

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
Monday, July 15, 2024
9:00 am

Select Board Members Present: Katherine DiMatteo, Erica Jensen, Jeffrey Baker

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Nicole Hurlburt, Liz Kidder-remote

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

Discussion

One Day Liquor License

Nicole Hurlburt has applied for a one-day liquor license for a wedding at Camp Lion Knoll on September 7, 2024. She submitted a certificate of liability insurance with her application and a check in the amount of \$25.00.

Motion: Erica moved to approve the one-day liquor license as presented. All paperwork is in order. Jeff seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Highway Quarterly Check-in

- Bill Brooks reported that Leyden has been lucky with the past few rainstorms in that there have not been any big road washouts.
- The new loader is waiting in a lot in Springfield. Bill is waiting for the Treasurer to return from vacation and the company will deliver.
- Katherine shared The Greenfield Recorder is doing a story on the beaver issue in Leyden. Katherine spoke to the reporter, and she said to call Beaver Solutions for more information on the diverter. Michele said she received a call from the reporter also and told him to call Beaver Solutions. Bill said he has to reply to the reporter, he does have a voice mail from the reporter.
- Barbara Wallace sent an email regarding the corner of Alexander Road and Greenfield Road. She asked if the town could cut the bushes for better road visibility initially, she would maintain it.
- Hunt Hill Road-Bill went to Hunt Hill to scope out the work as stated in the Open Space Agreement with Penfield Trust. As he and AJ were walking down the road Tony Streeter happened to be outside and showed Bill and AJ where his property pins were. Bill observed the pins that marked the properties including Glabach's property. Erica stated there is a question of whether the pins have been moved and Bill said he really couldn't tell but they look like they have been there for quite some time. The pin in question he plans on staying 3 feet away from. He had walked the property last year to check out where the material should go before the annual town meeting following the footage mentioned in the warrant article. He was doing the same just last week. He has also looked at property maps. He did have a question about the temporary bridge. Katherine replied the bridge is temporary and the Penfield's would have to go before the Conservation commission to install a permanent one. Bill also mentioned the roadbed to be installed is only to get a 4-wheel drive vehicle down to the Penfield's property, no culverts will be installed and also built to not have to maintain the road.
- Katherine spoke to town counsel about the Penfield Trust agreement and Penfield's attorney is on vacation this week so there is no agreement to sign. Katherine reiterated to Donna that there may be more than one shed on the property and the town would need to know how many are to be stated in a baseline report in the agreement.
- Michele asked Bill Brooks if it would be okay to put some Chapter 90 money towards the design and planning of the West Leyden Road "bog" project. The office of EOED is willing to give the leftover money from East Hill Road and 10-mile bridge towards this project. She is awaiting an updated quote from Gill Engineering. Bill replied yes, he has no problem putting some Chapter 90 money towards the cost of the West Leyden Road project.
- Culvert Assessment-Bill stated the report was last done in 2021 and the report mainly shows where the culverts are placed and not the condition of the entire culvert. It is only a snapshot in time. The ones that

are labeled “critical” are not necessarily so. If there was debris or a stick in the culvert at the time of the assessment that was blocking flow that may have been “labeled” but the highway department goes around checking on the culverts and if they need replacing the highway department does so with plastic pipe now and not metal. He did a sample of culverts from River Road to Gates Road and based on the culvert report there and found that there were none in the report that needed replacing. Erica noted that we should continue to participate with FRCOG in the culvert assessments, they have some useful value.

Meeting Minutes

Katherine sent Michele some amendments via email of the July 8 meeting minutes. She was wondering if she should send them to all Select Board members via email for all members to review prior to the meetings. Members thought that would be helpful.

Decision made to pass over the July 8 meeting minutes until the next meeting.

FY 25 Appointments- None

Continued ADA Compliance Issues -Building Needs Meeting report

Erica attended the Building Needs Committee meeting. Chris Mason from Green Communities was in attendance. Erica reported Chris mentioned Eversource had a list of preferred vendors who will do energy assessments and work. He will send that list to everyone. Richard Parks and Dave Vreeland will look for a company from that list to do both the membrane insulation and replacement of the section of the roof of the town office building that needs replacing. Richard Parks can do the energy savings assessments for the Green Communities application for reimbursement of the attic insulation. Building Needs would like an energy assessment of all town buildings. Dave Vreeland would like to speak to Eversource about deep energy retrofitting of boilers but not sure that we will have enough money to complete all this.

ADA- The committee is still working on plans for the ADA ramp out in front of this building and enlarging the interior door for wheelchair access.

Erica mentioned the Librarian will be sending their ask for the MIIA grant for a vapor barrier in the library basement and a couple other items.

