

RESULT: ADOPTED 8 - 0	
MOVER:	Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Tim Ryan, Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan Saums
EXCUSED:	Marshall

16. MOTION to authorize 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. Gales Ferry Library e-fiber installation.

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums provided some background noting in early December, 2021 Library Director Gale Bradbury spoke with him about installing a fiber network because they were having issues with the internet at the Gales Ferry Library. He stated to provide some data regarding the Library's request to install a fiber network that a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Speed Test was conducted which showed that their internet download was 41.70 Mbps and the upload was 6.03 Mbps at the Gales Ferry Library, which was comparable to the type of internet service someone would have in their home. He stated anyone could download the FCC Speed Test on their cell phone and conduct the Speed Test on any internet or Wi-Fi connection they have in their homes.

Councilor Saums went on to explain that the Schools and the Bill Library were currently receiving excellent internet service from the Connecticut Educational Network (CEN), which was a high-speed fiber optic network, that was independent from ComCast and Frontier. However, he stated the Gales Ferry Library was not on a fiberoptic network and when a number of people were in the Library using technology devices they get kicked off the internet because they were exceeding the upload and download of the Library's current cable internet carrier. Therefore, he stated the Connecticut State Library was strongly encouraging the Gales Ferry Library to get on a fiberoptic network, explaining that this would be expensive because the fiber would need to be installed all the way from the hub in Ledyard Center to the Gales Ferry Library. However, he stated the Connecticut State Library had money available to help libraries install a fiber network through the Connecticut Education Network (CEN) Program.

Councilor Saums continued by addressing the cost to connect to the Connecticut Educational Network explaining the installation of the entire fiber network would cost \$91,900 and the equipment would cost was \$10,758. He stated the Connecticut State Library had money and would provide a match thru the E-Rate grant funding so that the entire installation cost (\$91,900) and equipment (\$10,758) would be funded.

Councilor Saums explained that the E-Rate grant was a Federal Program that was funded by the telephone services. He stated a certain percentage of everyone's phone bill was paid to Universal Service Fund, therefore, these funds were not actually coming from the State of Connecticut. He stated although he had mixed feelings about spending \$91,000 to install a fiber line because it was very expensive, that if Ledyard did not apply for the grant funding that another town would, noting that the grant funding would be spent either way. Therefore, he stated that this was a good opportunity to improve internet service at the Gales Ferry Library.

Councilor Saums addressed the on-going and annual maintenance cost stating that this grant funding would also pay the \$7,200 annual fee for fiber maintenance for the first year. He explained beginning the second year and each year thereafter, the Library was eligible to apply for the E-Rate discount, which has been 50% for the last few years. He stated the E-Rate discount would reduce the Gales Ferry Library's annual fiber maintenance cost to \$3,600 for each year of the 20-year contract, noting that their current cable internet cost \$828 per year. Therefore, he stated the net annual fiber maintenance cost would be \$2,772 noting that transitioning from the cable internet service to the Connecticut Educational Network would be a net difference of \$55,000 during the 20-year contract. He stated that given that the funding was coming from the Universal Service Fund that this was a good opportunity to move technology forward for the town, noting that the purpose of the Universal Service Fund was to provide access to everyone who needed it regardless of where they were.

Councilor Ryan noted the back-up information stated the annual maintenance fiber fee for the Connecticut Education Network at Bill Library after the E-Rate discount was \$1,650 per year; therefore, he questioned the reason the annual maintenance fee for the Gales Ferry Library would be \$3,600 after the E-Rate Rebate. Library Director Gale Bradbury explained the cost in Ledyard Center was lower because of the Bill Library’s proximity of the Connecticut Education Network hub at the High School and Police Station/Town Hall.

Councilor Ryan requested clarification on whether the town would need to apply for the 50% E-Rate discount for the annual fiber maintenance cost every year. Library Director Gale Bradbury stated that the town does have to apply each year to receive the 50% E-Rate Discount. Councilor Ryan questioned the probability of the town not receiving the 50% E-Rate one year. Mrs. Bradbury stated she has applied every year since 2016 to receive the E-Rate Discount for the fiber maintenance at the Bill Library and that the town has received the grant funding every year. Councilor Ryan stated that he was surprised that there was no increase in the fiber maintenance costs over the 20-year contract.

Mayor Allyn addressed Councilor Ryan’s comments regarding increases in the fiber maintenance cost, noting that same could be said for other cable internet providers, stating that they would have to believe that there would be increases in those providers annual costs.

Chairman Dombrowski thanked Library Director Gale Bradbury for her input.  
8 - 0 Approved and so declared

VOTE:

RESULT: ADOPTED 8 - 0	
MOVER:	Bill Saums, Town Councilor
SECONDER	Andra Ingalls Town Councilor
AYES:	Dombrowski, Ingalls, Irwin, McGrattan, Paul, Rodriguez, Ryan Saums
EXCUSED:	Marshall

17. MOTION to authorize the Mayor to submit a Department of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application in the amount of \$1.38 million to the Office of Brownfields and Capital Projects Small Business and Community Development Program Unit CT Communities Challenge Grant Program Round #1 for the purpose of extending a sewer line extension to Ledyard Center

In addition, appropriate \$1.37 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Account for Phase I, Phase II & Phase III of the Ledyard Sewer Line Extension Project.

Should the CDBG Application not be approved, appropriate the full cost of the Ledyard Sewer Line Extension Project in the amount of \$2.76 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Account.

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Ingalls

Discussion: Councilor Saums provided some background stating that the town received grant funding to construct a Multi-Model Pathway from the Ledyard High School to Ledyard Center. He stated while the town has been designing and planning the Multi-Model Pathway, that they have also been studying and designing plans to extend the sewer line from the High School to Ledyard Center which would be done in several phases noting that it would run along Route 214/Route 117 to Colonel Ledyard Highway and would construct an estimated 2,450 linear feet of sewer line. He stated the Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension Project would support additional economic development behind the former Ledyard Center School, as well as support existing businesses in Ledyard Center.

Councilor Saums stated because portions of these two projects (Multi-Model Pathway and Ledyard Center Sewer Line Extension) would follow the same track the thinking was that the two projects should be done together. He went on to state among the qualifying usage of \$4,443,574 American Rescue Act Plan (ARPA) funding was water and sewer line projects.

Councilor Saums went on to explain that in addition to the use of ARPA Funding for the sewer line extension project, that Ledyard was also eligible to apply for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$1.38 million to help pay for the much-needed sewer line infrastructure project. He stated should Ledyard receive the CBDG Grant that