

**Town of Atkinson
Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 1, 2023**

Attendance:

Members Present

Beth Cacciotti, Chair
William Baldwin, Vice Chair
Gregory S. Spero
David Paquette

Robert Worden

Others Present

Karen Wemmelmann, Recorder
John Apple, Town Administrator
Monique Chretien, Conservation Commission
Paul Wainwright, Chair, Conservation
Commission

6:00 PM Open Public Meeting:

Chair Cacciotti opened the May 1, 2023 public meeting of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen at 6:00 PM. Mr. Wainwright led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Appearances:

- Turtle Signage – Monique Chretien, Conservation Commission

Ms. Chretien thanked the Board and apologized for having to postpone her appearance at the last meeting. She introduced herself as a three year member of the Conservation Commission. She reported that the Conservation Commission has been having many discussions about turtles being killed by cars on several roads in Atkinson. Some are endangered turtles; some are threatened types and some who do not make endangered or threatened status but are still being injured or killed. The number one cause of death of turtles is being run over by cars. It is a concern because turtles take a long time to reach sexual maturity and if they are killed before they are able to reproduce, their numbers dwindle even more. The Conservation Commission would like to help decrease the number of turtles being run over and raise awareness of where turtles are crossing so hopefully people will slow down.

The Conservation Commission has purchased some highly reflective turtle crossing signs. Ms. Chretien gave the Selectmen a map of the locations. Some of the locations were brought to her attention by residents. Mr. Wainwright has frequently seen turtles being run over and killed on Maple Avenue, also. She is requesting to put up two signs on Maple Avenue, one in each direction; two signs on Island Pond Road which is very heavily trafficked; and one sign on Brushwood, which is one way so only one sign is needed. Two signs are needed for Hall Farm Road but only six signs were purchased because they were not aware of the problem on Brushwood. Rather than purchase one more sign for Hall Farm Road this year and pay for shipping for one sign, they may wait until next year. The Conservation Commission has six signs at the moment and she is

requesting the Board of Selectmen allow the Conservation Commission to erect turtle crossing signs at the above stated locations. Mr. Sullivan, Manager of the Department of Public Works (“DPW”) has agreed to assist. The email from him is included in her packet.

Discussion: Member Worden remarked that he has also noticed the problem on Maple Avenue. He advised not to turn the turtles around, bring them to where they want to go. Mr. Wainwright explained that turtles can live 70-80 years and sexual maturity comes as teenagers. Females go back to the same spot every year to lay eggs. A Blandings Turtle is laying eggs on his lawn, she was probably laying eggs on his property long before the house was built in 1985. Turtles need to avoid being run over for 15-16 years before they start to reproduce.

Member Worden thinks it is a great idea. It is great to raise public awareness of turtles. Anyway to get people to slow down on Atkinson streets is good. People have trouble keeping to the 30 mph speed limit. He is very much in favor, not only from a conservation standpoint, but from a road safety standpoint, it might help with the speeding problem. Mr. Wainwright informed the Selectmen that the Conservation Commission hopes to have the signs up in May, June and July, because that is turtle nesting season when they are really on the move. They will either take the signs off the poles or take the poles out after nesting season, that has not been decided.

Chair Cacciotti polled the Board and there were no more comments. Chair Cacciotti remarked that it is a fantastic idea. She loves the idea of putting the signs up and taking them down. Mr. Wainwright agreed that the signs lose impact if they are left up all the time. She agrees with Member Worden, there was a long chat on Facebook about speeding and trash so anything to make people aware and slowdown is good.

Member Worden made a motion to accept the proposal by the Conservation Commission to enact the turtle signage program as described. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion. All in favor. Vote: 5/0/0. Motion passes.

New Business:

➤ Committee Board Appointments

Mr. Apple stated that this topic is continued from last week so the different committees and commissions could meet to discuss possible candidates and the Board could receive their recommendations.