Mass in Motion Grant Update

Katherine will be composing a letter of appreciation to Jim Baker, Dave Vreeland and Bill Brooks for constructing the new steps outside the town hall kitchen door. They did this as volunteers. The railings are here, and Dave Vreeland is in charge of getting them retrofitted at the Steel Shed in Bernardston.

ADA ramp at the town office building-Dave Pomerantz mentioned the Collins Center can do a thorough needs assessment for the town’s ADA through a grant. Recommendations not requirements will come from the assessment.

Electric Aggregation

Katherine spoke with a Deerfield Select Board member about their experience and the process they went through with the FRCOG to join the 14-town group for electric aggregation through Colonial Power. Michele spoke with Colonial Energy, and they noted that timing is right for Leyden to engage in a plan for the town with the new recommendations coming from the State. Katherine agreed that the timing is good as it will be 3 years in 2025 for the 14 towns to be negotiating their 3-year contract. If Leyden were to start now maybe we could join the other towns. Katherine was told Andrea Llamas, Northfield Administrator was instrumental in getting the towns to aggregate power maybe she can offer insight into next steps, and if we could join the existing 14-town group. Michele will reach out to Andrea Llamas. Katherine also mentioned Bernardston has pulled out. Michele should try and find out why they took this action.

Town Coordinator Update

- Michele has received notice that the Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED) will allow the Michele/town to use the leftover money from the East Hill Road project and 10-mile bridge grants. Michele had mentioned to Senator Anne Gobi when she visited of the frustration that when we do good work and come in on time and underbudget why the money cannot be rolled over to other important road projects. Small towns need every dollar they can get. Anne Gobi wrote to Assistant Secretary of EOED asking for this money for Leyden. Michele has asked the engineering firm she works with for an updated design and plan for the West Leyden Road “bog” project. As mentioned earlier the \$126,000 leftover money may not be enough money if we were to have started the project, but costs may have increased. This is great news for the town because we will not have to wait for grant approval and if the design phase could be completed this fall /winter Michele could apply for a construction grant in the spring.
- Michele is still working on end-of-year reconciliation of her grants and some accounts with the accountant.
- Tax bill update-Michele has spoken to VADAR and when Susan comes back there will be a joint meeting of the financial team so we can prepare for new year tax bills at the end of December.
- Conflict of interest training reminders-Michele will continue to do with the Town Clerk now that the town clerk will be leaving.
- Audit update-Michele has called the auditor who completed our audit last time 4 times with no response. So, she has outreached to other firms.

Select Board Updates

- Katherine asked Liz if ADUs were on the Planning Board’s August agenda. Liz replied yes, it was. Liz stated the law may have passed the legislature by then so the Planning Board will have more information. Liz also said the Planning Board will be asking for a Special Town Meeting in the fall for other zoning issues.
- Erica shared the Fire Department Open House is all set for August 3rd from 12p-3p. The Fire Department and Fire Association are handling everything.

Motion: Erica accepted with deep regret Paul McClatchy III, Town Clerk’s resignation letter dated July 12th. His resignation is not effective until January 31, 2025. Katherine seconded with regret. Unanimous.

Katherine asked Michele for the Town Clerk job description and newspaper ad we placed last time be sent to her.

- Katherine spoke with Allison Wright, the forester for Penfield’s logging project. Allison went to Hunt Hill last year and recommended where a water bar should go. She was told not to put in a water bar (maybe by Glenn Caffery) until after we had our annual town meeting. Allison never heard back from the person she spoke with, and the logging plan expired. Allison said the lower slope of Hunt Hill was a mess before the logging was started and no one can do anything until after August 1 due to the National Heritage letter for the Bitterns that are a protected species. The Penfield’s may need to submit a new logging plan to do the repairs and go before the Conservation Commission (Con. Comm.) again for approval. The Penfield’s are having to go before the Con. Comm. again anyways for a permanent bridge. Alison did say she has the authority to ask about the repair and will put it on her to-do list in August. Katherine has noted in her calendar that she will remind Alison. Erica will find out if the water bars are really needed since the road was in such poor condition prior to logging. The logging operation did create deeper ruts in the road though.

Agenda Planning

Next meeting July 22 at 5:30 pm. Upcoming agenda items include:

- One Day Liquor license-Shenandoah Sluter
- Appointment updates
- Approve minutes of 7/8 and 7/15
- Town Victim Impact Statement
- -EMS vehicle Registration and Boundtree updates
- Procurement policies/purchasing policies
- Other policies- Katherine would like to go through an outstanding list
- Penfield Agreement

Motion: Erica moved to adjourn at 12:16pm. Jeff seconded the motion. Unanimous.

Respectively submitted,
Michele Giarusso