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024/2025; noting that in accordance with the Town Charter the Mayor's Budget was due to the Town Council on Monday, March 4, 2023; and that the Finance Committee's Budget Work Sessions with the Town's Department Heads were scheduled as follows:

- March 7, 2023 – 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- March 11, 2023 - 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- March 14, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Councilor Ryan noted that the Budget Work Sessions with the Department Heads were all scheduled to begin at 12:00 noon. He addressed the need to leave his employment early to attend the three Budget Work Sessions; and therefore, he asked if they could change the time of the March 11, 2023 Work Session to begin at 2:00 p.m. The Committee agreed to adjust the Budget Work Session Schedule as noted above.

Councilor Ryan stated the Budget Work Sessions were intense and he noted that it was amazing how much the Finance Committee learned from meeting with each of the Department Heads.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher noted that the Budget Work Sessions would be conducted in Hybrid Format allowing residents who cannot attend in-person to participate remotely. She also noted that the video of the Budget Work Sessions would be available on the Meeting Portal.

**RESULT: COMPLETED**

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

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**VOTE:** Councilor Saccone moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Buhle.  
3 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Saccone  
Committee Chairman  
Finance Committee