

Leyden Select Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
Monday, August 11, 2025
5:00 pm

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

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Liz Kidder,

Erica called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

Accept Meeting Minutes

Motion: Katherine moved the 8/4/25 meeting minutes with minor amendments. Jeff seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Town Coordinator Updates

- Erica signed the letter of support for the Northern Tier Rail Service and the CAI contract to order digital maps for the Assessors

Motion: Katherine moved to support the designation of the Deerfield River becoming a Wild and Scenic River designation. Jeff seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion: Katherine moved to sign the MOU for the Mass in Motion grant for FY26 in the amount of \$4,200. Jeff seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Erica and Katherine signed the MOU.

- Michele read an email from Bill Brooks explaining what the state ethics commission lawyer of the day told him had to be done for the Tree Warden position to be a special employee.

Motion: Katherine moved to make the Tree Warden position a "special employee". Jeff seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Michele explained Rebecca Bald would be attending the August 25th Select Board meeting to discuss her property on East Hill Road and the East Hill Branch Road that runs through her property. Michele and Erica spoke to Alice. Erica reported that Mr. Hines gifted a triangle portion of the land to the town to change the course of the discontinued portion of East Hill Branch Road. There is no record of this, nor a survey done conveying the land to the Bald property. East Hill Branch Road was discontinued in 1985. At this point the town does not have any jurisdiction over the property. Ms. Bald will have to contact possibly the heirs of Mr. Hine.
- Michele has received permitting paperwork from Gill Engineering that will have to be signed before Gill can apply to the EPA for several permits. She was wondering if anyone had any contacts for Kibilio. Erica shared a contact with Michele.
- The town audit is still being done remotely, the auditor has finished his pulling of paper records and warrants and reading through/scanning what he needed.

Devorah Vester

Devorah requested that all Board of Health members be provided with dedicated town email accounts due to concerns about professionalism, public records, and security. She emphasized that using personal emails for town business was inappropriate, especially when interfacing with other entities. The Select Board explained that while they agreed with the sentiment, they could not accommodate the request due to cost constraints and existing policies. They suggested using Gmail accounts as a cost-effective alternative.

Select Board Updates

- Jeff shared his family reunion was this past weekend, and he used the Avery Field walking path. It was very nice and smooth and wheelchair accessible. People suggested maybe the Recreation Committee could put up some ceiling fans in the ceiling to circulate air in the summer.

- Jeff watched the school committee meeting video and asked Michele about the consultant that spoke. Michele answered he was hired to conduct a strategic plan for the district.
- Jeff thought the presentation of the six town planning committee was interesting, he learned a lot from the presentation. He sees some positives now in this plan.
- There was more general discussion on school-related issues, including concerns about declining enrollment, regionalization efforts, and the need for a strategic plan.
- Katherine mentioned she would like to set a date for the informational meeting on education. The board decided on September 30th at the town office building. Katherine will develop a plan for this meeting and present it at the Sept. 8th meeting.
- Discussed the orientation for new appointees and elected officials will be September 16.
- Katherine will put these meetings in the September Leyden Life when she writes up the Select Board report.
- Erica will be meeting with the Fire Chief and Samantha Wood next week to discuss email issues. Jeff asked if we are going to ask the Fire Chief to come in and meet with the board.

Public Comment

- Liz Kidder mentioned the Emergency Management meeting was held last week and they are planning for activities at Avery Field on September 28th, there will be a variety of activities from public safety people. A flyer is being composed to send out.

Agenda Planning Next Meeting

- Bob Penfield
- Long term planning

Motion to adjourn: Katherine moved at 6:31 pm. Jeff seconded the motion, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by: Michele Giarusso