



LEYDEN MUNICIPAL LIGHT PLANT
Leyden Town Office Building
Minutes
October 5, 2021

Selectboard Members Present: Jeff Neipp, Bill Glabach, Erica Jensen

Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Jack Golden, Andrew Killeen, Susan Bobe, Angelica Desroches, Michele Higgins, Ginger Robinson

Jeff called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. Introductions made.

Jeff stated regular meetings should be planned. The Select board are the MLP board at this time. He suggested at the next annual town meeting there could be an article to recruit more members. Erica fine with this. Andy stated he would like to see an MLP board separate from the select board. Bill not sure at this time.

Jack stated he would like to see a technical expert on the board as well as one with a business background. There may be a resident who is out there and would step forward. A Select board member should be on the MLP board from his perspective.

Jeff suggested other towns have an MLP manager who are compensated as well as other staff on MLP boards. The suggested starting salary could be around \$4500 per year.

Andy does not want the position he does not need another part time job. He puts in about 8 hours per month on average and feels the amount of money would be reasonable. The person needed for this position must have a 360-degree view of what the MLP is. This is a separate business from town government and the person needs a business sense. Andy suggested if no one steps forward to apply maybe we could partner with another town.

Erica interjected a regional viewpoint is smart. Jack stated a northern cluster of towns is being formed as a partnership on redundancy and this would fit in well. We should also be considering what is called a backhaul; a backup or meet up point with Colrain.

Currently the redundancy is from Greenfield to Springfield, but the northern towns can be very different weather wise than south of here thus the northern towns are talking about a backup with Colrain and having a server in Heath. We are currently paying for the main feed. Andy said this hitch up will cost \$600 per month.

Motion: Erica moved to approve this set up and pay WG&E \$600/mo. Unanimous. Jack stated he has heard some chatter that other towns are not enamored with Whip City but not sure why. When we were doing our project, we had great customer service from the contractors.

Jeff stated maybe Andy and Jack could talk to other towns about having a shared MLP manager. Angelica stated this hiring of someone could get sticky with benefits. She suggested FRCOG maybe could do the hiring and the towns pay the FRCOG as a fee for service program. Erica asked what is the role of the MLP manager is there a job description? Jeff answered the MLP manager signs contracts and oversees the MLP.

Michele asked what the policy was for new service as she has gotten a few inquiries. Andy answered for them to call Whip City directly. There will be a cost for the new service and residents should be aware of this. Maybe Michele could take the drop policy off the website and put something in there in reference to how to contact Whip City for customer service and new connections versus downed wires and service which would be technical service Michele stated she will do

Jeff stated there was some storm damage and the money came out of the tree warden's budget and should come out of the MLP so Angelica should transfer. Jack mentioned the generator should have yearly maintenance he has an estimate from Kinsley generator service. Everyone agreed this needs to be done before winter.

Outstanding bills from Whip City were discussed. Michele G. stated the monthly ISP bills have not been getting to this office because Whip City had our old address, and the US mail is not forwarding. She has had conversations with Whip City on the outstanding ISP amount and we need to pay asap. The outstanding amount is around \$82,000. Susan said we are receiving around \$25,000 per month in revenue and our monthly ISP bill is around \$16,000 per month. We should pay this outstanding bill. Michele G. added the other more troublesome amount is the construction bills we owe. Currently around \$133,000 but could be more. Susan will never see the construction bills online and these also were coming by US mail but never made it to us. These bills are always sent after Andy signs off electronically. Angelica thinks we could possibly pay these out of the ARPA funds if the dates are in accordance with the new law. Ginger thinks if we have the money in the construction account, we should make a partial payment now. Jeff is concerned we do not know if these are our bills. He would like an audit done and will consult with town counsel.

Next meeting should be in November sometime. Jeff stated maybe Michele could call other towns who have a job description for MLP manager.

Motion: Erica moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:15pm. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Giarusso