

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Select Board Working Session
August 7, 2023
9:00 am

Select Board Members Present: Glenn Caffery-remote, Katherine DiMatteo, Erica Jensen

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Liz Kidder, Donna MacNicol

Glenn called the meeting to order at 9:00am.
Warrants reviewed and signed.

Discussion

Ambulance Contract

Amendments were reviewed.

Motion: Erica moved to sign the ambulance contract with Colrain Volunteer Ambulance Association, Inc. Katherine seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote-Katherine-yes, Erica-yes, Glenn- yes.

Emergency Electrical Repairs for Fire Department

Three bids were presented. Current Electric was the lowest at \$7350.00. The Building Needs Study Committee recommends Current Electric.

Motion: Erica moved to accept the Current Electric bid for \$7350.00 for the Fire Department repairs. Katherine seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Katherine-yes, Erica-yes, Glenn-yes.

Motion: Erica moved that ARPA funds be used for the \$7350.00 electrical work on the Fire department. Katherine seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Katherine-yes, Erica-yes, Glenn-yes. Glenn will notify Dave Pomerantz of the Select Board's decision.

Town Clerk and Administrative Assistant Hiring

The Town Clerk and The Administrative Assistant job was posted in the Greenfield Recorder on Saturday, August 5, and on the official posting board outside the office. Focus now is on recruitment. The plan is to post in September Leyden Life. Erica suggested we do another ad in the Greenfield Recorder. Glenn's preference is for Michele to come with a master list for advertising and costs. Michele suggested the Town Clerk position can be posted on the Town Clerk Association list serv. Michele will reach out to other towns to spread the word. Other suggestions for posting were West County News, Montague Reporter, Greenfield Reorder, Leyden Life, GCC job center, Brattleboro Reformer, Hampshire Gazette and Masshire. Erica will contact MassHire. Perhaps there can be an article in North County news of the The Recorder. There was discussion about using Indeed, Michele will research the costs. Once we receive the information Erica will work with Michele to decide on when to post.

Town Clerk Job Description

Amendments and changes were made. Erica to send revised job description to all.

Motion: Katherine moved to approve the Town Clerk Job description with the amendments. Roll Call Vote: Glenn-yes, Katherine-yes, Erica-yes.

Glenn opened a discussion on whether the position should be hourly or stipend. Glenn's preference is hourly, Erica agreed based on experience and that the rate within the approved budget of \$14,275.00. The discussion continued, how to hold the person accountable for the hours they request. The Select Board oversees the position and expects the person to manage their hours

according to additional requirements of the position at certain times of the year, for instance elections. This position requires a certain level of maturity in order to manage their time within the budget. Discussion of wage range. Glenn proposed top end of \$27.50 per hour. Low end \$23.50. Exceptional circumstances can allow for negotiating. Compensation policy needs to include legal requirements.

Motion: Erica moved to set the hourly salary range for Town Clerk at \$23.50-\$27.50 per hour, however under extraordinary circumstances there can be an allowance for negotiating. Katherine seconded the motion. Katherine-yes, Erica-yes, Glenn-yes.

Motion: Erica moved to add the same language regarding extraordinary circumstances to the admin assist hourly salary band. Katherine second the motion. Roll Call Vote: Katherine – yes. Erica -yes, Glenn – yes.

Agenda for Next Meeting

Public Safety Advisory Committee extend to the end of December and decide on the future of the committee; update on 911 training and regulatory compliance contract.

Recreation Committee lease of Avery Field

Municipal Assistant updates

Glenn asked the board to affirm that the town offices are open to the public for certain hours as we had for year-end reconciliation. Erica and Katherine agreed. Glenn and Michele will make changes to the website. Katherine will announce in Leyden Life.

Town Counsel

Donna MacNicol joined the meeting. She was sent prior to the meeting a list of questions the Select Board wanted to discuss and have her answer.

- Interpretation of Open Meeting Law (OML) regarding sharing of edits – Donna explained the Open Meeting Law has very strict rules. Deliberation is any communication oral or written, including electronic manner by a quorum of a committee is forbidden. Sharing of the meeting minutes prior to the meeting is fine. Sending amendments to each other is a problem, you can send them to Michele ahead of time then repeat them during the meeting where you will be accepting. The same goes for Michele, she cannot send the meeting minute amendments back to you prior to the meeting. Open meeting law violations complaints take a lot of time, and you want to avoid them.
- Discussion of meeting minutes-Donna suggested less prescriptive minutes are fine versus detailed minutes. The meeting minutes need to reflect what was discussed, but not verbatim. Important to have the motions, seconds and vote recorded as well as document attachments that were presented or discussed at the meeting. Documents that have been worked on at a meeting should be saved as different versions.
- Policies and the OML are the same you cannot comment back and forth by email.
- Online scheduling tool- Donna is fine with the Select Board using an online scheduling tool.
- Town Coordinator position- there are no requirements under the law regarding the change in title and position description. The only thing that should be changed is the personnel policy. The Select Board has the authority to contract positions.
- Posting of meetings has to be by a Town Clerk or an appointee of the town clerk. Have the Town Clerk appoint an Assistant Town Clerk. The Select Board can appoint a temporary Town Clerk when a Town Clerk is not available. The question was asked in this instance does it have to be an employee? The answer is no, anyone can be appointed who you think is qualified.

- Overtime for exempt employees is not allowed by law but you can give bonus money or comp time. Municipalities will do this during very busy times around town meetings, end of year etc. because employees must put in more hours.
- Orientation for Town appointed and elected officials in September- Donna is available the week of September 11 to attend. She suggested seeing how many people may be available and maybe you could do one in the evening and one during the day. See If Bernardston would like to join you.
- Wage and compensation policy-Donna asked if we had one. If not the Select Board can set a disclaimer policy for extraordinary circumstances and go out of the range set. A wage and compensation policy with steps is a bylaw, MGL Chapter 41, Section 108A.
- Public Safety Committee extension of term-Donna suggested the moderator can extend the appointment of this advisory committee until the end of the grant.

Motion: Erica moved to go into Executive session at 12:20 pm and not return to public session. Katherine seconded the motion: Roll Call Vote: Glenn=yes, Erica=yes, Katherine=yes.

Respectively submitted,
Michele Giarusso
Municipal Assistant