

**Town of Leyden Public Safety Advisory Committee
Minutes of the Meeting May 04, 2022**

A duly posted meeting of the Leyden Public Safety Advisory Committee was held in the Leyden Town Hall at 6:30 pm, on May 04, 2022.

Present: Elizabeth Kidder (Chair), Jack Golden, Emily Yazwinski, Barbara Wallace, Michael Morgan, Candace Hope (Alternate), Marcia Miller.

Absent: Anders Ferguson,

Audience:

Tom Luck, Carol Kuzdeba, Cliff Carlson, Nik Adamski, Nanette Rolstad, Jim Brodeur, Christine Brodeur, Margaret Brown, Robert Anson, Bill Yetter, Michael Aiken., Charles Brooks, Jeff Miller, Sandy Yetter, Mary Glabach, Michelle Higgins, John Higgins, Erica Jenson, Warren Facey, Ellen Coty, Erik Johnson, Diedrick Neipp, Philip Julian, David Pomerantz, Sara Seinberg, William Glabach, Ginger Robinson, Leigh Wright, Tom Raffensperger, Gerry McCarthy, Vanessa Russell, Gary Russell, Elwyn Barton, Samantha Barton, Michael Morgan, Colleen Caffery, Glenn Caffery, David Campbell, Jenny Campbell, Robert DePalma, Lisa Limont, Amy St. Clair, Elizabeth Kuzdeba, Lois Feldman, Fred Feldman, Ken Medvetz, Annie Garvey, Dave Vreeland, Steve Richter, Pat Little, Barbara Wallace, John Wallace, Nathan Messier, Jeffery Baker, Chris Larabee.

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm.

Public Information Meeting Presentation with Collins Center

Introduction by Jack Golden and Liz Kidder

- Mike Edwards & Steven Foley, overview of Collins Center
- (Powerpoints attached)

Public Comments and Questions

- Tom Raffensperger: Can the county Sheriff pick up some of the duty?
Mike: That's an area still being evaluated, it's not standardized.
- Robert Anson: Spoke in support of certification being of the utmost importance for the people in our community who carry weapons (referencing Police Reform Act). Also offered gratitude for the work of the committee.
- Digger Neipp: Spoke to the issue of small towns losing officers to big towns; lots of part-time officers at Bernardston—How can we know Bernardston will be able to provide services if they lose officers? Why not rely on state police temporarily?
 - Mike: That's a question for the town to consider. Re: Bernardston, the legal agreement will ensure Bernardston is able to support the agreement.
 - Liz: Palmeri is aware of the Police Reform Act, he knows what they need to do in order to be in compliance. They're already working toward full-time officers, a collaboration with Leyden will help them fill out the department to be in compliance.
- Digger: Why aren't we looking at Colrain? Why can't we use the \$187k for supporting our police department?
 - Liz: The grant is specific about what it can or can not be used for: there is money for a feasibility study and some capital expenses.
- Digger: Why is our police department being thrown out? Why not work with the police we have and rely on state police to give us a hand? Expressed a desire to have money go into our local police department.

- Liz: One officer full-time in Leyden is going to cost us about \$75k year (only \$86K for full coverage from Bernardston).
- Warren Facey: We should look at the town of Greenfield to work with. They're already up here patrolling land they own.
 - Mike: Looking at Greenfield will be part of the study
- Cliff Carlson: Why are we making a commitment to Bernardston when we've just started working with the Collins Center? Why do we need to sign an agreement so soon?
 - Liz: Increased hours of service is worthwhile—the hours of coverage we have currently is limited. We have a strong connection with Bernardston (Leyden children are in Bernardston schools). Wendell used the interim agreement as a way to understand the working relationship in action in order to fully develop the long-term agreement.
 - Cliff: How quickly can we get out of the agreement?
- Bob DePalma, South County Road
 - Confirming the town will have an opportunity to vote on the long-term agreement before it is approved. (Yes)
 - What road service will we receive from Bernardston?
 - Liz: 80 hours a month to start, we can increase the hours if we need more coverage. Additional 10 hours appx. \$250-300.
 - We currently have 24-30 hours of weekly coverage.
 - Bob: What will happen with the cruisers?
 - We will keep our cruisers for now. Bernardston will keep one of their cruisers to use in Leyden. If we enter the long-term agreement we will be buying a new cruiser with the grant money. If we withdraw from the agreement, that cruiser will be returned to Leyden.
- Samantha Barton:
 - Whatever the agreement is, I want to make sure we still have police in the community.
 - Liz: Palmeri's officers visit the schools a lot, and are very into community policing.
- Barbara Wallace:
 - Heard from our librarian that the Bernardston police are great in the schools and community
- Tom Raffensperger
 - Can the agreement specify that police come to community events?
 - We can add hours for events whenever needed.
- Digger
 - Can we jump in with Bernardston six months from now? Does it have to happen now?
 - Working with Bernardston now, gives the two towns a chance to understand what it is like to work together. It will provide valuable information to the process of developing a longer term agreement. As soon as we join with Bernardston, we will have many more hours of police coverage than we do now.
- Ginger Robinson
 - Bernardston is offering more coverage for just \$10k more than what we're paying now. This is extremely affordable—expected we would need to add over \$100k to the budget to maintain our own police department. We can get very good coverage from Bernardston.
- Sara Seinberg
 - Thanks for explaining the administrative cost, having that information is so helpful.

