

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Select Board Working Session
August 28, 2023
9:00am

Select Board Members Present: Glenn Caffery, Katherine DiMatteo

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Liz Kidder, John Higgins, Dave Pomerantz, John Lepore

Glenn called the meeting to order at 9:08am.

Discussion

Green Communities Application Update

Glenn and Michele will be meeting with Allison Gage from the FRCOG on Tuesday to complete the 5-year energy reduction plan. We need to have a documented 20% energy reduction in place. Glenn will compose two letters for Donna to sign that we have met the criteria for adopting the stretch code and solar bylaw. After the meeting we should have an action plan for the application to submit by the end of September. Glenn will circle back with Chris Mason from DOER to see if there is anything else we need to do for Green Communities status.

Dave Pomerantz and John Lepore-MVP grant, Multi-town wildfire Hazards

John Lepore shared his background credentials as an Ecological Restoration Scientist and the work he is doing. He and Dave were excited to write this grant for both towns and be able to address the issue of wildfires as a result of climate change. They hope once complete, this will be a model for other towns.

Dave and John will co-manage the grant and meet all the deliverables. The deliverables will come back with the signed contract.

Michele mentioned that everything had to go through the procurement laws. Both John and Dave replied they are aware.

25% match has been reduced to a 10% match as Leyden and Bernardston have been determined to be a vulnerable population by the state. For the in-kind match they put in for project management of the grant, the work should cover the 10%.

Michele asked if they were going to pass invoice payments through the town accountant first or submit reimbursement forms directly to the state and wait for the payment. John replied they will submit directly to the state.

Glenn asked what Michele's role will be in this grant. Michele's role will be posting meeting notices on the website, possibly submitting articles to The Recorder. Discussion followed that an article should be published by a reporter with interviews with citizen scientists. John and Dave will be recruiting citizens to get involved in this grant with the focus on continuing to use what they learned for future years. John stated transferability of outcomes is what MVP likes to see as a result of these grants.

Katherine asked if reports from the grant should be with a joint meeting of the Bernardston and Leyden Select Boards. Everyone thought this was a good idea.

Motion: Katherine moved to accept the state's award for the MVP grant for Bernardston and Leyden. Glenn seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Orientation Planning

Glenn will write up a draft plan for the orientation of public officials. As he was thinking about the topics 90 minutes seemed more reasonable than 60 minutes and he is suggesting maybe one session and not two. Katherine suggested people RSVP if only one evening session. After further

discussion the decision was made to offer two sessions, one at 11am and one at 6:30pm. Glenn will check with Donna MacNicol to see if she is available September 19th. If Donna cannot do both sessions on one day, then Glenn will ask if she can do the 19th and 20th as possible dates.

Goals for the session are the laws public officials must follow and how to get things done within the confines of municipal government. Glenn would like to start with an ice breaker after introductions are made, maybe one where people say what committees they are on so committee members get to know who is on each committee and what the committee is responsible for. Followed by process and procedures then a question-and-answer session with Donna.

Glenn will draft an invitation letter. Katherine will contact Angelica and Susan to see if they would like to come up with fact sheets for their respective roles.

Review Avery Field Leasing Policy

The reformatted Avery Field Lease policy was presented and read.

Motion: Katherine moved to accept the Avery Field Lease policy as presented. Glenn seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Municipal Assistant Updates

Michele is planning on attending the DLS Municipal Law update seminar in Holyoke on September 28.

The Town Hall stove has most people scared of using. The Town Hall was rented out this past weekend and the person renting asked to have the pilots started as they were going to need the oven. Jeff Miller had a hard time starting the pilots because, as mentioned before, the stove was meant to have gas always running through it and on. Michele could call the company who serviced it and see if they know of any companies who purchase used restaurant style equipment.

Discussion about notifying the building inspector of the town passing the stretch code so the FRCOG building inspectors are aware to enforce for us. Michele will call the FRCOG and see what is needed from their end.

Audit- there is no such thing as a partial audit, we will have to have a full audit. The Select Board asked Michele to obtain quotes for a full audit.

Michele is thinking of taking the online free procurement course offered by the MA Inspector General's office. Now is not a good time to enroll until more help is hired. The course will take a few hours per week to complete each session.

Extra hours worked over the past year-the Select Board is not comfortable going back on payment for extra work hours. Michele stated she was doing this extra work to meet deliverables required for all grants as well as writing grants, completing town clerk responsibilities that was not getting done, state agency public records follow through and many interruptions that happen throughout the course of a week are just a few things that have happened in the past. In the future she will inform the Select Board more frequently and if work cannot get done, they will know and can possibly come up with solutions to help.

No Executive Session required.

Update on Hunt Hill Road

Glenn shared Donna has replied to Glenn regarding Hunt Hill. Donna is working on our behalf with the attorney involved and is aware of recent updates provided to her.

Motion: Glenn moved to adjourn at 12:20pm. Katherine seconded. Unanimous vote.

Respectively submitted,
Michele Giarusso
Municipal Assistant