

**ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023**

Members:

Sue Killam, Chair (present)

Vice Chair Turell (not present)

Ted Stewart (not present)

Paul Wainwright, (not present)

John Ottow (present)

(Master Plan Team)

Heidi Mahoney (present)

(present)

Bill Baldwin– Selectman Ex Officio (not present)

Others Present

Julie LaBranche, Planner (present by telephone)

Karen Wemmelmann, Recorder (present)

Sue Coppeta, Planning & Zoning Administrator (not present)

Call to Order:

Chair Killam called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Chair Killam, Member Ottow and Member Mahoney are present.

Public Hearings: NONE

New/Old Business:

Housing Grant Application: Julie LaBranche

Ms. LaBranche appeared on the phone. She informed the Board that she sent out a draft of her survey on line and asked if anyone had attempted it. Member Mahoney read through it. Ms. LaBranche will make some changes. Member Ottow did not see it.

She stated that she has not done a lot of publicity. She will be working with the Planning Administrator to launch the housing needs page on the Planning Board page. The link for the housing needs survey will be on the Planning Board page as well. She will start publicizing the housing needs project more heavily after the Community Forum. The housing needs project survey and the survey will launch on April 12th. She will submit an article for the Carriage Town News next Thursday for the following week.

The web page will launch, some flyers will be put up and information on Facebook will be posted for the housing needs project soon. She has spent some time reviewing the Rockingham Planning Commission and the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission regional housing needs assessments. Atkinson is on the border of both regions and has had cases that involved Salem, NH in the past.

She will have a table at the Community Forum on Tuesday. She will be there for both sessions. There will be a poster for the housing needs survey and printed copies of it. She will also have her laptop set up so people can fill out the survey on line. She will have copies of the flyer there too.

The survey will be launched and there will be promotion. There will be a box in Town Hall for surveys. She is hoping to get 10-12 people who are interested in being part of a discussion group. She prefers the term discussion group rather than focus group because focus group has connotations of picking a particular group of people.

She will keep the housing survey open for 4 weeks. The last week of the survey will be the first week of May. Survey Monkey will analyze the data. If there is not much response to the request to be part of the discussion group, she will do some outreach.

Master Plan Update: Member Ottow

The mailer for the Master Plan Committee went out last week. There are multiple pages on Facebook regarding the Master Plan update. The Selectmen gave the committee full access to all their on line resources to advertise for the forum and the focus groups following that. He has been working with the Planning Administrator and the Assistant Town Manager. There is a Master Plan page and a Planning Board page which will be updated on April 11th. He showed the Board an example the proposed pages. The Master Plan page will be highlighted and there will be a button leading to the housing survey. Focus groups will be conducted. There are 7 different 2x3 foot posters. There will be seven tables as well as a table for the housing needs project at the forum.

There will be another month after the forum for the master plan committee to continue their marketing efforts. There will be surveys at the library and people have already been asking for them. The Committee is on schedule and the process is going well.

Ms. LaBranche left the meeting.

July 19, 2023 Regular Meeting

Chair Killam informed the Board that the Station Manager will not be present for the regular meeting July 19, 2023. Options for a recorded meeting will be July 12, 2023 and July 26, 2023. The ZBA meets on July 12, 2023 and the Conservation Commission meets on July 26, 2023. There is not much going on, but they have to have a meeting by law. The Board members present agreed to hold the meeting on July 19, 2023 without television coverage.

Minutes: February 15, 2023, March 1, 2023, March 3, 2023, March 22, 2023

February 15, 2023:

Member Ottow made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2023 Atkinson Planning Board meeting as amended. Member Mahoney seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 3/0/0.

March 1, 2023

Member Ottow made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2023 Atkinson Planning Board meeting as amended. Member Mahoney seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 3/0/0.

March 3, 2023

Member Ottow made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2023 Atkinson Planning Board meeting as amended. Member Mahoney seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 3/0/0.

March 22, 2023

Member Ottow made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2023 Atkinson Planning Board meeting as amended. Member Mahoney seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 3/0/0.

Procedures for Planning Board Alternates

Chair Killam stated that by statute the Planning Board can have up to five alternates. She has never seen the Board carry more than three and it has always been sufficient. She spoke to Member Wainwright and he felt that the alternates should be appointed in April at the same time the Selectmen make appointments to other Boards and Commissions. Chair Killam stated that it may take up to a year to find alternates. The terms are three years by statute, the same as for regular Board members. The terms do not have to be staggered.

The question is how should alternates be found, vetted and decided upon. The alternate will be the sixth member at the call of the Chair if a regular member cannot participate or vote and must be ready and able to sit on the Board and vote. It is very important for alternates to attend meetings. Member Ottow stated he was an alternate for two years and spent two years learning. Also, if you are an alternate, your voice is still heard.

An article written by one of the attorneys at NHMA recommends that alternates sit and be part of the conversation only when a regular member cannot participate. Chair Killam has always been comfortable with alternates participating. According to the RSA, there are no provisions for alternates to participate. The RSA is 673:3.

Chair Killam stated that the Board needs its alternates and they get called on frequently. There is one applicant who is interested in sitting on the Board as an alternate. Chair Killam has spoken with her. She does not recall the Selectmen interviewing a candidate when they appointed alternates for the Planning Board. Now, the Planning Board appoints its own alternates.

Chair Killam asked how the Board members present felt about calling potential alternates before the Board for an interview. Member Ottow stated any member of the Board should be able to recommend an alternate. Members Mahoney and Ottow stated that they felt an interview before the entire Board was not necessary and that a phone interview by a member of the Board or the Chair would be sufficient. They all agreed that the procedure should not be

too intimidating or arduous. Member Ottow stated the timing may be good because of the publicity about the master plan.

Chair Killam informed the Board about the potential alternate. The person interested is already an alternate on the Conservation Commission. Member Wainwright is the Conservation Commission Chair. Only one person can be a member of the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board. The candidate expressed an interest in resigning from the Conservation Commission and becoming an alternate for the Planning Board. Chair Killam stated that she seems genuinely interested in a Planning Board seat and asked if the Board felt she should be offered a seat. Hannah Rizzo is the candidate.

Chair Killam feels it should be a quorum vote for the full Board to appoint alternates. Members Ottow and Mahoney agreed. Member Ottow stated he will be prepared to make a motion that an alternate can be nominated by any member of the Planning Board.

Member Ottow stated he would like commitments from Planning Board members as to what sessions of the forum they could attend on Tuesday . Member Ottow will be at both sessions. Chair Killam stated that she would be at both sessions. Member Mahoney stated that she would be at the early session. Chair Killam informed Member Ottow that he could email the members of the Board not present to get a commitment.

Member Mahoney made a motion to adjourn. Member Ottow seconded the motion. All in favor. Vote: 3/0/0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

The next Planning Board meeting will be April 19, 2023 at Atkinson Town Hall.