First are appointments for building inspectors. These are current - Brian Boyle, Building Inspector for one year until April 2024; David Pallaria and Shawn McKeen Electrical Inspectors for one year until April 2024; William Ashford, Gas and Plumbing Inspector for one year until April 2024; and Michael Dorman as Health Officer and Assistant Building Inspector for one year until April 2024. These candidates would receive his

recommendation and the recommendation of the Land Use Office Administrator, Ms. Sue Coppeta.

The recommendations for the Recreation Commission are: Jason Lewis, Chris Pignatiello and David Spera as regular members for three years until April 2026; and Trishia Flahive and Stephen Moore as alternates for three years until April 2026.

The recommendations for the Zoning Board of Adjustment are Scott Sullivan as a regular member for three years until April 2026 and Guy Wetherbee as an alternate for three years until April 2026.

The Conservation Commission met last meeting and accepted Mr. Murray in an alternate spot. The appointment should have been Sandra Cannon as alternate for one year until April 2024.

Member Worden made a motion:

To appoint Brian Boyle Building Inspector, for one year to April 24; David Pallaria and Shawn McKeen Electrical Inspectors for one year until April 2024; William Ashford Gas and Plumbing for one year to April 24; and Michael Dorman as Health Officer and Assistant Building Inspector for one year until April 2024.

To appoint Sandra Cannon as an alternate in the Conservation Commission for one year until April 2024.

To appoint Jason Lewis as a regular member of the Recreation Commission for three years until April 2026, and Chris Pignatiello, the current chairman, to be continued, for three years until April 2026; and, to appoint David Spera as regular member and Treasurer of the Recreation Commission for three years until April 2026; he is currently secretary. To appoint Trishia Flahive and Stephen Moore as alternates for three years until April 2026.

To appoint Scott Sullivan as a regular member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment for three years to April 2026 and Guy Wetherbee as an alternate for three years to April 2026.

Member Greg Spero seconded the motion. All in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

➤ **Live Free or Die 5000 Event**

Chair Cacciotti explained that Mr. Richard Magoon has requested a permit for the Live Free or Die 5000 event and requested Mr. Apple inform the Selectmen.

Mr. Apple stated that this is a great annual event for the Town and has run for 10-11 consecutive years except during COVID. DPW and first responders have no conflict

with the date listed and it has been incorporated into their liability insurance for that date. The date is July 15, 2023 and will last from 6:00 am until noon.

Member Worden made a motion to approve the permit, facility request and reservation application by Mr. Richard Magoon to hold the Live Free or Die 5000 event on July 15, 2023 from 6:00 am until noon, pending review of the final plan by the emergency management committee Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion.

Discussion: Chair Cacciotti requested that the applicant for the event make every effort to notify residents living on the closed streets as to where and when roads will be shut down. Member Worden agreed, the event was held last year, and there were signs. Chair Cacciotti recommended that signs be put up a week ahead of time to give people notice. Mr. Apple stated there would be an emergency management committee meeting with all departments involved at least a week before the event and the event holders would be advised to put up signage at that meeting.

Member Worden made a revised motion to approve the permit, facility request and reservation application by Mr. Richard Magoon to hold the Live Free or Die 5000 event on July 15, 2023 from 6:00 am until noon, pending review of the final plan by the emergency management committee and recommending signage. Member Spero seconded the motion. All in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

Discussion: Chair Cacciotti asked about promotion on the Town web site and Mr. Apple stated he believes it is promoted somewhere, but not on the Town website. It is a private, charitable event. He will discuss with the Magoons if they want more advertising.

➤ CIP Committee / Building Needs

Mr. Apple explained that this is one of the committees up for reappointment. There has been discussion regarding developing a mission statement for the building needs committee and to reinvigorate it with new goals and a mission after they had successfully completed a building needs assessment in 2020. Looking at the mission and discussing it with the past chair of the committee, he found the mission aligns with what a capital improvement plan committee would do. Looking back further into Town history, in 2012 a warrant was passed to allow the Board of Selectmen to appoint a capital improvement plan committee after the adoption or update of a master plan. A master plan is being developed at this time. This would be a good time to develop a mission for a capital improvement committee, develop an advertisement for members and to start the initial stages. Mr. Apple recommends developing a mission for a capital improvement committee in place of reappointing a building needs committee at this time.

