

**Leyden Select Board
Leyden Town Offices
Regular Session Minutes
March 15, 2021
6:00pm**

Select Board Members Present: Bill Glabach, Jeff Neipp

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Barbara Wallace, Chelsea Betsold, Ken Griswold, Angelica DesRochiers, Susan Bobe, John Higgins, Bill Ennen, Jack Golden, Steve Richter
Bill called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

Motion: Bill moved the minutes of March 1, 2021 as written. Unanimous.

Bill signed more paperwork for the 2 Community Compact grants from Department of Revenue, contract for the extension of the MVP planning grant and Broadband request for Disbursement of Drop Costs for \$120,000

Citizen's concerns were taken up first as residents attended in support of Chelsea Betsold's letter. Chelsea stated the GPS's do not work in this town and large tractor trailers have been going up Alexander Road from the south and getting stuck in the mud. The drivers are going to Facey's farm. One very large tractor trailer got so stuck the driver had to back up the entire way down the road but wanted to cut trees down. Jeff stated he read the letter and already spoke to Dave Brooks. The town will put up a sign. Not sure what it will state yet. Ken Griswold stated Mid County road has a sign stating only local traffic allowed for trucks. Barbara Wallace stated the GPS's do not take into account dirt roads very well. Bill suggested a sign also stating "Don't follow your GPS they don't work here." He suggested maybe Pat Little could make a nice sign.

Free cash- Jeff asked Angelica what her recommendation is for the use of free cash. She answered definitely do not use for your operating budget or to lower your tax rate. It should be in accounts to pay for special projects. Bill stated that is why we have been putting in various stabilization accounts over the years. Jeff asked about small accounts that have not been used for a few years. Angelica stated she would see if Vadar the new software can print a report similar to the old reports and if accounts have not been used in a couple of years we should definitely close them out. Jeff asked about the Enterprise fund. Angelica said we have an Enterprise for Broadband but she still has work to do on it. Now that all the end of year forms have been filled out for the DOR and we received our free cash she can now concentrate on getting the Enterprise fund in order. Bill Ennen added that Bob Ryan set up the Enterprise fund a couple of years ago. Angelica stated the Assessors signed off on it this year. Jeff stated we have had two storms this winter where Whip City had to come out and do repairs. Have we been billed for them? No one seemed to know that answer. Jeff also asked about the CAF money we should be getting. Bill Ennen responded that Leyden's CAF2 amount has been arriving monthly from the Feds and going into an account at Berkshire Bank. Debbie Wagner at DLS said it will flow into the towns starting in calendar year 2022. 19 towns are involved and all have to be finished with their broadband first. Many are close to being completed with the last one being in 2022. Then the towns can use that money for anything that is broadband related. Leyden should get \$265,000. Discussion ensued about paying the bond down with it or not using it and retaining for future repairs etc, That decision can be made in 2022. Bill E. went on to say that the federal government gave Charter a lot of money but the state is hoping to get Charter to refuse those funds and put in an account to provide subsidies for people who can't afford the monthly fiber bill. This subsidy is called Lifeline for Residents and will provide \$50 per month for those meeting the guideline. In addition, the COVID bill President Biden signed last week has money in it for broadband so we should be hearing more about this in the coming weeks.

Bill E. said he hopes to be winding down his involvement with broadband. It has been a pleasure working with all involved in Leyden and he gives great credit to Bob Ryan for all he did. To close out he will be working with Andy Killeen and Michele Giarusso. The form Bill Glabach just signed for the drop costs disbursements should come quickly and that is the beginning of closing out. Jeff and Bill thanked Bill Ennen as well as Jack Golden for following through on the construction.

Town Caucus - Jeff stated he discussed having a town caucus with Bob Hardesty. Michele stated Bob left a letter for the board to read after researching it more and discussing with other town clerks. He thinks it is better to do nominations papers. Bill stated if that is what the town clerk is suggesting he thinks that is what we should do. It worked out well last year.

Jeff also wanted to discuss opening up the town hall and town offices. Michele stated we still have to go by the governor's guidelines which includes cleaning, social distancing and contact tracing. Bill wanted to table it until the next time we meet since the opening doesn't go into effect until March 22.

Municipal Assistant- Michele stated DER representative called her today and said they may have more funds towards the Coates Road culvert design and permitting process. Michele had asked for \$94,000 and received \$84,000. Michele stated she of course said we would take any money we could get for this project! The estimate for construction of Coates Road culvert came in at \$365,000. She will be submitting the grant for construction on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week. The maximum from DER is \$200,000 so the rest of the funding will have to come out of another source. She will continue to look for that source. Michele presented 2 bids for the Community compact grant for job and wage classification and for policies and procedures. Bill opened the bid from the Collins Institute for \$17,500 for both grants and one from DIJacobs Consulting for \$15,000 for both.

Motion: Bill moved to go with the lower bid for DIJacobs, he stated it also looks like this company is used to dealing with smaller towns. Unanimous.

Motion: Bill moved to adjourn meeting at 8:25pm. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Giarusso