

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
February 20, 2024
9:00 am

Select Board Members Present: Glenn Caffery, Erica Jensen, Katherine DiMatteo
Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Ginger Robinson, Liz Kidder

Glenn called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.
The Select Board reviewed and signed Fy24 warrants.

Discussion

Bids for Fire Pumper
No bids were received.

Meeting Minutes

Erica moved to accept the meeting minutes of February 12 as written with minor amendments. Katherine seconded the motion but realized there were minutes missing. Erica rescinded her motion and Katherine accepted. Michele will look to see if she has the rest of the minutes.

Sensitive Documents Policy and Administrative Assistant (AA) Job Description

Erica shared V5 of the Sensitive Document Policy. She will retype and present the final version at the next meeting.

Sensitive Documents policy. Glenn asked Michele to reach out to Donna to see if she could attend the next morning meeting on March 3rd to receive her opinion on some of this. We can also ask her at the meeting other questions for warrant articles for the upcoming annual town meeting.

Letters that were received from residents have two state statutes referenced. Glenn feels the HIPAA statute is the one that needs to be referenced in the policy. In the policy the appropriate people will be referenced to complete the HIPAA training and once completed they will be duly authorized to access private, sensitive, protected information. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System information is shared with Bernardston Police and Shelburne Control. Glenn feels an analysis of the information should happen prior to an emergency event so the EMD knows ahead of time who may need medical help, outreach etc. ahead of time. Per the policy nothing is opened until the emergency. Erica clarified that only the CAD data will be looked at when there is an emergency event. Erica suggested the EMD be invited to a future meeting to clarify the policy. Liz mentioned there is a working session of the Leyden Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) on March 1. Erica will send a draft V5 policy to the committee prior to their meeting. Katherine feels the information sent by the residents who are concerned with the process are given the opportunity to share their comments and be engaged with the process. The LEMC should open their meeting for public comments. Erica feels everyone in a small town who volunteers to serve in the town wants to do the right thing for the town. Each volunteer learns as a new initiative is rolled out. Liz shared the dates of future LEMC meetings. There are currently only 3 appointed members of the LEMC. Liz called MEMA to see exactly what member of the committee can vote on and she was told only meeting minutes. The committee is also going to discuss other members be appointed. She will bring the recommendations before the Select Board.

Bernardston Select Board Meeting

Leyden is invited to the Bernardston Select Board meeting on Wednesday, February 21 to discuss applying for another joint MVP grant with Bernardston. Since the meeting was not posted in time in Leyden a decision needs to be made on who will attend the meeting and what concern does this board have. Erica wants to make sure Leyden does not have any financial commitment, she wants to see the information on flying drones and who will manage the grant. Katherine shared her concern as to why Leyden must be involved this time. She asked if the board has confidence the grant will be completed in a collaborative way. Glenn is most concerned about us applying for a grant in Leyden for the bog and if this will have implications for us applying for 2 grants in one year. The other issue is there will be Leyden residents asked to be citizen scientist volunteers. Erica feels the data that will come out of the grant is useful information, but she should probably not attend the meeting. Katherine feels she should probably not attend either. Glenn offered to attend on Leyden's behalf. Michele will also attend.

Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Salary Survey

Katherine collated all the tiny towns stipends and salaries in a spreadsheet. Leyden is pretty much in line with other tiny towns except for the Librarian and Town Coordinator. The Finance Committee is expecting recommendations for salaries to come from the Select Board. Katherine asked whether the Select Board would recommend an across-the-board cost of living increase as well as adjustments. Glenn stated he feels we need to be competitive to keep staff and attract staff.

Discussion continued on equity and accountability issues before changing any town structures. There should be a joint meeting scheduled with the Finance Committee and the Assessors. Ginger reminded the Select Board to look at all salaries across each position to make a systemic review of the position and recommendation and not the people in the position.

Town Coordinator Updates

Michele called Colonial Power to see if Leyden could join in with the other towns who had signed on as their aggregate for electricity. Colonial stated we have to pass a warrant article at town meeting, and he does not see that Leyden ever did. Michele shared the warrant article to be put as a place holder for our annual town meeting.

Pest Control

Michele called two companies as a follow up to last week's meeting. Florence Pest Control came and gave an estimate of what they would charge. Michele will call Minutemen to complete their free consultations. Michele will also get written quotes from each of the companies.

MIIA Grant for Fire Department Insulation

Michele asked the board what they would like to do about the MIIA fire Department grant now that the fire department states insulating the walls of the fire station would take up too much labor and time that they don't have. Erica would like Michele to find out if the grant can be used to insulate the roof of the fire station instead. Since the roof insulation estimate was around \$40,000 Michele wanted to know where the rest of the money would come from. There was discussion on using ARPA money to pay for the rest of the insulation but Michele needs to find out first if MIIA in agreement with insulating the roof.

Staples Bill

Michele reported that Staples has finally zeroed out the \$16.21 money for taxes they have been billing since 2022.

Select Board Updates

Katherine reported the Finance Committee, Building Needs and she completed a tour of town buildings. The Building Needs Committee would like the Select board to give them a vision for the future for Leyden buildings.

PVRSD issues

Katherine spoke to Bea Jacques, Select Board member from Northfield for around 2 hours. They discussed several items pertaining to the schools. Northfield's position on consolidating schools to one campus is not something the Select Board is in favor of. Bea stated that Northfield's elementary school is not suited to be rehabbed for another purpose. They discussed the six-town planning committee's work and Bea said town Select Board members are opposed to a six-town region. The PVRSD District Agreement will need more time for the towns to review, more like one year. Bea also felt the towns should meet quarterly to discuss the future for facilities and other matters of importance that all 3 towns have commonality in.

Complete Streets

Katherine spoke to Beth Giannini about dirt roads and Leyden applying for a planning grant. Beth stated that Gill has a dirt road upgrade in their plan but that it has not been approved by the state yet.

Glenn reported the Building Needs Committee can meet on March 11 with the board.

Glenn will be away the week of March 25th.

Erica reported she spoke to Jim Palmeri, and he feels an excessive false alarm bylaw is nice to have but not necessary. He feels having such a bylaw can deter excessive false alarms through.

Erica feels in reply to Beth's email on Serv Safe Training Beth K. should just pay for the course. She can work with Michele on how to get the course paid.

Agenda Planning

Next meeting February 26:

- Planning Board on open space
- Susan and Alice on the Stratton property update

Motion: Katherine moved to adjourn at 12:03pm. Erica seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Respectively submitted,
Michele Giarusso