Discussion: Member Worden would like to see a member or two members of the building needs committee as part of a capital improvement committee because they

have been through the process. Also, advertise to the public for those who would have an interest. Member Worden asked if members of the Master Plan could be members. Mr. Apple stated they may be part of it, if not as capital improvement committee members. He would like to gain interest from different folks with different backgrounds pertaining to strategic planning and capital improvement. Member Worden suggested including master plan people and building needs committee people as well as opening it to the public to find people who have expertise in these types of endeavors and move forward with names and recommendations.

Mr. Apple pointed out the last capital improvement plan for the Town was adopted in 2000 for a span from 2000 to 2009.

No more comment. All other members agreed.

Chair Cacciotti thanked Mr. Apple and read the definition “capital improvement is something that has a high cost and useful life of several years in contrast with regular operations and maintenance which have lower costs and occur on a more frequent basis. Capital improvements would include infrastructure projects, land acquisition, buildings or engineering studies for any of those projects.” She would like to see volunteers from Town that have a background in some of these bigger projects.

The work of the building needs committee did is invaluable, but without a charter for them now and knowing that a capital improvement plan should happen right after a Master Plan, she agrees with Mr. Apple that it is the right time. Once that is in place the Board can revisit and look at building needs which would be more long term maintenance as recommended by the capital improvement plan committee or carrying out strategic programs and projects.

Chair Cacciotti asked if Mr. Apple is requesting a motion to create a capital improvement plan committee.

Discussion: Member Spero asked if the building needs committee would be dissolved. Mr. Apple said no, he looked back at the history, if it was ever created it was by a warrant article. He believes it was created to build Town Hall in 1988 or 1989. He would hold off on reappointing them. There are different focal groups for the police station and if there were a capital improvement plan committee as well as a building needs committee it would take a lot of people from a small pool. He would hold off on building needs until they have a mission. A capital improvement plan committee would be more helpful at present. The master plan will steer the Board as to future capital improvements. Mr. Apple stated that the master plan should be completed in November. It is an 18 month process.

Vice Chair Baldwin made a motion to create a capital improvement plan committee. Member Spero seconded the motion. Vote: 5/0/0. All in favor.

Old Business:

➤ ARPA – Fire Department Radios

Mr. Apple explained the need. The Fire Department (“FD”) encumbered funds at the end of 2022 to do some radio maintenance and to purchase a much needed repeater for the command post vehicle. The vendors made an initial quote, then at the beginning of 2023 they came back and said there was a misquote because another piece of equipment is needed. They gave another quote which is also included in the package. The difference between the original quote and the second quote is \$3,217.36. This amount will deplete the FD communication budget for the year.

At the same time the Board had approved the DPW radio project in ARPA funds not to exceed \$81,000. The DPW was under budget on that project. Mr. Apple recommends that the extra amount needed to fulfill the FD repeater project be absorbed into the \$81,000 originally approved by the Board for the DPW radio project. Both are done by the same vendor and they would bill us within that same bill.

Member Worden made a motion to expend \$3,217.36 from the ARPA radio project fund to cover the final cost of the Fire Department repeater. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion. Vote: 5/0/0. All in favor.

➤ Fire Warden Appointment

Mr. Apple explained that last month the Board received the resignation notice from former Fire Chief Murphy from his long tenure as Town Fire Warden. Chief Murray has informed Mr. Apple that many towns recommend that the acting Fire Chief also act as Fire Warden. Mr. Apple recommends that Chief Murray be appointed as Fire Warden to fill the open position.

