

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

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

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Janell Howard, (arrived at 10am) - Ginger Robinson, Pam Brown, Paul Hake, Carolyn Asbury, Susan Bobe,

Remote: Liz Kidder

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

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Jeff moved, and Katherine seconded to approve the 8/26/2024 minutes, approved 2 yes, 1 abstain.

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to approve the 9/03/2024 minutes, unanimously approved.

Votes--Personnel Policy, Special Employee designation, Town Office mold Assessment Estimate, Appointments, Official Posting for Meetings

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to approve the paperwork for Bill Brooks to be a special employee as Highway Superintendent so that he can retain the elected position of Tree Warden, unanimously approved.

Discussion on mold assessment quotes-

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to accept the GEC bid for the Town Offices for \$2000, unanimously approved.

- Discussion on the appointments, fence viewer and constables.
- Discussion on cemetery's maintenance and request for appointment to East Hill Cemetery Commission.
- Discussion on changing the official posting location for meetings.
- Discussion of Poll workers to be appointed for 1 year - Carolyn Asbury, Aaron Dulles, and Corey Cusson
- Discussion on Deerfield Watershed Committee. A volunteer will be sought from the Conservation Commission to sit on the Deerfield Watershed Committee. If no volunteer is found, then Liz Kidder said she would be willing to be on the committee.
- Discussion on retroactively approving the Victim Impact Statement.
- Discussion on the updated Personnel Policy

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to appoint Carolyn Asbury, Aaron Dulles, Corey Cusson for 1 year as poll workers, unanimously approved.

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to approve the official posting of agendas to the town of Leyden Website.

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded, that we retroactively approve the Victim Impact Statement sent to the DA office as written, unanimously approved

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to approve the 8-15-24 version of the Personnel Policy as written, unanimously approved.

ACTION: Michele will reply to McGoldrick's email and provide information on constable position and inform Michael McGoldrick that the fence viewers job description is not yet available and will be sent when available.

ACTION: Michele will reply to the inquiry about the East Hill Cemetery Commission appointment and about the fee for caretaking. Inform Kayla Barnard that if she wishes to be on the Commission, she will have to recuse herself from voting on the fee for caretaking. The Commission can decide on the fee as long as it is covered by the annual budget approved by the town.

ACTION: Michele will send the information to the Conservation Commission about the Deerfield Watershed Committee.

ACTION: Michele will look into who owns the land of the cemeteries.

ACTION: Janell will send an appointment letter to the appointees and will put their names in the appointment document.

ACTION: Janell will ask Paul who we notify in the state about of the location of the official posting change, and if he will notify the state or assign Michele or Janell to do so.

Legislative Breakfast –

Discussion on the Town of Leyden hosting the legislation breakfast on Friday October 11th around 8-8:30 in the morning for 40-45 people. The town would need to provide a food table and chairs and tables for attendees.

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to allow the MMA Legislation Breakfast to be held at the Town Hall on October 11, 2024, at 8-8:30am, unanimously approved.

Town Coordinator Report

- When payment for 50% of the invoice for the roof replacement has been received by the roofing company, then the roof replacement work will be scheduled for the first of October.
- Discussion on mold testing estimates.
- Energy Resources, USA updated the savings, and Michele will correspond with Green Communities to see if this qualifies to receive Leyden's designated funds. Eversource wants us to sign a contract that they will pay 50% but Michele does not want to sign until everything is worked out with Green Communities.
- DLS Municipal Annual seminar "What's New in Municipal Law" Seminar is September 26th at 8am to 2pm at the Log Cabin in Holyoke.

ACTION: Michele will contact Mark Stinton from Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) when the engineering firm does a site visit for the bog project.

Select Board Updates

- Discussion on the Fire Department Equipment and Vehicle Policy.
- Mileage reimbursement is available when members of the Fire Department use their own vehicles for fire or medical calls and inspections and was added into the Fire Department - Equipment and Vehicle Policy.

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to approve the EMS/Multipurpose vehicle to be kept at the Fire Chief's house.

Motion: Jeff moved, and Katherine seconded to approve the Fire Department Equipment and Vehicle policy, unanimously approved.

ACTION: Erica will email the final policy to Janell.

