

Leyden Select Board Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
January 3, 2023
6:00 pm

Select Board Members Present: Katherine DiMatteo, Glenn Caffery via remote, Bill Glabach
Others Present: Nik Adamski, Mary Glabach, Erica Jensen, Liz Kidder, Beth Kudzeba, John Higgins

Bill called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm. Selectboard read correspondence file and reviewed FY 23 warrants. Announcement from chair that the meeting was being recorded.

Motion: Katherine moved that minutes of December 19, 2022 be approved as presented. Glenn seconded. Glenn - yes, Katherine – yes, Bill – yes. Approved unanimously.

Motion: Katherine moved to sign the FRCOG procurement MOU for fire alarm testing bids and contracts. Glenn seconded. Glenn – yes, Katherine – yes, Bill – yes. Approved unanimously.

Motion: Katherine moved to transfer Leyden’s share of funds from FRCOG for police training money to the town of Bernardston police department in the amount of \$4800. Glenn seconded.

John Higgins asked if this was in addition to what we had already agreed to pay the police. Michele responded yes. Erica asked if the money specifically goes to police training. Michele responded yes.

Glenn – yes, Katherine – yes, Bill – yes. Approved unanimously.

Michele reported that EMPG grant needed a UEI number, but Leyden’s had expired. When Michele went to renew, she was told that she was not the administrator. Dan Galvis was the administrator during the pandemic. The address was also wrong, so a notarized letter needs to be sent to correct. No motion needed. Bill, as chair, signed the form for changes.

DISCUSSION

Changing locks on Town Hall

Bill noted that this is a periodic action to manage the number of keys that are in circulation. Michele has a new system to have people sign a key and the keys are not able to be copied. There are different keys for the Town Hall: the kitchen, town hall back and front doors, old town office and the rooms upstairs. We would now get one key for all the outside doors which would be good for Fire and Police to have access with one key in a lock box that opens all the doors.

John asked who would have the keys. Katherine responded that the number of keys should be limited, identify those that must have access - probably Municipal Assistant, one Select Board member, librarian who uses the bathroom, maintenance person.

Erica noted that old Select Board office is used by Fire and EMD, so they have keys now. John noted that Recreation and Council on Aging have storage areas in the Town Hall. Susan Bobe asked about a punch code lock. Michele responded that we had looked into this, and they are expensive.

There has been a problem with water this week and access to the Town Hall is needed by those who could work on such a problem, for instance Dave Brooks who works at times for the Highway Department.

Glenn suggested to ask Building Needs Study Committee to look at the lines for water and recommend action. Michele will mention it to them.

Select Board agreed that Michele will look into new locks and to initiate the same system that we are using for town office keys.

Updates

Glenn reported that the solicitation policy and Impala Municibid is not ready for discussion.

Glenn noted that Tahoe next steps are to remove decals and have the registration switched over. Glenn has sent an email requesting that the Fire Chief give Michele the information she needs to change the registration. Nik will check in with Brian.

Abutters for Hunt Hill have not yet been notified. Glenn asked whether the notice will also go to East Hill extension. Michele noted that she will check, this needs to be done two weeks prior to the town meeting – whether special or regular.

EMS update: Tina Riddell responded and sent copies of her certifications. Tina has filled out all the paperwork and that the Fire Chief has it. This has been requested and we have not yet heard back from Brian. Cindy McGoldrick has not responded yet to Michele's request.

Glenn asked Nik about size of trucks for Fire Department since they might be subject to the random drug testing requirements for drivers of trucks of certain weight. Nik does not know the weight; however Fire Departments are treated differently in regard to CDL licenses.

Bill asked Nik about leak in tanker. Nik responded that it still needs repair, but the department can use the brush truck instead or the tanker can be drained to keep water below the spot of the leak.

Communication

Katherine reported on the discussion on December 28th Select Board working session about the requirements for public access to committee and elected official communications. Without town emails for every committee/councils/commissions, communication is going through personal emails so the town does not have copies for our records or public records requests.

Michele noted that there are more public records requests coming in. Town clerk is also getting increased public records requests about elections and other information.

John asked if there is a capacity to the number of emails we can have. Michele said no but there is a charge to add new email addresses. He also noted that those requesting public record requests can be charged.

The Select Board agreed that we will set up official email addresses for all the chairs.

Glenn stated that a public records retention policy will be developed, perhaps including a central email address for all public records.

Erica responded that a repository for all communications may be overwhelming and may not solve the problem of public records requests.

Michele noted that there may be grants to assist with organizing our records and setting up systems to keep them maintained.

Bill pointed out that emails have been used frequently by citizens with complaints. Bill also noted that Facebook could be misused. Social media policy does not exist although there may be an incident where Facebook and other social media could be inappropriately used. We will add this to the list of policies to develop.

Bill asked if committees sent their meeting minutes to Michele. Not all do so.

Public Safety Advisory Committee Report

Liz Kidder reported that the agreement to replace the interim police service MOU with Bernardston and Leyden is still in the works.

Steven Foley suggests we talk to Colrain about ambulance service and possible contract between them and Leyden. EMS and Fire regionalization is in the future. So, trying to cover our ambulance needs now includes looking to other cooperative agreements with neighboring towns.

Lock box program: Bernardston senior center reaching out to Leyden to facilitate lock boxes for citizens. Liz has looked into the Pelham and Amherst agreement between their Councils on Aging and the Senior Centers in which a larger town provides a smaller town with services. She will continue to discuss with Bernardston senior center more cooperation with Leyden Council on Aging. Also, she is looking into other ways to communicate and coordinate with Leyden citizens.

Mass Trails Grant

Katherine reported that the grant is due by February 1 so a project development or trail assessment grant might be possible. The grant requires that projects already have permission from landowners and that is not possible in the time we have to write the grant. Also, we need a better idea of what trails exist and which might be a priority for social, historic, or educational reasons.

Barbara Wallace has indicated interest in working on this. Michele noted that Ryan Cleary could help with the grant; he is working with other towns on this grant, and he lives here in Leyden. Jeff Miller should be involved as he heads the Mass. Snowmobile Association. John Higgins will ask the recreation committee if anyone is interested in working on this. Glenn will ask for others who might be interested.

Barbara, John, Bill, and Michele spoke about past discussions regarding the trail behind Avery Field.

Katherine will attempt to get a meeting together next week.

Municipal Assistant Updates

Michele reported that the RAVE invoice has come in; we have a three-year contract, so the cost has not changed.

Michele researched the expansion of Conservation Committee; can be increased to 7 but was set up by town bylaw as 5. So, as discussed previously this will have to be an article on a Special or regular Town meeting.

Logistics for the West Leyden Road grant are being researched by Michele to complete the expression of interest letter that has to be submitted.

Solar lights in the town office parking lot have been installed by volunteers from the Building Needs Study Committee. This is a temporary fix.

Other business:

Natalie Blasé has asked to come to meet with the Select Board and prefers mornings. Michele will coordinate with the Select Board members to schedule one of the Monday working session meetings.

Katherine asked if we needed to address the resignation letters we received tonight. Michele noted that Bill and Glenn have not had a chance to read so it will be on our next regular Monday night meeting.

Motion: Katherine moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 pm. Glenn seconded. Glenn-yes, Katherine – yes, Bill – yes. Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele Giarusso
Municipal Assistant