Member Spero made a motion to appoint Chief Murray as Fire Warden. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Apple informed Chair Cacciotti that the position lasts until the warden resigns.

All in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

Member Spero thanked Chief Murphy for his years as fire warden. Chair Cacciotti remarked that the Fire Warden is in charge of forest fires. Atkinson does not have many fires, but it has a lot of forest. It is an important job. It makes sense to have the person most aware of tools and resources to be in charge. Vice Chair Baldwin informed the Board that the Town has deputy wardens as well. There may not be any fires in Atkinson, but deputy wardens have gone to other locations to help with forest fires.

Assessing:

➤ 2023 Veterans’ Tax Credit

- Map 13 Lot 87-17 Rec: Grant \$2,000
- 2023 Elderly Exemption:
 - Map 4 Lot 48 Rec: Grant \$150,000

Vice Chair Baldwin made a motion to accept the 2023 Veterans' Tax Credit grant for Map 13 Lot 87-17 in the amount of \$2,000 and the 2023 Elderly Exemption grant for Map 4 Lot 48 in the amount of \$150,000. Member Worden seconded the motion. All in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

Liaison Report:

Historical Society: Member Paquette informed the Board that the Historical Society is beginning fund raising for the Center School. He requested people look for it and contribute.

Police Department Building Steering Committee: Vice Chair Baldwin met with the Committee. It was a very productive meeting. It was their first meeting and going forward, the committee meetings will be televised so the public has access to view them at their leisure. First and most important is the mission statement, second the committee selected Mr. Sam Butler as secretary, and he will do the minutes. Vice Chair Baldwin chairs the Police Department Building Steering Committee with Chief Crowley. Captain Nick Fiset is Vice Chair. All committee members bring crucial experience and knowledge to the committee. There is a lot of project management experience, there is one engineer with experience building commercial buildings, and members with finance experience.

It is important to know that the committee looked at 10 properties for the police station and eliminated all but one, a garage at the north end of 121. The Town owns the property. Most people would like the Police Station closer to the center of the Town as would the committee, but the Town is blessed to have this as the proposed site because it is town owned. Harriman is the company that did the drawings for the new building. The proposed station will fit on the property and the neighbors are on board,

Now the committee is getting the message to the public. The committee will host open houses for questions at Town Hall. There are drawings on the easels in the meeting room. There will be an open house on Saturday and one in the evening. There will be arrangements with Chief Crowley and Captain Fiset to do tours of the current police station, and people can see why it is not adequate, there is a lack of space and lack of usage of the building. There are a lot of issues with the building, there is asbestos, the heating system was replaced for the second time, there are water issues, and it is not a good work environment. It is not a suitable police station. The need is there and now is the time to tell residents. They are trying to build a new police station that will last for 30 years. Public safety is important for the community. Most residents he has spoken to

are on board. There will be a presentation on May 15, 2023 at the Board of Selectmen meeting by Harriman on the project. The presentation will show the building, the size and how it will place on the land. The presentation will be held at Town Hall. The next committee meeting will be May 18th.

Chair Cacciotti stated that the new police station was featured prominently in the previous master plan. This is something long overdue.

Recreation Commission: Member Worden reported that the recreation commission appointments have solidified. They have started on the pickle ball courts this week and will come back in June. They have started the posts and will come back in June, fields are looking much better with the opening, they are all trimmed, the parks are cleaned, and the bathrooms are sharp. They are off to a good start now; the teams are happy and doing well both at Woodlock and Collins. An AED which was received as a donation from Trinity was added to Collins and now there is an AED at both public facilities for the first time.

Senior Transportation: Comparing the first quarter of 2023 to 2021, there were 217 rides in January 2023 and 102 rides in January 2021; there were 177 rides in February of 2023 and there were 98 rides in February 2021; there were 205 rides in March of 2023 and there were 166 in March of 2021; and in April of 2023 there were 92 rides and there were 146 rides in April of 2021. Actual rides are 599 with 63 possible days, four cars, one handicap van and 10 drivers. The transportation division has been extremely busy. The new team is doing a great job.