ACTION: Janell will put the approved Fire Department Equipment and Vehicle Policy on the website.

ACTION: Janell will create a Fire Department Vehicle Sign Out Sheet.

DLS Recommendations Discussion with Finance Committee/Finance Team

Ginger Robinson called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 10:00 am

Discussion on Financial Policy:

- What are best practices and how many financial policies are we already doing.
- The Select Board and Finance Committee would like to have feedback from the different positions: Treasurer, Accountant, Assistant Assessor.
- Best practice would be to have policies in writing with the Mass general law and the section it pertains to next to it.
- Purchasing Policy and Petty Cash Policy should be added into the financial policy.
- Discussion on Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) – we don't have such benefits and all references can be cut from the document.
- The Capital Plan is done. It will be updated yearly. The Finance Committee can present it at the Annual Town Meeting.
- Discussion on grouping department payments to utilities together, pros and cons.
- Budget calendar – the Finance committee is meeting first in October and then they will decide on the calendar for the Finance Committee for the year.
- Need more information from the assessors.
- Discussion on presenting income numbers to the town.
- Meet and decide the dollar amount of a Capital Improvement Cost.
- Inventory should be kept by the department and sent to the Town Coordinator yearly.
- Discussion on using the cloud or having a server.
- Treasurer - payroll is submitted before it's approved by the Select Board because of scheduling issue. The Select Board suggested that the Financial Policy should be rewritten to reflect how the town does payroll or investigate changing when the payroll is being submitted.
- The reconciliation process is redundant.
- Put a bounced check fee in place - we don't have a fee in place.
- The town decides what they want in the Financial Policy and can take out the non-relative areas.
- The timeline is to approve the Financial Policy prior to the Annual Town Meeting on 5-22-2025.
- A credit card policy needs to be added into the Financial Policy.

ACTION: The Finance Committee will go through the Financial Policy and remove the information that is not relevant and add in pertinent wording for the town.

ACTION: Susan will write up a procedure on payroll to discuss with the Select Board.

ACTION: Susan will look at all areas that say Treasurer in the Financial Policy and will clean it up so that it is relevant to the town.

ACTION: Susan is working on getting a credit card for the town and will bring the Bernardston Credit Card Policy to the town to help write up a Credit Card Policy for Leyden.

ACTION: Michele will ask Accountant and Assistant Assessor to look at all the areas in the Financial Policy that apply to them and suggest edits to reflect what is done or what could realistically be done.

Other topics not anticipated

- Megan Rhodes or Ryan Clary will be coming in October to do an ADA Plan assessment on the town building and then write up a report by January.
- Discussion on the Scheduled Highway Road Closures Procedure.
- Discussion on annual reports that are still needed.
- John Richardson suggested for appointment for the Deputy Emergency Management Director (EMD)/Public Information Officer (PIO).
- Discussion about the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) coming to the Pioneer Valley Regional School District meeting with the Select Board and touring the school buildings.
- The PVRS District Agreement will be finalized in October.

Motion: Katheirne moved, and Jeff seconded to accept the Scheduled Highway Road Closures procedure, unanimously approved.

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to approve John Richardson to be the Deputy EMD/PIO for 1 year ending in 2025, unanimously approved.

ACTION: Janell will reach out to the School Committee Chair reminding them that their report is required by law in the Annual Town Report and is due.

ACTION: Janell will send an appointment letter to John Richardson and add him to the appointment list.

ACTION: Michele will send a revised PVRS District Agreement to the Select Board.

ACTION: Michele will email Karen and Ginger to come to the October 21st Select Board meeting in the evening.

Agenda for 09-16-24 meeting

- Discuss the Avery Field plan for trails
- Janell's Review
- Warrant
- 3-town meeting on PVRS District Agreement discussion
- Reports: Town Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, Select Board
- Public Comment

ACTION: Katherine will contact Jim Brodeur and Steve Richter, Recreation Committee and ask if he can attend the meeting on the 16th about the plan for a trail on Avery Field.

ACTION: Janell will remind the assessors of the Select Board Meeting with the assessors September 30th evening meeting.

ACTION: Katherine will remind Donna about the ADU bylaw, Tax Delinquent Policy, and Solicitation Policy.

Motion: Erica moved, and Jeff seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Howard