

Joint Leyden Select Board, Conservation and Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Leyden Town Office Building
Regular Session
Monday, December 15, 2025
5:00 pm

Select Board Members Present: Erica Jensen, Katherine DiMatteo, and Jeffrey Baker via remote access
Others Present: Michele Giarusso, Beth Kuzdeba, Pam Brown, Jim Brodeur, Janell Howard, Karen O'Neil, Evan Abramson, and Liz Kidder via remote access.

Erica called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Accept Meeting Minutes

Motion: Katherine moved the 12/01/25 meeting minutes as written. Erica seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

Town Caucus

Motion: Katherine moved to set the town caucus for Monday, March 23, 2026, at 6pm. Erica seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

Jeffrey Baker joined the meeting at 5:08pm.

Town Coordinator Update

- There was discussion on a request from the Leyden Board of Health to send a letter to Senator Jo Comerford for budget support to help small towns meet the requirements of the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District, Beth Kuzdeba explained how we have been receiving \$3,000 per year from the state to support our enrollment.

Motion: Katherine moved to sign the letter for the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District. . Erica seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Jeff-yes, Katherine-yes, Erica-yes.

- Recreation department has filled out the surplus equipment form for the skating rink. Members approved.
- Franklin County Tech school students from Leyden. The town clerk compared the information the school sent to the town. Our Town Clerk has said there are 2 addresses on the Tech School list where there were no children listed on the street list. Michele will follow up with the tech school.
- Digital equity grant #1 needs further clarification of the roles and responsibilities between Northfield, GCC, and Leyden. All agreed there should be a meeting with Donna Duseell, Jack Golden, and Karin Parks to better understand the grant requirements and Leyden's participation. It was stated that Leyden does not have reporting requirements for this grant. Donna has asked Leyden to be part of a second phase of the grant with GCC providing training in Leyden at the computer in the community room.
- Digital equity grant #2. Meeting to be scheduled to begin work on the parameters of the notebook lending program. Katherine and Erica will meet with Jack and Donna. Michele should be involved because there are reporting requirements.

FEMA Floodplain Maps

- Erica discussed the town must adopt new FEMA floodplain maps by October 2027 with the planning board adding an additional zoning bylaw. Joy Duperault will be at the FRCOG for a workshop for the towns on January 8th and another update on the maps.

- Discussed there should be a public forum on floodplain management for residents, so they are aware they are in a floodplain. Evan suggested that the residents in the floodplain be notified. There is time to schedule as the maps have not been finalized yet.
- Evan asked if we could circulate the maps done by FRCOG that showed the changes in color from the previous maps. We have those now based on drafts.
- Our Hazard Mitigation plan needs updating by 2027. The Select Board will put on the new DLT form when received for next year. Open Space committee could also use help.

Public Comment

- Liz shared information about a pilot commission being established by the governor for woodland analysis, and mentioned that Sam Haupt from Peru had agreed to serve if nominated. The partnership is looking for someone else to volunteer for this commission and asked Liz who declined. Katherine will put something in Leyden Life to see if there are any volunteers from Leyden.
- Jim Brodeur suggested the board name the conservation property behind Avery Field.
- The group discussed snow removal challenges, particularly around town hall and handicapped accessible spaces, with a focus on the need for timely clearing of sidewalks and ramps. The discussion continued that the highway department plows roads, they do not handle sidewalk clearing, which falls to the town custodian. The Select Board agreed to continue seeking a solution to ensure main exits are cleared within 24 hours of a storm, ask the current custodian if this is feasible and advertise this service in the newsletter and on the website.
- Discussed the possibility of purchasing a snowblower and having the highway department plow down to the pavilion at Avery field during the winter.

Select Board Updates

- Katherine reported Karen Kelly has invited Leyden to a Bernardston Capital Building meeting for Bernardston Elementary School in January. This is where they meet to discuss the capital needs of the school. Katherine volunteered to attend that meeting.
- Katherine reported that on December 22 there will be a PVRSD budget subcommittee meeting combined with a full school committee meeting to discuss borrowing money for a school feasibility study. The money that was in the school choice fund is no longer there. MSBA will cover 58% of the approximately \$1 million to \$2 million cost. All selectboards and Finance committees should attend this meeting.
- The E&R grant committee did not meet last week due to errors in the memo received from the Collins Center. They will be meeting this Thursday. Katherine spoke with Sarah Concannon and Sarah will be working with Anthony to update the memo. Katherine contacted towns that are sharing services and she will be meeting with 2 town administrators to discuss their experience with shared services.
- Katherine shared that Bernardston Fire Chief would like the E&R committee to make an IMA with Leyden and Bernardston fire departments a priority.

Agenda Planning

- Kibilio Pilot discussion
- Update on snow plowing and snow shoveling

Motion to adjourn: Katherine moved at 6:33 pm. Erica seconded the motion. Katherine – yes; Erica – yes; Jeff – yes.

Respectfully submitted by: Michele Giarusso