- People keep mentioning how we're rushing: the committee has been working on this for five months. There have been public meetings, open to questions. Now folks are saying let's give it another six months, does not seem reasonable. Thanks to the committee for your service.

David Curtis

- What's the length of the contract?
 - Liz: Interim agreement is one year.
- DC: I don't know Palmeri but have heard from many folks that he's a good person. I think it's worth trying, it's a good idea.

Officer Brooks:

- Response time is going to be longer: The state trooper takes 20 minutes to get here, Bernardston takes 20 minutes to get here. Does it make a difference? The admin cost: it's not going to take 40 hrs a week to stay on top of admin.

Bill Glabach:

- I think the interim year is the most important. During the year everyone in town can be in contact with the committee to let them know if you see something you don't like from Bernardston. I dragged my feet for a long time because I didn't want to jump into it; but the more I think about it I realize we need to test drive it to know if we're going to like it. It makes sense with Bernardston, our kids are in their schools. We all have different ideas for what the perfect policing will be, we have a year to test it. If we don't like it we can look to Greenfield or to another town. Bernardston has been so welcoming to us, it's amazed me.

Reconvene Advisory Committee Meeting @ 9pm

Review of the minutes of April 20, 2022 – corrected date

Motion to approve the minutes of April 20, 2022 was made by Emily Yazwinski and seconded by Michael Morgan.

VOTE:

Emily Yazwinski: Yes

Liz Kidder: Yes

Marcia Miller: Yes

Candace Hope: Yes

Barbara Wallace: Yes

Review Public Information Meeting Interim Bernardston MOA for Police Services Updates

- Bernardston task force meeting took place last week, MOA updated based on feedback from town (120 day cancellation instead of 30 day)
- Budget is set with finance committee
- There will be a monthly Task Force meeting to stay on top of agreement
- Response time is 15 minutes from West Leyden to Bernardston
- Everyone on task force agreed about the language of the interim agreement and timeline
- Agreement will go before Leyden Selectboard for approval 5/23/22

8:20 EMD updates

- EMD has retired.
- Several people have shown interest in the committee.
- Liz and Barbra met with MEMA people, we need to choose dates for upcoming training (EMD 101: June 15th)
- Bernardston EMD is well-regarded in the region

8:30 Meeting with Fincom on Public Safety budgets May 11

- Public Safety will join Fincom meeting on 5/11 at 6pm
- Finance will need to have contingency budget
- Public comments: people spoke to wanting more police presence

8:40 Priorities and next steps

- May 23rd for signing interim agreement
- EMD Committee meeting
- Steven Foley would like a meeting with Fire

8:45 Public Comments and other business not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

8:50 Schedule Next Meetings – May 11th and May 18th

Review Correspondence – none received

Public Comments and other business not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting. – none presented.

Next meeting: May 11th (with Finance) at 6:00pm at Town Office, then Followed by May 18th at 6:30pm at Town Hall.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Emily Yazwinski and seconded by Michael Morgan.

Vote:

Emily Yazwinski: Yes
Barbara Wallace: Yes
Marcia Miller: Yes
Candace Hope: Yes
Liz Kidder: Yes

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Candace Hope

List of documents: Powerpoint Presentations