

**Leyden Select Board and Finance Committee Minutes**  
**Leyden Town Offices**  
**Regular Session Minutes**  
**August 30, 2021**  
**6:00pm**

**Select Board Members Present:** Jeff Neipp, Bill Glabach, Erica Jensen

**Others Present:** Michele Giarusso, John Higgins, Michele Higgins, Gilda Galvis, Dan Galvis, Beth Kuzdeba, Carole Kuzdeba, Barbara Wallace, Robin Neipp, Jill Cote, Peter Wakelin, David Brooks, Sean Berthiaume, Sara Steinberg, Ginger Robinson, Bob Depalma, Ken Spatcher, Alice Wozniak, John Rodgers

Jeff called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm with an opening statement about President Biden ending the war in Afghanistan. He stated this is a good day. He called for a moment of silence for the recent deaths of 13 servicemen who died trying to help Americans and Afghanistans flee the country. Jeff also made a statement about his expectations on how people should conduct themselves at meetings. He asked Michele G. to research code of conduct policies and will ask the board to possibly adopt some. He also said there should be no debate on public comments or bantering back and forth.

**Motion:** Erica moved the August 16 meeting minutes as printed. Bill seconded. Unanimous.

**Jeff stated he would like to change Citizen's Concerns to "Public Comments"-Barbara Wallace** stated she has several issues she is concerned about. She had 3 power outages within 5 days, her smoke detector went off, she called the fire department and Colrain responded in 30 minutes. She called the Leyden Fire Dept. nonemergency number 2 times, and no one called her back. She called Shelburne Control and found out our fire chief was on vacation and there was no back up to call her back. Sgt. Garrity told her that Colrain was the backup for Leyden. Barbara stated she does not understand why Colrain is covering and not Bernardston. She would like Bernardston as the backup for her side of town. Another issue Barbara shared is she never received the 2 RAVE alerts. In reference to her power going out there are 5 trees on her property to be cut and only 3 of them have been cut. She wants to know if other residents are having these concerns. She would like these trees looked at before winter and prioritized. West Nile virus is a real concern and she expressed we need to help each other out to try and get rid of standing water on our properties. She stated maybe we need to form a citizen's committee and brainstorm how to get this message out to the residents. Erica stated she has a good rapport with Michael Kane from Eversource and she would be happy to follow up with him about more cutting of trees. Jeff interjected and told Erica she is not to deliberate with the public. Erica replied she is giving an answer to the public which is okay. She is not deliberating.

**Carole Kuzdeba-**Carole is concerned about the 3 power outages she has had on that side of town. It seems to be the same 41 residents that are always affected. Asplundh has been in Leyden for 2-3 months. It took 6 months to take 1 tree down previously on her road. Carole has spoken with Joella the arborist who marked the trees. Joella told her after she marked trees residents went around and painted over the markings over some trees that should have been taken down. Carole asked who is responsible for this?

**Beth Kuzdeba-**Beth addressed the positive mosquito for West Nile virus as chair of BOH. She stated if we do not get the word out to people about what to do to not spread the virus and if the virus transmits to people the Governor can have spraying conducted anyways since it will be a public health threat. Even though we have opted out of spraying and if we become a "high risk community" the governor can ask that spraying be done, that is why she would like to get the message out. Jeff allowed Beth to speak about the mask mandate the Leyden BOH passed after the CPHS mandate on mask wearing for other towns was passed at their most recent meeting.

Beth stated the Leyden BOH is requiring masks be worn in all public buildings starting on September 1 at 12:01am. Beth also stated the BOH discussed needing a cooling center for people who do not have air conditioners in extreme heat, and she was wondering if the town office building would be okay to use?

**David Brooks Strap grant paperwork**-Dave had questions on filling out the pre application form. He did not know what the timeline should be and wanted to know what Michele put in the grant for a timeline. Michele stated she did not have to put a timeline on the grant that is done after you receive it. Michele stated she could fill out this pre application form herself she was just being collaborative in asking the highway dept. to give their input. Jeff stated Michele to finish the paperwork.

**Assessor's**- Bob Depalma read a statement on their interview process and hiring of Alice Wozniak for the position of Assistant Assessor. He also read her qualifications and other towns she worked for. She has 14 years' experience and is certified as an Assessor. She is on an advisory committee for the state and a member of the state association for Assessors.

**Motion:** Bill moved to accept the Assessor's recommendation to hire Alice Wozniak. Erica seconded. Unanimous.

**Appointment Barns and Animals**-Sean Berthiaume stated he was interested in the Barns and Animals Inspector appointment. He has spoken to Ashley Kraft from the state rabies program and will be taking online courses with her. He will follow up with Michele G. to sign the paperwork tomorrow as Michele will have to notarize his signature.

**Motion:** Erica moved to appoint Sean Berthiaume as Animal Inspector for one year. Bill seconded. Unanimous.

**BOH Appointment**-Jeff stated there were two candidates who expressed interest in this appointment, Carole Kuzdeba and Carey Barton. Carey is not present today. Erica asked when Carey submitted his interest. Michele stated his father Elwin dropped off the envelope this afternoon. There was discussion as to him not being here to be interviewed and what are his qualifications for the position. Carole Kuzdeba stated she has a healthcare background; she was on the board last year through an appointment by the select board. Jeff stated he had a problem with this appointment since due to the quorum. Bill asked Carole how could she work with Beth? Carole stated no problem. Bill continued that he would rather she run for office and show her commitment. Carole replied she did not run because she has been unemployed and there is a law that you cannot collect unemployment as an elected official, that is the only reason why she did run for office. Robin Neipp stated that is not the town's problem. Robin continued she has a problem with two sisters being on the same committee. Beth stated she did not understand when the board has appointed the police and captain of the police department who are husband and wife. Sara Steinberg questioned Jeff on what he meant by quorum. Michele stated Carole could call the state Ethics board if people had a problem, there is a state law in regard to small towns and people serving in more than one capacity.

**Motion:** Erica moved to appoint Carole Kuzdeba for Board of Health member. Bill stated he would like to wait for more information including state ethics. Jeff stated since the chair cannot second the motion the motion fails. Jeff stated he will follow up with Carey Barton and see if he can come in next Tuesday for an interview. Beth asked if she could be part of the interviews and Jeff said "yes". She went on to request that they not be on the agenda before 6:45pm because she has to work and cannot get here before then. Jeff stated there will be an executive session first then he will put the BOH on at 7:30pm. He cannot predict how long the executive session could go so he will have Michele call her at 7:25-7:30pm. All parties in agreement.

**Annual Appointments**-Michele handed out the FY22 Annual List of Appointments to the board. Jeff read the appointments excluding the police and fire departments.

**Motion:** Erica moved the list of FY appointments as written. Bill seconded. Unanimous.

**Municipal Assistant-** Michele stated Peter Wakelin was here and left. He emailed his plan to the board and would like an event permit for Sept 2-25. She will take care of STRAP grant paperwork that was previously discussed. The boilers were inspected in the town office building and the inspector stated there needed to be a remote shutoff outside of the boiler room. Jeff stated he will call Mike Townsley. Michele also pointed out the list Brian Pelletier left concerning issues he found around this building and Jeff said he will follow up on those items.

**Motion:** Bill moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50pm. Erica seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michele Giarusso