

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Select Board Working Session
June 26, 2023
10:00am

Select Board Members Present: Bill Glabach, Katherine DiMatteo, Glenn Caffery

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Liz Kidder, Susan Bobe

Bill Called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

Discussion

Minutes

Motion: Katherine moved May 15, 2023, meeting minutes as written seconded. Unanimous vote.

Motion: Glenn moved the minutes of June 5, 2023, as written. Katherine seconded. Unanimous vote.

Treasurer

The bond for broadband loan will go out to bid tomorrow. Susan has been told by various banks to continue with the 1-year bond, it is too risky to go with a longer-term bond. The amount owed will be \$711,326.31. The interest this year was \$17,000. She will need to have the paperwork signed by July 5th.

She would also like to move the payroll warrant up by one week starting with the first payroll in July. This way the board will be signing prior to the payroll going to Harpers and aligns the general warrant and payroll warrant for FY24. Harpers can do a reverse direct deposit if there is an error on the payroll. The employee would be notified that this would happen. Select Board agreed with this approach. She will redo the rate sheet and share with the Select Board for the first payroll in July.

Municipal Assistant

Michele is asking for a motion on a financial policy of the amount she can spend on repairs so she can tell vendors to order parts etc. on things that fail such as the fire panel which had recently been inspected and they said the panel didn't display. Michele will draft a policy including the kinds of emergency and administrative decisions she would like to have authority to make.

Motion: Katherine moved to approve the estimated fire panel repair. Glenn seconded.

Unanimous vote.

The Select Board asked Michele to draft a proposed policy about authorization for unexpected repairs and purchases up to a certain amount.

The Greenfield Pilot letter needs to be signed to mail. Bill signed. The amount Greenfield will pay is \$19,659.80 for the reservoir. It was noted that Greenfield sells the water to Gill Riverside. It was questioned whether the town could renegotiate with Greenfield on the amount they pay.

FRCOG needs a municipal employee to be the digital equity representative. Katherine volunteered which was acceptable to the Select Board.

Michele would like to use the Town Hall on Saturday, July 22 for the PVRSD school committee retreat in the am only.

Motion: Katherine moved that Leyden host the School Committee retreat. Glenn seconded.

Unanimous vote.

Solar lights for the two flag poles. No decision was made as to what to order. Michele will have Jeff Miller look at the ones at the town hall. It was suggested that having 3 mounted solar lights should suffice. Cost estimate: \$103 for 3.

Michele asked if there was a date for the annual training for appointees and elected officials. Katherine mentioned we should still plan for the date state ethics will do their training, but we should finish all appointments first.

Michele reported that Eversource needs a pole hearing scheduled for Eash Hill. Who should do this – Select Board, Planning Board or Highway?

Annual Appointments

Motion: Glenn moved to appoint Karen O’Neil for the 3-year Conservation Commission. Bill seconded. Unanimous vote.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint James Palmeri as Chief and all police officers in Bernardston. Bill seconded. Unanimous vote.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint John Higgins, Abbi Pratt, Ella Muka and Karin Parks for 1-year terms of the Recreation Committee. Glenn seconded. Unanimous vote.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint: Amy St. Clair and Anne Garvey for 3-year terms; Nan Rolstad and Pat Little for 1-year terms; and Meridith Lein and Chris McGuire for 2-year terms on the Council on Aging.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint Donna MacNicol as Town Counsel for one year. Glenn seconded. Unanimous vote.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint Susan Bobe for a 3-year term as Treasurer. Glenn seconded. Unanimous vote.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint Erik Johnson as the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans’ District Representative for 1 year. Glenn seconded. Unanimous vote.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint Christopher Demars as the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans agent. Glenn seconded. Unanimous vote.

Glenn reported on the Safety Survey that was sent to committee chairs, departments and employees. 10 of the 14 responses returned were available due to a limit placed by the software. Main items to improve safety: buzzers, door locks, security cameras.

Public Comment

Bob DePalma reported that the assessor’s evaluation of the Greenfield reservoir land is \$1.233M which is a reduced land value rate because of the geography. To change the rate, would need approval by the state. There is no valuation on the dam – could be \$7M, especially considering that \$500,000 was spent to dredge it recently. The assessors have been tying the PILOT to the tax rate, perhaps needs to be revisited.

Liz Kidder shared there was a Fire Department informational meeting last Thursday and 6 or 7 interested adult volunteers are interested in joining Leyden’s fire department as well as one junior volunteer. The new police cruiser is here and is being paid out of the Efficiency and Regionalization grant. The Building Needs Study Committee will be helping to get a wall installed in the former police station room before the grant runs out.

Liz asked for a Select Board member to attend a meeting with Gary Ponce of Colrain Ambulance Association on July 3rd or 5th to work on the contract. Katherine volunteered. She also reported that Ryan Cleary was working on a map of the town roads and houses for the ambulance service since they are unfamiliar with Leyden's roads. There are grants for reflective sign numbers that would be helpful for the ambulance and emergency services. She will look into that.

Other business

Bill signed a letter to State Fire Marshall notifying him that Nik Adamski is our new Fire Chief.

Bill noted that the agreement about the well at the Town Hall was made in 1962, and that whichever party (Town or church) put in the well, it would be shared with the other party.

Michele noted that there needs to be a master plan for repairs to culverts and bridges. The assessments by the state are in the files. This should be discussed with Bill Brooks.

Motion: Katherine moved to adjourn at 12:45pm. Glenn seconded. Unanimous vote.

Respectively submitted,
Michele Giarusso
Municipal Assistant