

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
Monday, March 24, 2024
5:30 pm

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

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Liz Kidder Erik Johnson, Janell Howard

Remote access: Beth Kuzdeba

Katherine called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Accept meeting minutes

Motion: Jeff moved, and Erica seconded to approve the 03-17-25 minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

District Attorney Meeting

- The board would like a private meeting in Executive Session with the Assistant District Attorney, preferably mornings, dates to avoid April 9,10 and 11.
- Ask town counsel to attend

Memorial Day Activities.

- Discussion on date to have Memorial Day Services and where, decided the Sunday before Memorial Day due to the other activities in surrounding towns on Monday. Services will be on town common at 10am.

Action: Katherine will contact the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Association for a speaker. Jeff will contact volunteers for flag placement and other activities.

Town Meeting Warrant Articles

- Michele has a list of written warrant articles saved for both the special and annual town meetings.
- Warrant articles will close April 28th.

Action: Michele to write up a draft of both Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting warrant articles for Select board to review

Admin Assistant Update

- This is Janell's last week of work. She has deleted most of the documents on her computer. Can the email account and computer go to the fire department to use? The Select Board agreed that the desktop computer and email account could be transferred to the fire department.
- She has been working on town bylaw research from 1975 until present and will be finished this week.
- She is available to work with the new town clerk on April 7 and will be working Wednesday evening with fire personnel.

Town Coordinator Update

- Inspector of Animals nomination of Sean Berthiaume. Sean has agreed to the nomination/ reappointment. This nomination runs from May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026 and the appointment is through the MA Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR).

Motion: Erica moved to nominate Sean Berthiaume as Inspector of Animals through MDAR from May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026. Jeff seconded the nomination. Unanimous.

- Voltrek/Assure renewal of Electric vehicle charging stations software. Select Board agreed Michele can sign the contract for \$1460.00.
- Municipal Aggregation Plan-the plan was posted for 30 days on the town website. The next steps are the Select Board must vote to approve the plan. Colonial Power will file with the DPU, once at the DPU, there will be a public hearing (likely within a month of filing) and then expect to see an Order within 120 days.

Motion: Jeff moved to approve the aggregation plan. Erica seconded the motion. Unanimous.

- Fuel and diesel bids sent to FRCOG. After consulting with Bill Brooks, we decided to keep the same amounts as last year.
- Whip City rep came to look at the pavilion for hook-up. Michele asked if the pavilion could be considered part of the town office building hook-up and not charge as a new hook-up. This will be brought back to the Whip City office for a decision. If not strong enough signal from the office building then a repeater could be used to extend the range.

Town Coordinator Review date

- Review date will be April 14th

Select Board updates

- Erica reported that the Finance Committee reviewed the public safety budgets, and the only increase is for an administrative person at 12 hours/month at \$25.00 an hour.
- Katherine mentioned she would like the department heads and chairs of committees or advisory committees to meet with the Select Board first before presenting increases to the Finance committee. Will discuss a budget procedural/process review with Finance Committee.
- Kibilio Retreat Center will be going to a tax-exempt status, the assessors think that a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) should be asked for as the loss of taxes is about \$15,000.

Action: Erica will follow up with Kibilio.

Katherine reported on some requests from the town clerk:

- Add to the annual town election ballot the open seat for Board of Health.

Motion: Erica moved to add a one-year seat to the town election ballot for the Board of Health. Jeff seconded the motion. Unanimous.

- Add to the annual town election ballot the assessor's question to switch to an appointed board.

Motion: Erica moved to add to the town election ballot "shall the town vote to have its elected Board of Assessors become an appointed Board of Assessors of the town". Jeff seconded the motion. Unanimous.

- Not allow early in person voting for the annual town election.

Motion: Erica moved to not allow early voting in the annual town election. Jeff seconded the motion. Unanimous.

- Katherine will be attending the Rural MA Conference on May 3rd. All Select Board Members can attend, and Michele usually attends.

Potential agenda items for next meeting

- Vote on one day liquor license

Potential for future meeting

- Logistics meeting with moderator for annual town meeting planning
- MLP budget

Motion to adjourn: Erica moved at 7:52 pm. Jeff seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by: Michele Giarusso

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