Liberty Ledge/Sewataro Advisory Committee Virtual Meeting

6:30 PM September 24, 2026
Committee Members present:
G. Atkeson, D Henkels, K Bell, R Gargeya, D Dineen, J Pincus

Also Present: James Goudie-Murray, Management Analyst

Roll Call:

Bell-present; Gargeya-present; Granger-present; Henkels-present; Pincus-present; Dineen-present.

At the conclusion of the roll call, Chair Dave Henkels called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

The Liberty Ledge Sewataro Advisory Committee held their 15th meeting to review and approve draft minutes from previous meetings and discuss recommendations for the town-owned property. The committee reviewed and made amendments to the minutes from July 23rd and September 10th, including clarifications about accessibility questions, survey responses, and grammatical corrections. They then examined recommendations for the property, focusing on long-term planning and development oversight, with extensive discussion about how to phrase recommendations regarding the camp operational area, environmental improvements, and future use considerations. The committee debated terminology around "development," "capital investment," and "conservation" to avoid potential misinterpretations, ultimately deciding to remove "conservation" and use more precise language around environmental improvements and public access. They also discussed the need for regular reporting and evaluation of camp operations beyond the current monthly newsletter format, to include data and metrics on programming benefits to the community.

The meeting, which was the 15th session of the Liberty Ledge Sewataro Advisory Committee, began with roll call and chair comments from Dave. Kay requested that closed captions be enabled for the meeting. The group discussed upcoming events, including a public input session on October 8th and a report due to the Select Board by October 31st. Jennifer declined to volunteer as minutes recorder, leading Dave to volunteer for the role and noted that five of the previous meeting minutes have yet to have been completed.

Minutes Amendment Review

The committee reviewed and discussed amendments to the draft minutes from July 23rd and September 10th. They clarified details about paths connecting buildings and public property accessibility, confirming these topics would be addressed in a separate accessibility study rather

than in the current survey. The group made several specific changes to the minutes, including adding parentheses for "other" in option 8, clarifying that committee questions were sent to town staff and KP Law, and removing language about appearing unbiased before September 10th. The committee approved the amended minutes of the July 23rd meeting.

Additionally, the meeting focused on reviewing and amending minutes from a September 10th meeting of the Liberty Ledge Sewataro Advisory Committee. Jennifer identified and corrected formatting issues with survey results, changing "pursue" to "explore" after discussion and formatting responses as bullets. The committee reviewed resolutions from the COA and Housing Trust, with Debbie emphasizing the importance of clearly distinguishing their property evaluation study from any development considerations, noting it should focus on understanding what exists on the property rather than its suitability for specific uses.

Ms. Bell moved to accept the minutes of July 23, 2026, as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dineen and passed unanimously via roll-call vote.

Ms. Bell moved to accept the minutes of September 10, 2026 as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pincus and passed unanimously via roll-call vote.

Town Property Development Recommendations

The committee discussed input (resolutions) from the Council on Aging with Granger clarifying that their recommendations would speak for themselves without needing direct responses to specific questions. James presented a red-lined version of the draft recommendation document, with the committee focusing on reviewing the long-term recommendations section. The group debated terminology around "development," with Debbie expressing concern that the term might be interpreted as referring to housing, and the committee ultimately agreed to use "capital investment" instead to avoid potential misinterpretation.

Camp Operational Area Definition Updates

The team discussed and refined language around defining the camp operational area, ultimately deciding to change "use the RFP to define it" to "reference the defined camp operational area" in the next RFP. They agreed that the five-year contract extension period should be used to determine if the current camp season boundary works for both the camp and town, with the ability to define the camp usage area during this time. The group also decided to remove the word "conservation" from the document since it was clear this was not conservation land.

Property Use Terminology Updates

The team discussed terminology for describing property uses, ultimately deciding to modify paragraph 11 to read "available for public access, municipal programming, or other future uses, or suitable for environmental improvement." They removed a redundant sentence about management responsibility from paragraph 12 and agreed the scope of future agreements should reflect demonstrated camp operational needs. The group concluded that "scope" appropriately encompasses both land and facilities when referring to the RFP.

