



TOWN OF LEYDEN

Meeting Minutes

Select Board

Where: Leyden Town Offices – 7 Brattleboro Road

When: January 12, 2026 at :00 PM

In Attendance

Members: Erica Jensen, Katherine DiMatteo, Jeff Baker-via remote access

Audience: Michele Giarusso, Mik Mueller, Liz Kidder via remote access

Time meeting called to order: 5:00 PM

Review of Minutes:

Motion: Katherine moved the **Second:** Erica Jensen
minutes of 01/05/26 be
approved with amendments

Vote: Unanimous

Discussions:

1- Mik Mueller, CEO Montague Webworks

Discussion: Erica gave an overview of what is needed for our website to be ADA compliant. She attended a webinar on this subject matter. Mik said he can run a compliance check of our website and recently attended a webinar from the MA Attorney General's office on websites. He discussed ADA compliance requirements, including proper font sizes, background colors, and PDF accessibility standards. The group agreed to run accessibility tests and implement proper file naming conventions (e.g., committee-name-year-month-date format) to improve organization. There was a discussion about the website's current structure, with different perspectives on whether to use subfolders or a flat filing system, though no final decision was made. The town clerk's role in managing website content was also addressed, with concerns raised about access permissions and content management procedures.

Action:

1. Mik will run a website accessibility compliance test using free tools, report findings and provide a price point for remediation.
2. Town Clerk will clean up website file naming conventions to use committee name-year-month-date format with hyphens and CC all relevant parties.
3. Mik will move the website dropdown menu so it does not cut off on the page.

2. DLTA 2026 Discussion

Discussion: The group reviewed the FRCOG Local Technical Assistance Form provided and went section by section discussing priorities for the town from a select board and planning board perspective, with Liz having previously consulted with Jeff Miller and Jim Broder. They evaluated projects including river corridor management, community housing, economic development, and emergency management initiatives, with regional

evacuation planning emerging as a key priority for Jeff. The discussion concluded with considerations around municipal succession planning, shared services, and transportation assessments, with Michele noting that many of these items were already being addressed through existing contracts and programs.

The group discussed and prioritized three key areas for their town's focus: community housing and economic development (with open space as a subcategory), emergency management, and shared municipal services. They decided against prioritizing AI training for local officials and fire service sharing, with Erica explaining that AI was not a current priority and the fire service discussion was already ongoing with other parties. The group also discussed floodplain management, noting that FRCOG was already supporting West County EMS regionalization and that they needed to be mindful of how their priorities might impact FRCOG's ability to continue their work with limited resources.

Vote: Motion made by Katherine to prioritize Community Housing and Economic Development helping with our Open Space Plan, Emergency Management and Shared Services. **Motion 2nd** by Jeff. **Roll Call Vote:** Jeff-yes, Erica-yes, Katherine-yes.

3. Aggregation Update and Discussion

Discussion: The board approved electrical aggregation, with plans to post documentation on the website and Michele to post in North County News. The public forum was scheduled for February 2nd at 6pm, with letters going out by January 15th to all residents. The board also discussed granting Colonial Power Group permission to list our rate on the Energy Switch website.

Vote: Katherine moved to give Colonial Power permission to display Leyden's rate on the Energy Switch website. **Motion 2nd** by Jeff. **Roll Call Vote:** Jeff-yes, Erica-yes, Katherine-yes.

4. Signage for Leyden Cupboard

Discussion: The group discussed Leyden's bylaw on signage and how this relates to what the Leyden Cupboard wanting permanent signs. They agreed to allow the signs to be placed in five locations around town, but with modifications. The signs will include the address and operating hours, to take out the word kitchen.

Vote: Katherine moved to allow the Leyden Cupboard to put up 5 signs around town on a permanent basis to state the hours of operation, to state the pantry is at the town hall with the address days/dates they are open to remove the phone number and take everything

else off of the draft sign sent to the Select Board for review/ approval. **Motion 2nd** by Jeff.
Roll Call Vote: Jeff-yes, Erica-yes, Katherine-yes.

5. Town Coordinator Updates

Discussion: 1. Michele reported she asked Erik Johnson if he would like to put up new ceiling tiles in town office and he declined the offer.
2. RAVE has sent a quote for ½ year for \$1425.00 Erica questioned why we would pay this amount when we paid double the amount after July 1.

Action: Michele will look up when she last paid the bill and report back.

6. Select Board Updates

Discussion: 1. Katherine reported the E&R grant public forum went well with 52 people attending, 28 people from Leyden and 24 from Bernardston. There was notable community feedback about town integration and service sharing.
2. Katherine has been reading the MSBA website to find out more about the PVRSD feasibility study.
3. Erica commented on Senator Jo Comerford's email about the six town vote and there may not be enough time to file legislation.
4. Erica reported the Building Needs Committee have finished their capital priorities for this coming year and future years . She has been going through the document and thinking of ways to fund a highway ventilation system that is estimated to cost around \$25-30k this year. She would like Bill B. to come in and discuss the use of Chapter 90 money. She also reported the library needs some electrical work done and chimney repairs.
5. Erica attended the floodplain mapping meeting at the FRCOG. State representatives were there explaining how they are working with FEMA. The maps should be ready for annual town meetings in May-June.
6. Jeff reported it was okay to take down the flag on the right to farm sign.

Miscellaneous: List any topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair prior to the 48-hour posting requirement for the meeting.

1- None

Next Meeting: January 26, 2026 at 9am

Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Katherine moved to **Second:** Jeff
adjourn at 7:14 pm

Vote: Roll call-Jeff-yes, Erica-
yes, Katherine-yes

Submitted By: Michele Giarusso