TOWN OF LEYDEN
Meeting Minutes

Select Board Meeting Minutes

Where:	Leyden Town Office
When:	October 26, 2026

In Attendance

Members:	Erica Jensen, Jeff Baker, Katherine DiMatteo
Audience:	Michele Giarusso, Pam Brown, Jenny Campbell, Madison Schofield reporter for The Recorder

Time meeting called to order: 5:02 pm

Review of Minutes:
Motion: Katherine moved to accept the meeting minutes of October 10, 2026, as written. Jeff seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Discussions:

1. **Vote and sign various documents**
   - **A. November 3rd election warrant signed to post.** Select Board members signed the warrant and Jeff gave Michele permission to sign for him.
   - **B. Renewal of MassDOT 10 year contract.** This is routine every 10 years. Only Erica as chair had to sign.
   - **C. Complete Streets contract extension with FRCOG until January 31, 2027.** Signed by all 3 members , Jeff gave permission to Michele to sign his name for him.

2. **iPad distribution**
   Michele reported there were 10 total applications received. Five met the low-income criteria, those 5 people will automatically receive an iPad. The six remaining names will be pulled by Karin Parks and videotaped.

3. **Discussion of Chapter 70 comments to send to the Chapter 70 review commission**
   The following were discussed by the board as possible ideas. Katherine offered to write it up.
   - **A.** Reassess the formula where more affluent municipalities are reassessed as compared to rural communities.

B. EQV-decrease the EQV as having so much weight on the formula especially for small communities.
C. Have a clause to relook at the formula every so many years.
D. Minimum contribution should be factored differently especially with declining enrollments, or the state (DESE) should have guidelines for regionalization if a school district no longer can provide all the electives/courses that larger schools can offer. A disparity issue across the state.

4. Town Coordinator updates

- Michele shared more paperwork, needing signing that came in after the agenda was posted:
  A. Contract between the Library and American Heart Association-Erica signed
  B. Letter that Greenfield sent asking all the municipalities in Franklin County Tech School to copy and send to the MSBA and MA delegation of state officials asking MSBA to reconsider giving more money for the FCTS construction of the new school. Select Board members signed, and Jeff gave permission for Michele to sign his name.
  C. Gill Engineering Contract additional money to design a traffic pattern for alternating one lane traffic closure for West Leyden Road. Michele reported having discussions with MassDOT and our engineers' concerns about closing West Leyden Road for a length of time. Gill Engineering came up with an idea that maybe the construction companies will find to be acceptable and not increase the cost of construction. The construction company could do the steel column placements by having only one lane open at a time. These changes will all go in the bid. Neighbors would be notified about the lane closing and also the noise from the construction of the steel columns.

Motion: Katherine moved to approve the additional $9083.00 for Gill Engineering to design an additional alternating one lane traffic pattern for West Leyden Road. Jeff seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

- The special permit findings for the highway container buildings 20 day waiting period has expired with no one contesting the conditions of the Planning Board. Michele will have to file with the Registry of Deeds and can now fill out an application to the ZBA for a variance.
- Highway department office insulation-Michele said another audit would have to be carried out in order to have Green Communities pay for further insulation. When the audit of all town buildings was done the insulation had not fallen down.
- MLP budget: per the accountant the MLP FY 28 budget should be discussed with her before submitting to town meeting. The budget should not have such a large surplus. Erica will contact the accountant and set up a time for a meeting with her and Jack.
- DLS Capital Plan workshop-Michele reported that she and Katherine attended. The town has some work to do to complete a capital plan. This should be a living document that resides with the town and not just the finance committee.

Katherine commented maybe there should be an all department/committee capital plan meeting so everyone can explain what is needed and understand what others are needing. The plan should be for at least 5 years and possibly be projected out further depending on the needs.

5. Select Board Updates

- Katherine reported the Annual Report is just about complete and can be sent to the state.
- Katherine asked the status or road work on Eden Trail. Erica will ask Bill for an update on the status.
- Katherine would like to invite Doug Finn to discuss the BESS new guidelines and invite other committees and residents to attend.

Action: Michele will coordinate.

- Erica spoke to an Eversource representative about the new poles being placed in Leyden. This project is not complete, and we will be having more pole hearings.
- Erica reported at the Building Needs annual walkthrough of the highway department Bill identified he would like better lighting on the inside and outside the highway garage, this is estimated at $5500-$7000, new siding and new roof over heating oil tank on the side of the highway office building in addition to what was already passed at the annual town meeting. Also ventilation in the buildings and repairs to the salt shed were discussed.
  There is some confusion about who is the lead on getting the work done. It was decided that the Select Board would take the lead on the salt shed, and the building needs study committee would be asked to get a new bid on the ventilation. Katherine stated it looks like Chapter 90 may pay for these repairs. Erica also stated there needs to be a handrail at the town hall retaining wall in back of the electric charging stations. Dave Vreeland is going to work on a design and Michele can submit it to the FCTS welding department to see if they could construct.
  Erica asked about the ramp at the Town Hall – what is the status of the repairs?

7. Public Comment

Pam Brown and Jenny Campbell asked if they could have 2 more keys to the town hall for the Leyden cupboard. They are getting a new freezer, and this must be monitored. Erica asked if this could be done remotely and Pam said yes but someone would have to go to the town hall if something were to happen and be able to transfer food. Erica explained why the decision to give out keys is so controlled now, due to no one knowing how many keys had been given out in the past and then contents went missing. After discussion the board decided to give out one more key for the town hall to Pam Brown.

Pam also reported the hours were changing for the food pantry during the winter months and there will be gift certificates and a special opening on Nov. 21 for Thanksgiving food give away.

8. Agenda Planning

- EMS regionalization update
- Updates from meetings attended during the previous week

Next Meeting: October 26 at 9am.

Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Katherine moved to adjourn at 7:12pm. **Second:** Jeff **Vote: Unanimous**

Submitted By: Michele Giarusso