

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
October 23, 2023
9:00 am

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

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Janelle Howard, Liz Kidder,

Glenn called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Discussion

Hunt Hill Road Contract Review

Glenn shared there is no information yet from town counsel. The agreement has gone to Penfield's lawyer, we are just waiting for them to sign and return it to us.

Security System for Town Office Building

Liz is waiting for Ken Medvetz to get back to her. He was going to contact ADT to see if they could install the system by the end of November. Erica is fine with going with ADT. Erica called the company as a potential customer to see if they would install a system without monitoring. She was told they would not.

Motion: Erica moved to accept the quote from ADT for a security system for the town office building for a 3-year contract based on ADT being able to install in November and to see if the monitoring fee could be paid up front in one installment for the year. Katherine seconded the motion. Unanimous vote.

Public Safety Efficiency and Regionalization Grant update

Liz Kidder sent an updated budget to the Select Board prior to the meeting. There will still be money left in the grant after all the purchases on her spreadsheet.

Appointments

Janelle Howard sent an email of intent to serve on the Conservation Commission.

Motion: Erica moved to appoint Janelle Howard to the Conservation Commission for 3 years until 2026. Katherine Seconded the motion. Unanimous vote.

MVP Grant Outstanding Issues and Next Steps

Glenn stated Dave and John could not attend today's meeting. Dave has sent an updated budget and answers to Erica's questions by email to the board. Erica's sense from Dave's email is Dave and John no longer want to be project managers of the MVP grant, they want to be considered "professionals" as far as the grant is concerned to be exempt from 30B. They are now asking the town to hire a project manager. Glenn would like the question from State Ethics also cleared up. Erica feels the Select Board has spent a lot of time on writing emails to Dave and John to protect the town. She feels they are not acknowledging all the work the Select Board is spending on this.

Katherine feels maybe we should reject the grant as there are still too many unanswered questions and feelings seem to be getting in the way, not to mention she questions is there enough time to complete the grant.

Erica stated the project is important for the town but also is concerned the huge change from John and Dave is challenging this late in time. The email from Dave and John also mentions the second phase of the grant expecting private property owners to continue protecting their land. Erica is concerned there will not be participation from residents. Glenn is concerned the expectation is for Michele to take over the reconciliation and other duties of the grant. Glenn continued the involvement of town personnel went from no involvement to a huge commitment from the town. By giving up the project management of the

grant it is also a change from the original written grant application. The town would not have taken on such a grant were it not for Dave and John. The ongoing investment in time for this project going forward is huge and the Select Board needs to consider this carefully. Glenn also wants to consult with the state MVP granting authority employees.

The board agreed to the next steps:

1. Communicate with Andrew Smith Regional Coordinator, MVP-Erica offered to do this.
2. Ask Dave Pomerantz to attend a Select Board meeting after he receives a reply from State Ethics. Glenn will email Dave asking him to seek ethics guidance, receive clarification on the role of Dave and John as project managers for the grant, clarification on what a “professional” means going forward and cancel any meetings they have set up with town officials explaining the grant until the Select Board receives more answers.

ROIP Router

The Bernardston police have this router in their possession but have no use for it. The purchase price was \$5200 but the equipment is becoming obsolete and no use to the town. Glenn will call the Inspector General’s office to see if we can sell.

Motion: Katherine declared the ROIP router and stove in the town hall surplus equipment. Erica seconded the motion. Unanimous vote.

General Bylaw Making Building Permits Contingent on Paid Property Taxes

Michele spoke to the FRCOG building inspection department and was told they have several towns who have this in place. We would have to pass this at an Annual Town Meeting (ATM) as a general bylaw. Once passed just give the information of the vote to the FRCOG and they will add to Leyden’s information on procedures to follow when issuing building permits. The town will have to make sure to have internal procedures for our Tax Collector to make sure outstanding taxes are completed each spring as DLS recommends.

Motion: Katherine moved to accept the draft of the outstanding taxes bylaw as it pertains to building permits and place an article on the ATM warrant next year. Erica seconded the motion. Unanimous vote.

Planning for Remainder of the Year: Priorities, Scheduling and Optimizing Meetings

Glenn presented tasks that are in the “que” of the shared google calendar to be worked on for the remainder of the year. Glenn would like to propose that the Select Board work to accomplish tasks that are satisfying to members and that would entice residents to want to run for Select Board. He suggested the morning meetings go back to working sessions. Katherine asked Janelle to look at other town’s policies for four outstanding policies the board would like to pass. She would like Janelle to write up drafts and send them to each Select Board member so these can be worked on in November. Discussion followed on what each member would like to see on upcoming agendas. Glenn will try and incorporate these agenda suggestions.

Katherine proposed that we change the times for November meetings so that Erica could participate in the working sessions. It was agreed that the November 20 meeting would be at 5:30 pm and the November 27 meeting would be at 9 am.

Town Coordinator

Motion: Katherine moved to change the title of Municipal Assistant to Town Coordinator effective today October 10/23/23. Erica seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Town Coordinator Update:

Bike signs have arrived for posting on the roads.

Desk chairs, hook-up for phones, new locks for the Town Clerk/Admin Assistant office and Police office can be taken from the Public Safety grant.

63 North County Road: concerns have been raised to the Board of Health from FRCOG inspector about the short-term rental property serving food without a permit. The owners have spoken to the chair of planning board and a special permit hearing will be scheduled. Other problems raised by the inspector: out building has sleeping quarters, no lock on swimming pool, and quality of water in pool.

Next Agenda Planning

Changes for November 20th and 27th meetings, these will possibly be both changed to evening meetings due to scheduling conflicts.

Woodlands Partnership update-Liz Kidder

Building Needs Study Committee

Dave Pomerantz-MVP

Select Board Update

Erica attended the MLP meeting. John Wallace is getting a handle on the financials and has prepared a financial worksheet. We should have a generous retained earnings balance again this year. No landscaping for the hut, just weed whacking.

Motion: Erica moved to adjourn at 12:29 pm. Unanimous vote.

Respectively submitted,
Michele Giarusso