

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
Monday, January 6, 2025
10:00 am

Select Board Members Present: Katherine DiMatteo, Jeffrey Baker

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Janell Howard, Gary Ponce, Tony Streeter, Bill Brooks, Jim Brodeur, Christine Brodeur, Donna McNicol, Bob Penfield, Jeff Glabach

Remote Access: Mark Cappadona, Denise Allard, Chris Mason, Mike G

Katherine called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.

Approve and sign warrants. Approve minutes of 12/30/24.

Katherine and Jeff signed the warrants.

Motion: Jeff moved, and Katherine seconded to approve the 12-30-24 minutes, unanimously approved.

Town Coordinator, Administrative Assistant updates

- Regular check in with the engineering company for the bog.
- Another survey needs to be done on the bog to find the actual stream bed to determine the next steps.
- The generators were tested and maintained, battery replacement is recommended and is estimated to be \$100
- Signed fire alarms quote is submitted.
- All reports were submitted on time by the end of the year.
- E&R Grant - Bernardston is deciding who will be on the committee and will let the town know who they chose.
- Vacation days for town coordinator: Jan 14-20. MMA conference ½ day 1/22 – 1/24.
- The three UTV Quotes are completed and ready for a decision on which quote to use.
- Cultural Council has been presented with the committee orientation information. Links have been sent in an email for the committee to fulfill their training.
- Vacation days for the administrative assistant are February 17th-25th.
- The Garmin In-Reach quote needs a signature from the Select Board.

Motion: Jeff moved, and Katherine seconded to approve the Ronnie Cycle Sales quote for the UTV for \$27,881.72, unanimously approved.

Colrain Ambulance-Gary Ponce updates

- January is the busiest time of the year.
- Gary reported on the statistics since August (see addendum)
- The safety of the public and providers are the top priority. There was one complaint about an ambulance blocking the road. It was determined that for the safety of the public and providers for a few minutes the ambulance vehicle was blocking the road until it was safe to move it.
- If there are any complaints/comments, please direct the complaints/comments to Gary.
- Colrain Ambulance is getting a lot more calls out of their areas of service.
- Gary will go through the numbers for the last 5 years and let us know what an annual fee would be for a year.

- Regionalization talks are going on with towns, towns that weren't interested are now interested in looking into regionalization.

Town Counsel – continued Hunt Hill Road and other road issues

- Discussion on maintaining the town public ways .
- Discussion on the Highway Department plowing Hunt Hill road up until the beginning of the statutory private way portion.
- The town public ways are maintained based on the condition of road, there is a different standard for less used dirt roads than the more used and larger roads. A decision can also be made to discontinue maintenance of a road if the town determines that is necessary for safety and public convenience.
- The town needs to be able to safely maintain the roads in a way that the Highway Department and emergency vehicles have safe access and personnel are safe.
- There are limited highway vehicles that can be used on Hunt Hill Rd, only smaller vehicles can be used on it for plowing. Plowing on Hunt Hill Rd will be at the later end of a storm. The area right before the statutory private way has an area that can be used to make a turnaround for the highway department when they plow. Street sweeping (waste product) has been dumped by Tony Streeter's property which he uses to spread on the road along his property. The highway department could use it to maintain the road. Snow from plowing will be placed in a way that will not block the statutory private way to the Penfield's property whenever possible. Highway and Tony Streeter will work together to find a turnaround area and a place to drop the snow off on his property. Tony said the plowing can be done a few days after the storm depending on when the highway can make it.
- A statutory private way is a road that the town does not maintain but does permit public access and the road is posted.
- A portion of the road has already been surveyed. The road easement can cross over property lines, that is what an easement is. The easement for the public way may overlap property boundaries.
- The Penfield's may maintain the statutory private way, but to make any significant or major changes the town needs to be notified. If the road washes out the Penfield's can fix it but will talk to the highway department to make sure it's not affecting the public way.
- The statutory private way will not be maintained by the Town.
- There is a point before the private statutory way that is a public way, that will be maintained as any other similar dirt road that has few or no houses would be maintained.
- Discussion on fire vehicles making it to the end of the public way.
- There must be turnarounds on public roads for emergency vehicles and highway vehicles in a safe way, otherwise the town may need to discontinue maintenance of the road.
- Trees that fall in the road can be removed by property owners or they can call the tree warden to have them removed. It is permissible to move branches out of the road.
- Tony and Bob requested a copy of the minutes.
- Discussion on what the process is to enlarge Eden Trail Road past the town's current public right of way. A survey will need to be done laying out a new right of way for Eden Trail by enlarging the easement. The Selectboard will need to lay out the new right of way. The town meeting will then need to vote acceptance of the new lay out of the road and vote to acquire any new easement rights. Once Town Meeting has voted and the Select Board has taken any new easements, the new lay out will need to be recorded in the FCRD. Bill can work with Michele and Janell and Donna to get it all in place.
- The Planning Board will need to meet with Donna to go over the ADU bylaw, there is some concerning language in the proposed bylaws. Donna has gone through the bylaw and left

comments for Liz. The Planning Board might want to wait until the state has issued a model ADU bylaw before going forward.

