

**Town of Leyden Public Safety Advisory Committee  
Minutes of Meeting September 20, 2022**

A duly posted meeting of the Leyden Public Safety Advisory Committee was held at the Town Hall at 6:30pm, on September 20, 2022.

**Present:** Elizabeth Kidder, Chair, Barbara Wallace, Emily Yazwinski, Anders Ferguson, Marica Miller, Candace Hope (alternate), Michael Morgan.

**Audience:** Michelle Higgins, Bill Glabach, Glenn Caffery, Ken Medvetz, Ginger Robinson, Sara Seinberg

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

**A motion to approve the minutes of August 17<sup>th</sup> was made by Anders and seconded by Michael.**

Vote:

Emily Yazwinski: Yes

Barbara Wallace: Yes

Liz Kidder: Yes

Anders Ferguson: Yes

Marica Miller: Yes

#### **Police Task Force Updates**

Bernardston / Leyden Task Force is formally established. From Leyden we have Liz Kidder, Bill Glabach, and Michelle Higgins, and Joyce Muka. From Bernardston we have Stan Garland, Jane Dutcher, Peter Nai, and Chief Palmeri. Meetings can be joined via zoom, a link is posted with the agenda on the website in advance of the meeting. Next meeting will be October 13th at 11am.

We've received only positive comments about the agreement; Bernardston has not received any negative feedback. Michelle G. found the record of when Leyden voted to create the police department (Chapter 97A). We are working on securing municipal attorneys to review the long-term agreement.

Bernardston Police are all first responders, with appropriate and up-to-date equipment in their vehicles (which was not true for our police vehicles) but we'd like to get a list of the specific medical gear they carry.

#### **Fire and Emergency Medical Services updates**

There is a recommendation by Steven Foley to turn the Tahoe into an Emergency Response Vehicle. We need to make repairs before it will pass inspection. There are questions about the electrical maintenance of the vehicle; we don't have records of past repair work.

Greenfield Auto said the big unknowns are electrical and emissions. We can take it in for an assessment so we make an informed decision about whether its worth the cost of repair. The selectboard is exploring options (repairing Tahoe VS buying a comparable vehicle at auction). Repairing the Tahoe would be a short-term solution for an emergency vehicle while we develop a long-term solution for Fire & EMS services.

One positive note is that we are exploring the idea of shifting to become a Rapid Response Fire Department with a smaller truck (instead of investing in a new large truck) that can quickly address emergencies while we wait for the longer response time from neighboring fire departments. The

smaller trucks are better with our terrain. The trucks we own have issues. It's our duty to make solid recommendations for the selectboard; this is a reasonable path forward.

We don't have an adequate budget for EMS and Fire. If we want to have a Fire Department, we need to have a realistic budget. Collins Center is looking at our mutual aid agreements and our neighboring fire departments to explore all the options, and is also helping us develop a list of the equipment we need. We'll be a better partner for mutual aid agreements if we have Rapid Response capabilities.

We need to help reframe how people think of the fire department to ease the transition from the department we currently have, and move toward a department we can afford to sustain.

Paperwork for the EMS volunteers is moving forward (background checks are done). We're still working on finding an EMS coordinator to help with scheduling and paperwork. There isn't money in the budget for this year to have it be a paid position, but there is a question about whether one of the EMS people (once they are officially "hired" by the town) could be paid from the EMS budget to do the coordination.

There was a discussion of additional / ongoing training for the EMS volunteers because the basic training is not sufficient for people to feel equipped to properly respond in case of an emergency. Perhaps we could collaborate with EMS volunteers in neighboring towns for additional (regular) training. Liz will connect with Chief Palmeri about how his department handles EMS training.

### **Emergency Management updates**

Meeting on Monday at Town Hall. David and Erica are working on our draft emergency management plan, each department is working on their chapter and people are submitting documents. Collins Center is helping. On Monday they'll give an update of where they are for each chapter. They'll also discuss when & how the emergency plan should be deployed. Town Hall and Town Offices are being considered for emergency shelter & emergency operations center, we're looking at what updates the buildings will need.

### **RAVE Alert System Update**

A conversation about the RAVE Alert system should include: Public Safety, Board of Health, Emergency Management Committee, Council on Aging, and the Selectboard. Liz will follow up with Michelle and the Selectboard about setting up a meeting.

### **Communication – Next Public Safety Public Information Meeting**

In the last meeting there were questions about why it's financially beneficial to partner with Bernardston. There was a discussion of whether we can get financial data from the Collins Center to present at the next public meeting to help people understand the costs and benefits. The interim agreement was based on estimates; Collins Center is working on developing the actual hourly cost of services for our long-term agreement.

We will aim for the public information session to be at the end of October or early November. Exact date TBD. Information session will include an update from the Emergency Management Committee (including a call for people to participate). It will also include an update on fire and EMS. This meeting will primarily be led by this committee and not the Collins Center.

### **Priorities and next steps:**

- Next meeting is October 18th at Town Hall, 6:30pm
- Date TBD for a Public Information Meeting

**Public Comments and other business not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting.** Nothing presented.

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Anders and seconded by Emily.**

Vote:

Emily Yazwinski: Yes

Barbara Wallace: Yes

Liz Kidder: Yes

Candace Hope: Yes

Anders Ferguson: Yes

Marica Miller: Yes

Michael Morgan: Yes

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Candace Hope