

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
Monday, April 28, 2025
9:00 am

Select Board Members Present: Katherine DiMatteo, Erica Jensen

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Paul Hunter, Patricia Williams, Don Vonner-Verizon Rep., Bill Brooks, Madison Schofield- Greenfield Recorder reporter

Katherine called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. Select Board signed warrants.

Accept meeting minutes

Motion: Erica moved to accept the meeting minutes of 4/17/25, Katherine seconded to approve. Motion approved unanimously.

Pole Hearing

Motion: Katherine opened the pole hearing at 9:07 am and called to order. Erica seconded the motion. All in favor.

- Don Vonner from Verizon rep reported that the last time we met the Select Board and Highway Superintendent wanted Verizon to meet with the Highway Superintendent to look at certain poles on West Leyden Road where stakes needed to be moved for various reasons. Don explained the reason for the moving of poles is to have pole spans closer to keep lines from drooping too close to the road. Don met with Bill Brooks.
Changes suggested on West Leyden Road since the last meeting:
 1. 2 poles were taken off the original list (near the bog) because there would be construction in the future and the poles would need to be moved again.
 2. 2 poles were pushed further away from the road.
 3. Neipp residence driveway- moved the pole to opposite side of the road due to drainage done years ago during construction of the road. There was a pole already across the road so the wires would just be moved to that pole.
 4. Verizon Engineers have agreed to the changes.

Motion: Erica moved to approve placement of 28 new poles on West Leyden Road according to Verizon's map and explanation. Katherine seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

- Mid County Road- Don explained 6 new poles are being recommended for Mid County Road. Patricia Williams from 20 Mid County Road would like the pole at the end of her driveway to move back off the road. Bill had another pole he would like Verizon to consider moving.

Motion: Erica moved to approve placement of 8 new poles on Mid County Road contingent upon the 6 poles discussed and mapped out with the understanding this could increase to as much as 8 poles. Don will take a ride with Bill Brooks after the meeting to look at Mid County Road. Katherine seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

- South County Road- Verizon has already installed the poles, and Don apologizes for not waiting for the pole hearing. The was done accidentally. Verizon still needs to take out old poles and anchor the new ones.

Motion: Erica moved to approve the petition for South County Road as printed. Katherine seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Motion: Erica moved to close the pole hearing at 9:33am. Katherine seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved.

STM and ATM Warrant Articles review

- Special Town meeting articles reviewed and approved. Michele will send to town counsel.
- A draft of the Annual Town meeting articles was reviewed but they have not been completely decided yet. Select Board will be meeting with Finance Committee.

ADA draft policies

- Grievance policy -Katherine had emailed a draft of the grievance policy prior to the meeting. The ADA state website had examples of policies on their website.

Motion: Erica moved to approve the longer version policy as written. Katherine seconded the motion. Unanimously approved the motion.

- Nondiscrimination policy- Both reviewed the policy.

Motion: Erica moved to approve the longer version policy as written and to change under The ADA public notice the words “as soon as possible but no later than 5 business days prior to the event. Katherine will update the policy. Katherine seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Town Coordinator Updates

- Energy Resources subcontractor will be coming the week of May 19 to upgrade the energy savings for the Green Community grant.
- Michele has jury duty on Tuesday.

Select Board Updates

- Tree Warden pay expense vs. payroll. The question came from the Finance Committee asking what goes into the expense line item for the tree warden. Select Board feels if the hours have been changed to the highway department account, then they should be separated out. Maybe this year is just an anomaly because there are no hours in the tree warden account yet.
- Erica and Liz went to an ambulance regionalization meeting. Other towns represented were Heath, Rowe, Colrain, Shelburne Buckland, Charlemont and Hawley. It was a good meeting and brainstorming session. The ambulance services are getting more expensive, and response time is increasing. The session discussed regionalization, districting or going private. It was suggested that the ambulance services apply for an Efficiency and Regionalization grant and all in agreement establishing a grant to look at the feasibility is necessary.

Katherine, Ginger and Michele attended the 3-town meeting to meet and discuss the PVRSD regional agreement with the attorney hired by the towns. Some of the changes being added are a 5-year capital plan and the administration present the budget at least 60 days in advance of the first town meeting. The attorney will incorporate all the changes. The next meeting will be at the end of May. All 3 towns discussed the upcoming budget votes, but none of the towns had taken a position on the vote yet. The attorney said the towns can divide the vote between operating and capital. It was a very interesting meeting.

- 250th celebration of our nation -Leyden was part of Bernardston 250 years ago. We will have to see if the Historical Commission wants to do something and maybe together with Bernardston.
- Proposed fence behind the library-Rob Snedeker would like to put up a fence around his property which butts up against the library property. Karin is not opposed to it as long as there are signs if the fence will be electrified, and she can access the basement.

Potential agenda items for next meeting

- Review ATM warrant articles and budget.
- Woodlands partnership grant for the Deerfield River watershed coalition
- Set up meeting time for school public forum

Motion to adjourn: Erica moved at 11:14 am. Katherine seconded the motion, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by: Michele Giarusso