- Discussion on wording of the bylaws and the regulations.
- Hunt Hill Rd issue – lines can be strung across the road as long as the lines are not obstructing any vehicles passage. 14 ft high is a minimum so that emergency vehicles and highway vehicles can safely drive under the lines. If lines are not high enough for highway and emergency vehicles to drive safely under them and the lines get damaged the property owner is responsible to fix the lines and move them higher. The property owner will need to repair the lines that are suspended across Hunt Hill Rd and will need to raise them higher.
- A letter was received from Eversource with an update of the vegetation plan, it will be added to the tree cutting plan.

ACTION: Michele will send a copy of the minutes to Jeff Glabach, Tony Streeter and Bob Penfield.

Colonial Power Aggregation and Department of Energy Resources (DOER) representative

- Discussion on how towns have power aggregation. Discussion on clean energy for power aggregation. The town is looking at saving the town's people money on their power.
- Small stipend is given to Colonial Power to go out and get power.
- An Energy Manager can be funded.
- There are different ways of acquiring greener power.
- There are options of financing clean energy in towns but there are not a lot of models to look at.
- Maximum flexibility is put in the agreement.
- Can use an Adder to have clean energy.
- Renewable Energy Certificates are better than nothing but they are not completely sold on them.
- Discussion on the different credits on the marketplace and the cost associated with it.
- All options will be discussed once they have the plan written.
- A DOER letter will be sent to the town certifying that we had this conversation. Then the letter will be posted for 30 days for people to be able to comment and talk about it and then meet back with the Select Board to vote. Then to DPU for approval within 120 days.
- Letters will be sent to the townspeople about the aggregation plan and how to opt out once the town is approved by DPU.

Selectboard Updates-

- Katherine talked to our Town Clerk and he is willing to fill the interim period until we hire a replacement for a \$1200 monthly stipend and will keep the winter hours.
- Tri-State Mutual Aid Agreement discussion.
- Katherine communicated with Jo Commerford's office that there is tension between towns and school committees. She will be meeting with Elena on 1/13.

Motion: Katherine moved, and Jeff seconded to change the arrangement with Paul McLatchy III as Town Clerk from hourly to a \$1200 monthly stipend, unanimously approved.

ACTION: Michele will call John Taylor about the Tri State Agreement and will let him know we are rebuilding the fire department and that we are in the process of getting the training done and see how he would advise us going forward.

ACTION: Janell will make a spreadsheet to keep track of all the training for the firefighters.

ACTION: Katherine will send a section to Michele about capital costs in MA General Law and see if it could be put in the PVRSD agreement.

Agenda for 1/13/25 Select Board evening meeting

- Sign the Tri-State Mutual Agreement.
- Interview the recent applicant for the town clerk position.
- E&R committee appointment
- Budget calendar
- Dates of meetings.

ACTION: Michele will ask for references for the recent Town Clerk applicant, and have Paul talk to him.

ACTION: Katherine will follow up with Jordan and Patricia about the weather and school start dates.

ACTION: Katherine will look up dates on the calendar Erica made.

Katherine adjourned the meeting at 1:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Howard

Addendum

DATE	RUN #	RESPONSE TIME	ALS/BLS	MUTUAL AID YES/NO	INTERCEPT YES/NO
9/7/24	24-61965	13	ALS	NO	NO
9/10/24	24-62818	20	ALS	NO	NO
9/10/24	24-62619	44	BLS	NO	NO
9/25/24	24-66277	26	ALS	NO	NO
11/7/24	24-76888	22	ALS	NO	NO
11/19/24	24-79666	10	ALS	NO	NO
11/23/24	24-80586	23	ALS	NO	NO
11/27/24	24-81718	14	ALS	NO	NO
12/6/24	24-83566	35	ALS	NO	NO
12/6/24	24-83653	12	ALS	NO	NO
12/12/24	24-84899	32	ALS	NO	NO
12/26/24	24-88273	21	ALS	NO	NO
1/3/25	25-498	19	ALS	NO	NO
1/3/25	25-626			YES NO CREW AVAILABLE	NO

8/7/24 TO 12/31/24 AVERAGE TIME CALL RECEIVED TO ON SCENE: 20.91 MINUTES