

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes  
Leyden Town Office Building  
Regular Session  
Monday, July 1, 2024  
9:00 am

**Select Board Members Present:** Katherine DiMatteo, Erica Jensen, Jeffrey Baker  
**Others Present:** Michele Giarusso, Liz Kidder, Jack Golden

Katherine called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** Erica moved to approve the June 17 meeting minutes with minor amendments. Katherine seconded accepted the minor amendments. Erica accepted the amendments. Vote: Katherine-yes, Erica-yes, Jeff abstained.

**Discussion**

Continued discussion on ADA compliance issues

Discussion continued re: handicap parking area. Katherine spoke to Bill Brooks, and he had some reservations about the incline. Michele stated there is handicap parking at the charging station because the EV grant required this and Bill put the lines in with the consultant for the EV charging station. Michele will discuss it with Bill. Building Needs will be making recommendations on other items. Katherine asked Michele if she had time to do an ADA plan. Michele would like Janell to help with the plan as Michele is working on several grants that need her focus. SB agreed that Janell will work on the ADA assessment and plan.

FY 25 Appointments

**Motion:** Erica moved to appoint:

- Deputy Collector-Arthur Little

Jeff Baker seconded the motion. Unanimous.

**Motion:** Erica moved to appoint:

- Historical Commission-Linda Allis and Holly Spatcher

Jeff Baker seconded the motion. Unanimous.

**Motion:** Erica moved to appoint:

- Poll Workers-Marie Lovely and Joyce Muka

Jeff Baker seconded the motion. Unanimous.

**Motion:** Erica moved to appoint:

- Recreation Committee-Ella Muka, Abbi Pratt and Gary Russell

Jeff Baker seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Moderator

Jack Golden debriefed the board on his thoughts about the annual town meeting.

- The PA system fell apart due to his own equipment which he used, they needed batteries for the mics and he did not realize this prior to the meeting. The town should really purchase their own equipment for the future. His recommendations are 5 wireless mics, maybe 1 wired one. Katherine commented maybe we could get some equipment through an ADA grant.
- Jack feels broadcasting the meetings would be a lot of work and we should have the annual meeting be an in-person event. This is a yearly vote, and he is not sure how people could vote remotely. Maybe the COA or other organizations could offer rides for those who need them.
- Other thoughts Jack had was should the meeting be changed back to a Saturday morning and can we clarify the budget better by consensus voting for the warrant articles that are routine, boiler plate, state mandated.

Katherine replied, town counsel stated we surely could have consensus voting to streamline town meeting.

- Budget confusion between operating budget total and warrant article additional expenditure. Could be resolved with two separate pages.
- Jack thought the refreshments served by the COA were great and we should continue this.

Jack also stated he completed his FY25 appointments and sent them to the Town Clerk.

#### MLP Manager

Jack has been attending the 3 digital equity programs that are being formed or have formed through state agencies. He reported the 3 programs are BEAD, Digital Equity and GAP. All 3 programs seem to be happening all at once. Jack has information from the Digital Equity grant that it will pay for training and equipment for those people unserved.

GAP impacts the Greenfield watershed area and Camp Lionel. GCET is applying for funding to bring service there – access is through Greenfield, not Leyden.

Supposedly there are 36 unserved locations in Leyden, but Jack is unsure of this. He has already visited 24 locations of the 36 and 24 were all served. He will visit the 12 remaining locations soon. He will make a challenge to BEAD to report on his findings. He thinks they are looking from a satellite view of the properties. When he is finished, he thinks only about 2% of Leyden's population is unserved and not 10% as BEAD is reporting. Jack will reach out to our librarian to coordinate with her for the digital equity grant. Erica questioned whether the grant would pay for subsidies for people who now have Verizon and cannot afford to pay the increase for Leyden's internet service. Jack did not think so but will ask.

#### DLS Financial Policy Discussion

Katherine would like to have a joint meeting on the policies with the Finance Committee and financial team to see what can or has to be implemented. Asked if we could get clarification on what are recommendations, and which are requirements.

#### Discuss Town Victim Response to Assistant District Attorney

Before the Select Board can reply to this request, they need to know how much time our staff put into this investigation from various state agencies. Michele will reach out to the Accountant and Treasurer to ask how many hours they put into gathering information and Michele also has hours to report. Erica will look at the form, and gather the information to fill it in. Katherine will check with Ginger about the Finance Committee response.

#### Town Coordinator Update

- Michele reported Susan still has not been able to secure a town credit card through a bank so the options for remote meetings are GoToMeeting or Google meet. The Board would like Michele to use the GoToMeeting account.
- Michele reported there is a little uptick in inquiries for a one-day liquor licenses for various events. Policy is all licenses must be approved by the Select Board.
- Michele has deposited a check from the FRCOG for \$3030 into the general fund. This is a refund on our FY24 assessment due to the FRCOG having an exceptional year for grants.
- Beth has returned the BOH chrome books saying they need batteries, and they should be considered surplus. Before putting into surplus Michele would like our IT person to see how much batteries would cost to replace and if not a lot of money these could be available for people who need access to the internet or need to learn on them. Select Board in agreement.
- Legislative update-Michele read some bills that had been passed last Friday that may impact the town. Michele reported she is in contact with Building Needs Committee to get specs for insulating the roof of this building and working through the Green Communities grant to get this completed.
- Fire alarms converting to internet service instead of land lines through Verizon. Due to all the problems, we are having with Verizon servicing the town Michele has received a verbal quote of \$1800-2000 to upgrade the fire alarm in the town office building and then have the fire alarm monitored through our

internet provider. The fire alarm at the town hall is a newer model and can be connected to the internet without upgrading. The Select Board would like Michele to receive a written quote before approving.

- Bereavement time-Michele would like to take time for her mother's services August 5-7. Katherine looked up the new policy manual and stated the policy is 5 days. Michele will take 5 days off, August 5- 9.

#### Select Board Updates

- Katherine attended the FRCOG Regional Planning meeting. The FRCOG provided an economic development update. There are several upcoming grants and projects the FRCOG can work on with the towns. One is the federal transportation grant program -TIP. This now includes tiny towns for road projects. The committee also commented that Chapter 90 money may now includes design work. Michele should check with FRCOG.
- Erica stated her interest in serving as the Deputy EMD. She would have to be approved for special employee status.
- Katherine and Erica both feel department head meetings should begin in August or early September to get on a regular schedule.
- Jeff reported he attended the PVRSD School Committee meeting remotely.
- This topic brought up the need to start early on the town budget by Katherine and suggested we meet with the Leyden school committee representatives and PVRSD administrators before any work is done by the school committee on their budget. Katherine will write a letter inviting the administrators.

#### Agenda Planning

Upcoming agenda items include:

- Continue with FY 25 appointments.
- Approve fire alarm transfer to internet from landline.
- End of year transfers
- Sign Penfield Trust Open Space Agreement

**Motion:** Erica moved to adjourn at 12:11pm. Jeff seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Respectively submitted,  
Michele Giarusso