TOWN OF LEYDEN
Meeting Minutes

Select Board Meeting Minutes

Where:	Leyden Town Office
When:	August 24, 2026

In Attendance

Members:	Erica Jensen, Katherine DiMatteo, Jeff Baker
Audience:	Michele Giarusso, Molly Miller, Liz Kidder via remote access

Time meeting called to order: 9:01am

Review of Minutes:

Motion: Katherine moved to accept the meeting minutes of 8/17/26 with amendments	**Second:** Jeff	**Vote:** Unanimous

Discussions:

1. Warrant for Primary Election

Motion: Katherine moved to sign the primary election warrant to take place on September 1, 2026. There were questions about the warrant, but the town clerk was able to answer. **Second:** Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous

2. Dedication of the Annual Town Report

Katherine suggested the Leyden Cupboard volunteers as the annual report dedication. Many people came together to make this happen; there is consistency in both volunteerism and donations.
Motion: Katherine moved to dedicate the Leyden annual report to the Leyden Cupboard volunteers.
Second: Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous

3. Hiring of Administrative Assistant

Molly came in to discuss the hiring of an Administrative Assistant (AA). She reported that she feels both candidates are motivated, but she feels she is new to the position and hiring an AA with experience is most important right now to help her and Kathleen has the experience having worked in the Greenfield town hall with many administrative departments.
Motion: Katherine moved to hire Kathleen Garmalo as the Administrative Assistant for 4 hours per week at $20.00 per hour. **Second:** Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous

4. Digital Equity Grant

Michele is still waiting for the report of 62 y/o's and older to send out postcards. Sarah Brown-Anson is training Molly today and Michele asked if the report could be worked on. Molly hopes to print on Thursday.

6. Town Coordinator Updates

- Michele mentioned she is waiting for Randy Crochier to call her back regarding a subpoena that may have been dropped off at the wrong address for Rebecca Brown. She mentioned the BOH meeting regarding this property is on Sept. 1.
- Michele reported ongoing work on the amended MassDOT grant contract, which required a letter with budget changes and explanations.
- Michele informed the group about Leyden being classified as a moderate risk for West Nile virus.
- Lynde Well Drilling replaced the pressure tank last week at the town hall. No invoice has come yet so not sure of the cost to repair.
- Fence around gas tank at the town office- Peter Shedd confirmed no fence is required around it. Michele will see if Bill can take it down.
- Michele discussed a right of first refusal for the Lotrek property at the top of Frizzell Hill. It is 7.066 acres and located in APR (Agricultural Preservation Restriction) land. The Select Board needs to vote on waiving the right of first refusal so that Trish Crapo and Tom Ashley can purchase the property for $135,000.This item will be put on the next agenda.
- Michele mentioned an upcoming public hearing in Greenfield regarding potential data centers ban, scheduled for September 3rd.
- The governor has the six-town special election legislation on her desk to sign. Hopefully it will be signed in the next couple of days.
- Michele asked for vacation time in December and will let the board know the exact dates.

7. Select Board Updates

- Jeff asked about the brick building in the center of town next to the town hall. Michele stated this was the old town vault, but it is not suitable for records storage due to mold etc.
- Jeff asked Katherine what her issues are with Warwick's tuition agreement. Katherine replied that her issue is with the proposed school choice students being able to attend PVRSD at $5,000 per year and the SPED costs as well as the school administration having to do all the paperwork for SPED reimbursement.
- Katherine reported on several updates:

  1. FCTS meeting -Michele, Erica and Katherine attended the FCTS information session in Buckland hosted by the Buckland Finance Committee. The meeting was very informative and brought up several things to think about whether the vote passes or did not pass. The average resident voter does not have all this information. Maybe we should set up a public forum to discuss.

  2. PVRSD meeting- Katherine reported the meeting covered the high school handbook revisions, policies on no caffeine drinks allowed on campus and competency standards approval for graduation, they are looking for 2 soccer coaches, one for volleyball and one for soccer, they went over personnel changes, public requests that have become very annoying from a company who is using the data for AI purposes, a future education summit with DESE officials and the $100,000 earmark for an outdoor pavilion.

  3. The Mass in Motion committee meeting covered various topics including using $1,000 that may be needed in addition to the Woodlands Partnership grant, path maintenance, a planned step challenge event on September 27th,noise dampening panels for the town hall, and the decision to cancel this year's 5K event due to low participation and logistics challenges. The committee also discussed potential radon testing and other health-related initiatives. Jenny Campbell was in attendance and would like to be appointed to the Mass in Motion Committee.

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint Jenny Campbell to the Mass in Motion Committee. **Second:** Jeff
Vote: Unanimous.

- Erica reported on the EMS regionalization meeting with Liz-there were a lot of opinions on options for paying for services and assessments from the towns. The possible options that were recommended by the group were options 6 and #7. The members will be sharing these options with their respective Select Boards.
- Erica mentioned the meeting on FCTS, if we were to leave FCTS we would have to pay more so this is not really an option.

8. Public Comment

None

9. **Agenda Planning**

- Lotreck property
- Complete Streets Prioritization Plan
- Public Forum planning for September 17 on the FCTYS vote and the Six Town Regional agreement vote
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Next Meeting: August 31 at 9am

Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Jeff moved to adjourn at 6:52pm. **Second:** Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous.

Submitted By: Michele Giarusso