

**Leyden Select Board Minutes**  
**Leyden Town Office Building**  
**Working Session**  
**November 14, 2022**  
**9:00 am**

**Select Board Members Present:** Bill Glabach, Katherine DiMatteo, Glenn Caffery

**Others Present:** Michele Giarusso, Bill Brooks, AJ, Ginger Robinson, Liz Kidder

Bill called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

**DISCUSSION**

**Meeting with Highway Department**

Discussion about who does evaluations. Consensus was that Bill as Highway Supervisor should do evaluations of those that work for him. When job descriptions are complete as well as the evaluation process for all town employees then that would be the template that Bill would use. AJ's probationary period ended September 22, 2022, and this has to be confirmed as well as any adjustment to pay. Glenn explained that we also have no policies regarding pay increases and probationary periods. AJ noted he started part time in January and has many years' experiences with the machinery and trucks used. Bill noted that he figures the budget based on the salary increases across the board from July 1<sup>st</sup>. Expectations were set up when the budget and hiring of AJ was done.

Bill suggested that the personnel policy include that an increase, if appropriate, be given at the end of a probationary period. Bill expressed that his expectation for AJ was that the 3% start now or at the end of the probationary period. Glenn agreed with this approach. AJ stated that he would be happy with the 3% from now forward.

**Motion:** Katherine moved that we accept the end of AJ's successful completion of probationary period and approve a raise of 3% from today forward. This is a special situation in lieu of a completed policy. Glenn second. Approved unanimously.

**REPORT**

Bill reported on East Hill project that has a deadline of end of May 2023 and probably can't get an extension. They are on target and will likely be under budget since they are doing some of the work themselves. Limited activity on East Hill until the Spring. If they had more time, they would do more. They would like to see what happens with the drainage work completed over the winter and spring. Town pays first then we are reimbursed so if we don't spend the whole grant, it stays with the State. Difficult to get contractors scheduled and do the work so the Highway Department does the work themselves. Katherine asked how the work that they do takes away from ongoing or regular Highway work. Is their time and use of town equipment charged to the grant? No, their pay is not charged to the grant. Bill is not sure what can be charged. Michele will re-read the grant. Road construction projects like this is something they should not do but need someone to manage the project and deal with the contractors, getting the contractors to come in on time and in budget.

Highway can manage two projects a year. Going forward with road construction needs to know what the town boundaries are by the roads. Abutters need to be managed and kept in communication if constructing on their property. We need do not have good maps for knowing boundary lines. Preliminary work by the planning board and assessors would need to be done if more road construction was done involving private property. Suggested a survey of the roads section by section each year similar to what happens in Guilford, VT. Michele suggested adopting the Three Rod Rule, but Bill noted that can happen if you know the boundaries of the roads. Would need to be a budget item and can be expensive to survey all roads.

Ten-mile bridge grant is a big plus because of its serious condition of disrepair. Ten-mile bridge is completely owned by Leyden. Bridge projects are easier for the Highway Department. Unlikely they would do the bog bridge because they do not have experience with bridge building.

Michele stated good relationships with the State in terms of good, on-time, on-budget work on the grants are helpful to getting future grants. State follows up with Michele. Bill does a lot of work managing the contractors, doing some administrative work on the East Hill grant. Michele pays the bills, does quarterly reports and reconciles that money is received after requesting from the state. Bill Glabach asked about needing a third person. Bill B replied right now it is more manageable to have a two-person crew. Part-time people are key to keeping the department running for snow plowing and special projects. Right now, there is Erik Johnson with Dave Brooks being the 4<sup>th</sup> person for plowing. Discussed Bill can't hire, set rate or advocate for pay increase for a family member who works part time (Dave Brooks), but the Selectboard can do that.

What expectations do folks in town have about mowing, and what expectations does the Highway Department have. The second mower machine no longer is available – shared program with other towns sponsored by Eversource. Ed Johnson retired who had been our mower crew person. Purpose: to mow under the power lines so that Eversource crew did not have to do it. Not for road beautification purposes but to keep vegetation from encroaching on the roadway. In answer to a question from Glenn, Bill noted that the mowing is done for the year.

Eversource representative will be meeting with Bill, Michele, and the arborist to discuss vegetation management and then later to discuss with the Selectboard a plan.

Ginger as Finance Committee chair reminded Bill to put in requests for capital expenses. New loader would be good the year after next (two more years to put money into stabilization fund – reluctant to give up the one they have because of new emission requirements. They can work on the current machine because there are not computers. Investment cost to keep this one running is better than getting rid of it. Nice to have a back-up piece of equipment even when we get a newer one. Cost would be \$200,000 for the loader, but they have the attachments if they stay with the same brand of equipment. May need more space to store equipment – Maybe the Building Needs Study Committee

has some ideas. Not much room to build around the existing building. Ideally a whole new structure for the Highway Department, Fire Department and EMS.

Katherine noted that in our work on the Personnel Policies will impact those that work, for instance taking a holiday that falls on a day that one is not usually scheduled to work. Glenn added that we would like to review with the employees the revised policies so that the policies work for the town and the employees.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Fire Department:

Glenn circulated copies of his correspondence with Brian Pelletier, Fire Chief. Glenn asked that the Select Board request a formal meeting with Brian and his performance as Chief. Communication is unacceptable as evidence in document circulated. Safety issues are urgent and are not being addressed. Bill reviewed history. Ginger requested that the Select Board decide if Brian holds the position of Fire Chief or Officer in Charge.

**Motion:** Katherine moved that the Selectboard write and request an evaluation meeting with Brian Pelletier within the next month. Evaluation would be based on current work and outlined expectations for his performance based on the October 24, 2022, meeting discussion of safety and communications. Glenn seconded. Approved unanimously.

Liz Kidder noted that Erica Jensen has been assisting Brian with bidding for equipment. Who can place the order based on the bidding process? Glenn responded that before we buy anything we need a leadership structure in place for the Fire Department. The Feasibility study going on now has looked at shared administrators with neighboring towns. Part of the study is looking at Leyden to see if we can meet the requirements.

Ginger noted that we need to apply equipment policies fairly to all employees that work for the town. Employees should not have Town owned equipment stored in their homes. Glenn noted the Select Board is still working on personnel policies.

### Building Maintenance Job Description:

Edits were made to the draft circulated by Michele and Katherine.

### Surplus Property Disposition Policy:

Policy was presented by Glenn and discussed. Bill questioned the section on Select Board vote to declare surplus property. Glenn will reword to indicate that the department heads must not report the disposal of property of less than \$50 value to the Select Board.

Discussion about Impala. Consensus to send to Municibid for sale.

**Motion:** Glenn moved that the job description for Building Maintenance position as edited. Katherine seconded. Approved unanimously.

**Motion:** Katherine moved that the Surplus Property Disposition Policy be approved as edited. Glenn seconded. Approved unanimously.

**Motion:** Glenn moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 am. Katherine seconded. Approved unanimously.

Respectively submitted,  
Michele Giarusso  
Municipal Assistant