

Bernardston Leyden Police Services
Advisory Committee Meeting
Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 Time: 11:00 A.M.
Location: Main Conference Room, Bernardston Town Hall and online
Minutes of the Meeting

A duly posted meeting of the Bernardston Leyden Police Services Advisory Committee was held in the Bernardston Town Hall at 11 A.M. on March 6, 2024.

Present: Ken Bordewieck, Jane Dutcher, Chief Jim Palmeri, Liz Kidder, Erica Jensen, Emily Yazwinski, Karen Kelly, Ginger Robinson, Peter Nehs

Remote attendees: N/A

Absent: Stan Garland

Call the meeting to order:

The meeting was called to order at 11:03 A.M.

Review of minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes of December 6, 2023 was made by Ken Bordewick and seconded by Emily Y.

Vote: Passed unanimously

Police Services Report/Update by Police Chief:

Staffing issues – no applicants applied online or via newspaper ad to replace parttime officers that have left BPD. BPD down to two part-time officers, the department likes to maintain 6 PT officers. As of June 2024, all part time officers will have needed to complete all Bridge Academy classes. These officers can be hired as either FT or PT officers. Next step in the standards movement is to accredit departments – this is coming, but slowly.

The staffing crisis is not critical, but the solution may be to further regionalize. Chief P mentioned that there is a state grant that could pay 65% of a FT officer (pay, insurance, retirement) for three years, then the town takes on the full time responsibility of full payment. The Chief will look into this further as it becomes posted. State Police do not charge for calls – but the response times may be quite long and for some non-important calls, they may not respond at all.

This summer will be a test of staffing with vacation time – but Chief P feels that they will manage.

Gill regionalization: pros and cons. There is a higher expectation of staffing in Gill, than in Leyden. They have 2 FT officers and may want to keep that level of staffing. Regionalizing with them would take 2 FT officers. The regionalization conversation may take up to two years.

FY25 BPD Budget:

Bernardston FinComm and Chief P have met but FinComm will still need to talk to all departments and committees prior to setting a final town budget. Jane D began to work through the Police Services worksheet and has reached out to Mike Edwards to discuss budget sheet. At time of meeting – Mike Edwards has not been in touch with Jane D. The budget that is submitted to the Bernardston ATM April 29, 2024) is what Leyden will be given. This will be sent to Leyden prior to the Bernardston ATM. The base formula will remain the same, the numbers going into the formula will change. Medicare, insurance, unemployment, payroll to name a few, will go up.

Committee concerns or questions regarding the IMA:

No comments

Future Agenda – next meeting June 12, 2024, 11AM, Bernardston Town Office

Will keep agenda items for next meeting consistent with agenda items from March 6 meeting

Public Comment:

No comments

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn was made by Erica Jensen and seconded by Jane Dutcher.

Vote: Passed Unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 11:37AM

Respectfully submitted by Erica Jensen