Conservation Commission: There will be a public meeting on May 18, 2023 at 8:00 PM at Town Hall regarding the finalization of the purchase of the Lang Land. A formal vote will be held after the public hearing.

Events coming up for the public are:

- Garden for Wildlife, Natural Landscaping and a Better Backyard to be run by Pete McVay and Scott Kurchel and held at the public library on Thursday, May 18, 2023 from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM.
- A talk on the benefits of selective timber harvesting by Charlie Mareno, the Town Forester. It will be held at the Moore Town Forest on Sunday, June 1, 2023 at 1:00 PM. There have been a lot of questions regarding selective harvesting of woods and why. Mr. Mareno is the expert.
- A talk on Plant and tree identification on June 24, 2023 at 9:00 am at Woodlock Park on the trails by the County Forester, Greg Jordan .

Member Worden thanks the Conservation Commission for arranging all this.

Fire Department: Member Spero attended Fire Department training on Monday. They spoke about trauma training. One of the representatives from Parkland Medical Center came in and reviewed how the State handles trauma training and how hospitals handle it. The meeting was fully staffed and there was great attendance. The training went very well. There was a meet and greet prior to the training with the State representative who handles State training for fire departments. It was good to hear about her planning and what she wants to do. They are doing great things at the Fire Department

Cemetery Trustees: Member Spero reported that he met with Sue Killam who is a Cemetery Trustee and she gave him a tour of the cemetery. There are a lot of issues with fencing and trees that may need to come down. He would like to meet with Mr. Apple in the next couple of weeks to come up with a plan to present to the Board. The cemetery needs some attention. It is one of the most beautiful parts of town. A lot of work has been done, but more still needs to be done. There are four sections where the fence has come down and trees have fallen on it. A plow hit the fence by the library, that needs to be fixed. One area needs to be regroomed so it can be set up to accept grave sites. Trustee Killam explained a lot about the history.

Library Trustees: Mr. Apple and Member Spero met with Karen Gelato, Chair of Library Trustees and got updated on the garden. Concerts will be held outside this summer and will be advertised soon. The Library Trustees want to replace rugs and take care of some maintenance issues. He and Mr. Apple will work on a plan and present it to the Board.

Last, the school would like to have second graders do two visits to Town Hall. The first one would be on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 from 9:15 to 10:00 am and from 10:15 to 11:00 am and another one on Thursday, May 25th from 10:30 to 11:15 am.

Mr. Apple stated that no motion was needed, just an acknowledgement. He stated that visits to different departments in Town are coordinated by the school

Department of Public Works: Chair Cacciotti stated that the highway department is heading into paving season. Mr. Apple did a drive along and he said the roads look great. It is going well. They have put out a notice for an additional person for the DPW.

Member Worden informed Chair Cacciotti that the DPW did a great job with the rainstorm. There were 3 inches of rain. Maple Avenue got washed out and Providence got washed out. DPW did a great job with the clean out. It was a tough storm. Continental was there to help with the streets, too.

Member Spero informed the Board that Member Paquette had registered all the grave sites at Atkinson Cemetery on Find A Grave, website, and photos of memorials were added. Several years ago, Member Paquette went in for his own genealogy and found that Atkinson cemetery had 700-800 monuments on the web site and only 40% had pictures. Member Paquette photographed all the memorials at the Atkinson Cemetery

and added them to Find A Grave. He recommended Find A Grave as a good place to start genealogy research.

Member Spero thanked him. Ms. Killam had informed Member Spero of his work. Member Paquette has helped a lot of people with their genealogy research.

Donations:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| ➤ Elder Services Transportation Fund | \$51.00 |
| ➤ Cemetery Beautification Fund | \$50.00 |
| ➤ Conservation-Donation Fund | \$100.00 |

Member Worden made a motion to accept the donation of \$51.00 to the Elder Services Transportation Fund. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion. Vote: 5/0/0. All in favor.