Camp Operator Reporting Requirements Enhancement

The group discussed enhancing reporting requirements for the camp operator, with Debbie proposing more detailed data collection on program participation and benefits to the public. They agreed to recommend adding a new paragraph to the management agreement requiring regular check-ins between the town and operator, with Kay suggesting the inclusion of data-focused reporting rather than just monthly newsletters. Jennifer raised concerns about setting long-term goals that might need to change over time, leading to a discussion about how the agreement could allow for annual reviews and modifications while maintaining regular assessment of goals and outcomes.

Long-Term Lease Agreement Discussion

The committee discussed the structure of a long-term lease agreement for camp operations, with participants debating the level of definitiveness needed in the recommendation. James suggested making the recommendation more definitive about supporting a long-term lease, while Granger noted the committee's internal disagreement on this issue. The discussion centered on the importance of flexible expectations, regular reporting mechanisms, and ensuring the town receives promised benefits from the operator/property usage, with participants emphasizing the need for ongoing reassessment rather than a rigid long-term agreement.

Long-Term Agreement Structure Discussion

The group discussed structuring a long-term agreement with formal checkpoints for reviewing and potentially revising terms, particularly to allow for capital investments by the camp operator. They agreed that any additional community benefits, such as after-school programs or vacation camps, should be clearly defined in future agreements with regular check-ins to ensure both parties meet their obligations. Debbie and Jennifer emphasized the importance of being explicit about expectations and tracking deliverables to avoid past misunderstandings, while Dave highlighted the need for collaboration and ongoing review processes.

Camp Management Agreement Discussion

The committee discussed concerns about a long-term management agreement for Camp Sewataro, with Radha and Jennifer emphasizing the need for periodic check-in points and due diligence throughout the process. Scott Brody, the camp operator, defended their performance, clarifying that while many ideas were proposed in the RFP response, the final agreement reflected the town's specific priorities and needs. The committee agreed to take time to further consider the issue and revisit it at their next meeting on the 1st, with Kay emphasizing the importance of ensuring the Select Board includes community benefits in the management agreement.

Property Agreement Language Refinements

The group discussed language regarding property use and long-term agreements. Kay initially proposed removing a word she felt weakened by the statement about property size but agreed to keep it after Jennifer's explanation about potential uses. The team reviewed and refined language in section 13, removing the specific "next five years" timeframe and adding references to municipal needs beyond just community input. James explained that contract provisions for ending agreements are common, particularly in long-term agreements like cell tower contracts, though the group ultimately decided to consider this language for section 12 rather than section 13.

Property Development Recommendations Discussion

The group discussed recommendations 12, 13, and 14 regarding development on the property. Dave emphasized the need for mutual cooperation between the town and camp operator for long-term projects like the pavilion. Jennifer and Debbie raised concerns about language in the recommendations limiting development to only already developed areas, arguing this could preclude future options for coexistence between camp and town uses. The group agreed to remove specific language about not building in undeveloped areas and instead focus on evaluating development in the context of broader town goals, with plans to continue this discussion at the next meeting on the 1st.

Public Input Session Planning

The committee discussed plans for the upcoming public input session on the 8th, which will cover both near-term and long-term recommendations. James outlined a proposed structure for the 2-hour session, suggesting that committee members present each recommendation followed by public comment, with a total of 55 minutes allocated for presenting and discussing all recommendations combined. The group agreed to handle questions and comments in real-

time during the session, with the understanding that detailed responses would be addressed in their follow-up meeting on the 15th.

Community Recommendations Presentation Planning

The group discussed plans for an upcoming meeting on the 15th where they will present recommendations to the community. They agreed to organize public feedback by first presenting all recommendations and then allowing comments on each one, with time limits to manage the 40-minute feedback period. The team assigned volunteers to read specific recommendations, with James coordinating the distribution of clean draft versions and recommendation assignments to all members. Additional work remains in sections including public input and findings, which will be addressed in their next meeting on October 1st.

Ms. Dineen moved to adjourn the meeting of the Liberty Ledge Sewataro Advisory Committee. The motion passed unanimously via roll-call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM