



TOWN OF LEYDEN

Meeting Minutes

Select Board Meeting Minutes

Where : Leyden Town Office

When: September 21, 2026

In Attendance

Members: Erica Jensen, Jeff Baker, Katherine DiMatteo

Audience: Michele Giarusso, Jack Golden, Jim Brodeur, Beth Kuzdeba, Liz Kidder via remote access

Time meeting called to order: 5:04 pm

Review of Minutes:

Motion: Katherine moved to accept the minutes of 9/14/26 with amendments **Second:** Jeff

Vote: Unanimous

Discussions:

1. A. Sign Contracts for Conway School of Landscape Design grant, Woodlands Partnership Grant and the amended contract from MassDOT for the West Leyden Road project adding in project management costs and the extension of the Complete Streets Grant.

All 3 board members signed with Jeff giving Michele permission to sign for him

B. Sign election Warrant for the special election on October 6 for the regional agreement for the Great River School.

Motion: Katherine moved to approve the special election warrant for October 6, 2026. **Second:** Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous.

2. Appointments

Motion: Katherine moved to appoint Isabel Whiston on the Council of Aging for 3 years.

Second: Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous

3. Jack Golden-Municipal Light Plant

Jack provided an update on Eversource pole licensing requirements, explaining that 62 new poles need to be licensed and move fiber from existing poles to the new ones. He explained that while Eversource will reimburse costs for reattachment work, the MLP must pay for pole licensing, with fees totaling \$3,100 to Eversource and \$638.60 to Verizon. The group agreed that Jack could sign the licensing documents on behalf of the MLP, and he noted the town's certificates of liability insurance would also be needed for the new poles. He will stop in and get this from Michele later.

The board discussed plans to address the upcoming Verizon service discontinuation, particularly focusing on phone line options for residents who don't want internet service. Jack will bring this topic up at the quarterly hilltown call with Whip City on September 30th to gather information about costs for installation and explore potential assistance programs for low-income residents. Jack also

mentioned that Verizon may be installing fiber in the area, though details about which specific towns are affected remain unclear.

4. Lotrec Property -Right of First Refusal

Jim Brodeur spoke as chair of the Planning Board that members are not eager for the town to purchase this property due to it being a single lot that couldn't be easily subdivided. The Select Board has no interest either and they have heard from the Conservation Commission that it is okay to not purchase.

Motion: Katherine moved to not exercise their right of first refusal and terminates those rights for lot 1 on a plan recorded with the Franklin County Registry of Deed and Plan Book 135, page 89, containing approximately 7.066 acres. **Second:** Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous.

5. Molly Miller -Town Clerk 3-month review

Molly shared her experience so far with election administration and her ongoing work on the annual report, including issues with accessing certain documents and obtaining burial agent status. She said the primary election went well. Sarah has been wonderful helping her learn the job and answering any questions she has had. The election workers were great.

Molly discussed focusing on improving documentation processes, particularly around conflict of interest in appointment letters and record management. She reported that an intern had completed organizing hard copies of marriage, death, and birth certificates into folders, though scanning was paused to preserve older documents. The main challenge identified was navigating the confusing computer filing system, which Molly is addressing by reorganizing files into more logical structures using OneDrive folders. The discussion concluded with concerns about managing the October 6th, Molly is planning to either be present or brief the warden on expected questions. She discussed improvements to the check-in process, suggesting the use of signage and sample ballots to make it easier for voters, and highlighted the need for clear communication with wardens and constables as this is a two-ballot voting on one day.

The website updating and conflict of interest organizing of elected/appointed officials' completion is something Molly will focus on after the November election.

5. Town Coordinator Updates

- Alice's new hard drive is ordered and should arrive by Thursday
- Digital equity grant -Michele is receiving two or more applications per household, something that was not thought about nor specified as one application per household. The board decided to extend the deadline to October 19th and send a new postcard clarifying that only one application per household will be accepted. They also discussed the possibility of virtual training. Michele will follow up with the virtual training and report back. The board also discussed there should be 2 different pulls of cards, one for low income and one just for over 62 years of age if not enough low income applicants.

6. Select Board Updates

- Erica would like Michele to email Lou Bordeaux in Bernardston and set up a fire advisory committee meeting.
- The board discussed the capital planning meeting on October 22 and asked if anyone from the Finance Committee is going, if not maybe a Select Board member should go with Michele.

8. Public Comment

Beth Kuzdeba was wondering if the board had seen the newspaper article where there is a proposed 60-unit subdivision in Greenfield and was wondering what this would do with the water supply. Another topic she brought up is the recent motorhome parked on town property. Beth raised concerns about how it was handled, while Erica explained that police properly followed procedures within their authority, including running plates and serving a 72-hour notice before removal. The board clarified that mobile homes used for human habitation fall under temporary housing regulations in the zoning bylaw, which requires Board of Health approval. This would also take some days to receive. Beth thinks to avoid this situation in the future we should have no overnight parking sign on town property as you come into town and on the land itself. The board was not in favor of this idea.

Liz mentioned there is a Leyden Emergency Management meeting this Thursday with Peter Shedd attending.

9. Agenda Planning

- Senator Jo Comerford

Next Meeting: September 28 at 9am

Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Katherine moved to adjourn at 6:50pm. **Second:** Jeff **Vote:** Unanimous

Submitted By: Michele Giarusso