Member Spero made a motion to accept the donation of \$50.00 to the Cemetery Beautification Fund. Member Worden seconded the motion. Vote: 5/0/0. All in favor.

Member Spero made a motion to accept the donation of \$100.00 to the Conservation Donation Fund. Vote: 5/0/0. All in favor.

Discussion: The donation will go to phase one construction of accessible trails in the Slade Town Forest. Member Worden remarked that there will be a major push of fundraising to raise \$25,000 in order to complete phase one and show a full commitment to the trail in order to apply for an \$81,000 grant to complete phase 2. These are ARPA funds.

Member Worden seconded the motion. Vote: 5/0/0. All in favor.

All donations were accepted.

Approval of Minutes:

- | | |
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| ➤ 8/15/2022 | Nonpublic Minutes |
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Member Worden made a motion to accept the nonpublic minutes on Topic 1 of the August 15, 2022 meeting of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen without sealing. Member Spero seconded the motion. Vote 4/0/1 with Member Paquette abstaining.

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|-------------|-------------------|
| ➤ 8/15/2022 | Nonpublic Minutes |
|-------------|-------------------|

Member Worden made a motion to accept the nonpublic minutes on Topic 2 of the August 15, 2022 meeting of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen without sealing.

Discussion: Vice Chair Baldwin asked if the matter were still on going and recommended sealing the minutes for 180 days. Chair Cacciotti agreed.

Member Worden amended his motion to accept the nonpublic minutes on Topic 2 of the August 15, 2022 meeting of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen with sealing for 180 days. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/1 with one member abstaining. The motion passes

➤ 8/29/2022 Nonpublic Minutes

Member Worden made a motion to accept the nonpublic minutes of the August 29, 2022 meeting of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen without sealing. Member Spero seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/1 with one member abstaining.

➤ 9/19/2022 Nonpublic Minutes

Member Worden made a motion to accept the nonpublic minutes of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen without sealing. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/1 with one member abstaining.

➤ 3/06/2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Member Worden made a motion to accept the regular meeting minutes of the March 6, 2023 meeting of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion. All in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

➤ 4/17/2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Member Worden made a motion to accept the April 17, 2023 regular meeting minutes of the Atkinson Board of Selectmen with the following amendments:

On page 2, amend the co-chairs to Captain Nick Fiset and Co-Chair Nick Hall; on Page 14, change Tykes Towers to Tikes Towers. Member Paquette stated the date on bottom of page must be changed to April 17, 2023. Vice Chair Baldwin seconded the motion. All in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

FYI: None

Future Agenda:

Next Selectmen's meeting will be held on Monday, May 15, 2023 at 6:00 PM. Harriman will be presenting information on the drawing for the new police station.

Non-Public Meeting:

- RSA 91-A:3,II (a)
- RSA 91-A:3,II (c) – Topic 1
- RSA 91-A:3,II (c) – Topic 2
- RSA 91-A:3,II (1)

Vice Chair Baldwin made a motion to go into a nonpublic meeting under: RSA 91-A:3,II (a) – the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting or (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted; RSA 91-A:3,II (c) Topic 1 and Topic 2 - matters which if discussed in public will likely affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the Board unless such person requests an open meeting to include any application for assistance, tax payment or waiver of any fee or fine or any levies based on ability to pay or poverty of the applicant; and RSA 91-A:3,II (1) – consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel either in writing or oral to one or more members of the public body even when counsel is not present. Member Spero seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Member Spero – yes, Member Worden, yes, Member Paquette, yes; Vice Chair Baldwin; yes; and, Chair Cacciotti, yes. Vote: 5/0/0. All in favor.

Adjournment:

The public hearing was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Wemmelmann, Recording Secretary

Beth Cacciotti, Chair

William M. Baldwin Vice Chair

David Paquette

Gregory S. Spero

Robert Worden