



# TOWN OF LEYDEN

## Meeting Minutes

---

### Select Board

**Where** : Leyden Town Offices – 7 Brattleboro Road

**When:** March 16, 2026 at 5:00 PM

---

### In Attendance

**Members:** Erica Jensen, Katherine DiMatteo, Jeff Baker

**Audience:** Michele Giarusso

---

**Time meeting called to order: 5:00 PM**

Select Board reviewed and signed the bi-weekly warrants.

#### Review of Minutes:

**Motion:** Katherine moved  
the revised minutes of  
3/2/26.

**Second:** Jeff

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion:** Katherine moved  
the minutes of 3/9 with a  
minor change. **Second**-Jeff.  
**Vote:** Unanimous

#### Discussions:

##### 1. Employee Review Form

**Discussion:** Katherine simplified the employee review form. Full-time employees should fill out. Bill Brooks should give this form to his employees to fill out.

**Motion:** Katherine moved to approve the revised employee form. **Second:** Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous.

##### 2 . Town Coordinator Updates

#### Discussion:

- MIIA insurance yearly renewal proposed 1.9% rate decrease for FY27. Michele is reviewing the liability insurance as well as fleet insurance. She consulted Jim Palmeri about old police equipment. He said we could delete the coverage.
- Perennial garden- email from Peter Whackenagel regarding work planned for the perennial gardens, including moving brush piles, sheet mulching, and removing oriental bittersweet vines. Katherine asked if he plans on cleaning the library garden also.

**Action:** Michele will follow up with Peter.

- D2R2 bike ride is scheduled for August 22, approximately 1500 bikers will be going through Leyden.
- Michele reported there was a conference call with our MassDOT representative Chris, Bill Brooks, Jim Brodeur and Michele on Eden trail work Bill is proposing needs to be done. Chris said a survey needs to be done first followed by an engineering study and assessment of the land, with Chapter 90 funds potentially available for some costs.
- Michele is working on the ECO One Stop grant and would like the board to sign a letter of support for the grant project. The board signed the letter for the West Leyden Road project.
- Michele discussed the town's financial situation, focusing on some overages that Angelica would like the Select Board and Finance Committee to consider using free cash for this year. Winter maintenance and insurance costs are the two-line items . Angelica estimates will be about \$22,000 over this year and end of year line-item transfers will not be able to cover these.

**Action: 1.** The board would like Michele to ask Janell if she can host the remote viewing of our Special and Annual Town meetings this year and contact the moderator to set up a time to review the warrants and general overview of the meetings.

### 3 .Select Board Updates

**Motion:** Katherine moved to accept the Life Path grant of \$3,000 for the Avery Field walking path. **Second** -Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous.

- Erica attended the BOH and FRCOG webinar on battery storage. It was mentioned by other towns that when Eversource has had pole hearings they have tried to sneak in battery energy storage systems.
- Erica is looking into OPEB costs and who pays OPEB costs of the towns around us. Leyden is the only town that does not pay post-employment health insurance in our local area. The board discussed and agreed to have Susan get actuarial costs to conduct a study for Leyden.
- Katherine mentioned the upcoming finance meetings and the 3-town meeting being held this Thursday. It is important to attend these meetings and listen to budget discussions.
- Jeff listened to the school committee meeting last week. The superintendent with other superintendents is pushing for more rural aid and a one-time allotment from the fair share funds to be sent to schools for the increase in health insurance costs.

### 4. Public Comments

**Discussion: None**

### 5. Agenda Planning

- Finalize wage and stipends for FY27
- Possible places to move the right to farm sign
- OPEB update
- Decide on Digital Equity 1 workshops
- Set Digital Equity 2 parameters

**Next Meeting:** March 23, 2026, at 9:00 am

**Meeting Adjournment**

**Motion:** Katherine moved  
to adjourn at 6:32 pm

**Second:** Jeff

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Submitted By:** Michele Giarusso