

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
February 12, 2024
5:30 pm

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

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Beth Kuzdeba, Devorah Vester, Ginger Robinson, Liz Kidder and Sara Seinberg remote

Glenn called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Discussion

Bernardston Police Department Used Cruiser

Erica spoke to Jim Palmeri about the cruiser Bernardston hopes to sell. This could be to replace the Tahoe as an EMS vehicle. Jim would have to get approval from the Bernardston Select Board first, Leyden would be first in line if we want. The cruiser is a 2014 Ford AWD with approximately 126,000 miles.

1983 Pumper Fire Truck and Legal Status

This vehicle is currently on Cliff Spatcher's property. Cliff was a former Fire Chief in Leyden. The pumper was purchased by the Fireman's Association for \$3900 several years ago. Copies of the bill of sale as well as the title were on hand. Meeting minutes were provided and read from the former Select Board and information provided by Michele Giarusso, former chair of Leyden's Finance Committee at the time when the Fireman's Association purchased this vehicle and wanted the town to take over this vehicle. Both committees had told the Fireman's Association the town did not want to purchase this vehicle for Leyden's Fire Department. What has been discovered is the title of this vehicle is in the town of Leyden's name. It does not look like this truck has been registered. Cliff would like to purchase this vehicle. Much discussion on if this is truly a town vehicle. Katherine feels this was purchased by the Fireman's Association. The association can sell it to Cliff. If there are any issues with the transfer of the title the parties involved can contact the Select Board. Glenn will let the Fire Department know this is not the property of the Town of Leyden.

Update on Mice Issue

Glenn has contacted Minutemen Pest Control. They can do an initial free assessment. They would not commit to any charges over the phone. Any areas the mice are coming in a handyman would have to tighten up access, Minuteman would not. Glenn stated they use bait and integrated management techniques. Michele will arrange for Minutemen to come to Leyden to do a consultation when Jeff Miller is available. The Select Board would like Michele to contact other exterminators for estimates also.

Tax Collector Update

Susan said things were going well in her position as Tax Collector. There has been a whirlwind of activity getting the tax bills out in December and then part of the excise bills out. Michele and Janelle helped stuff the property tax bills and Janelle the excise bills. This has been a huge help. She has been receiving training from VADAR staff to learn the role of the Tax Collector. She has been putting in a lot of hours which she expected initially. She is cleaning up and reorganizing the office. After posting the tax bills she will focus on processing interest and back taxes and would like to return to a Select Board meeting to discuss the land abutting the Leyden Glen to keep the board in the loop on how that is progressing.

Finance Committee Recommendation of Bylaw for Excessive False Alarms

Erica created a draft bylaw for consideration. The board discussed the pros and cons of a bylaw. Erica will ask Jim Palmeri if he feels Leyden needs such a bylaw.

Masonry Vendor Quote for Fire Department Chimney

Motion: Katherine moved to approve a quote of \$500 to repair the Chimney at the Fire Station from Timothy Nye. Erica Seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Town Coordinator Updates

Town property insurance increase-Michele explained the reevaluation of the town office building and town hall to bring up to more full replacement cost value has increased our property insurance by \$9463.00/year. This will be prorated for this year.

Motion: Erica moved to approve the increase in property insurance. Katherine seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Michele asked the board to vote to accept and sign the Department of Fire Services Grant for \$10,500 for fire safety equipment.

Motion: Erica moved to sign the FY24 Department of Fire Services grant for \$10,500. Katherine seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Michele reported the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Service District has just received approval for renewal of their request to continue as a district for 2 years. Each town in the district Select Board has to vote and sign to continue in the district.

Motion: Katherine moved to approve to continue in the Upper Pioneer Valley Veteran's District for another 2 years. Erica seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Select Board Updates and Agenda Planning

Katherine mentioned the Bernardston Select Board has invited the Leyden Select Board to a meeting on February 21 to discuss an MVP fire grant application. There was discussion on whether to attend since the board was thinking of having their own Select Board meeting on that evening due to the holiday. Erica mentioned she would like to see the application in writing first to read over. Michele will contact Bernardston to see if she can get something in writing.

Katherine feels the board should be more involved with the two District Agreements (DA) being written or rewritten. The PVRSD rewrite of the DA and the six-town regionalization planning board DA. The six-town planning board is looking for representatives from each town to be on a subcommittee. Katherine will put something into Leyden Life looking for volunteers to serve on this committee. Katherine will also call Bea Jacques from Northfield to ask her opinion on the PVRSD's DA and facilities. Glenn will reach out to Bernardston Select Board.

Sensitive Records Management

There was much discussion on the Emergency Management survey that went out to all town residents and the sensitive information contained in the survey. Emails were sent to Select Board members prior to the meeting with various inquiries on how records will be secured and who will have access to them. There were privacy as well as protected health information concerns and the town needs to abide by

the laws. Also in discussion was policies and procedures on how the information would be used. Erica has written a draft of a policy for the storage and sharing of information and who would have access to the information. Erica also added to the administrative assistant job description the handling of sensitive information. The board discussed what training may be required. This will be looked into further.

Meeting Rooms

There was a mix-up in meeting rooms and times of the meetings. Beth Kuzdeba wanted to know what the policy was. There was discussion on a written policy for committees using meeting rooms. The board agreed this was the first time this has happened; this was an isolated incident and committees should work together to understand standing committee rooms versus a committee meeting and work together to accommodate each other.

Remote Work

Janell is asking if she can work remotely while she is away. Erica has written a draft of a policy for remote work. Katherine feels this policy should go into the personnel manual and she would like to stress that while employees are on vacation they should not be working. The board approved Janell working on the Annual report while away. Glenn will let Janell know.

Complete Streets

Katherine attended the Complete Streets training in West Springfield. She really enjoyed the training and learned a lot. Unfortunately, she learned the grant does not cover gravel roads at this time. The only thing Leyden may be eligible for is the painting of crosswalks and painting of the white lines on the edge of paved roads. Katherine is going to call Beth Giannini to see if anyone has applied and received grant money for dirt roads.

Welcome Sign

Glenn asked that the refurbished welcome sign be installed. Michele will have Jeff do.

Recreation Committee event

Michele stated the Recreation Committee has canceled their winter carnival event and instead wants to have indoor games on Saturday. Michele has okayed the use of the town hall for 2 hours instead of the town buildings. Select Board agreed.

Agenda for next Meeting

The next meeting will be a morning meeting on Tuesday, February 20 at 9am for the opening of bids for the fire pumper truck.

Discuss and determine who will represent Leyden at the Bernardston Select Board meeting for the proposed MVP fire grant.

Review FRCOG salary surveys if available and discuss next steps for FY 25 salary recommendations.

Motion: Katherine moved to adjourn at 9:00pm. Erica seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Respectively submitted,
Michele Giarusso