

*Town of Atkinson
Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
March 30, 2015*

The Selectmen returned to the Regular Meeting, from non-public session, of Monday, March 30, 2015 at 7:30pm. Mr. Baldwin led all present in the pledge of allegiance.

Members Present:

W. Baldwin, Chair
P. Consentino
J. Grosky
H. Morse, Vice Chair

Others Present:

A. Brackett, Police Chief
B. Innes, Town Administrator
N. Travers, Director Community Center

Administrative Abatement:

Map/Lot	Address	Rec	\$
2/47	14 Brushwood Drive	Grant	14.22

H. Morse made a motion to approve an administrative abatement on map/lot 2/47; 14 Brushwood Drive in the amount of \$14.22. Second. P. Consentino. 4/0/0.

Donations:

Transportation - \$175

H. Morse made a motion to accept donations totaling an amount of \$175 to the Elder Services Transportation Line. Second. P. Consentino. 4/0/0.

Appearance:

Fulltime Police Officer Hire – Chief Brackett

Chief Brackett appeared before the Board of Selectmen to give an overview of the Police Department and started off with requesting approval to hire Clint Scritchfield as a fulltime police officer in accordance of the Union Contract effective May 18, 2015 at a rate of pay of \$18.46 per hour.

J. Grosky made a motion to give Chief Brackett the authorization to hire Clint Schrightfield as a fulltime police officer in accordance of the Union Contract effective May 18, 2015 at a rate of pay of \$18.46 per hour. Second. H. Morse. 4/0/0.

Dane Denton – Police Academy

Chief Brackett asked the Board of Selectmen permission to sponsor Dane Denton to attend the Part-time Police Academy, in Hampton, NH this summer with the recommendation to hire him part time upon successful completion of the academy. There is no fee to send him to the Police Academy, just an agreement to sponsor him to go to the Police Academy. Chief Brackett will come back to the Board when it comes time to hire Mr. Denton.

H. Morse made a motion to sponsor Dane Denton to attend the Part-time Police Academy in Hampton, NH beginning this summer. Second. J. Grosky. 4/0/0.

Overview of the Police Department

Chief Brackett gave an overview of the Police Department and started off by saying there is a need for a new police building and listed the following reasons why:

- Never designed to be a police facility
- There is poor security in the building
- There is poor space in the building
- There is poor quality of air in the building
- There is no lock-up facility due to the fact that Chief Brackett turned the previous lock-up facility into a women's locker room. The original room had unsafe conditions anyway. Prisoners now go to the county jail.
- There is no sally port
- There are no interview rooms for victims, suspects, or witnesses
- There is insufficient space for armory with a poor security system
- The restroom is not private enough
- The utility room is not in a good location
- There are no public restrooms
- There are no showers
- There is a second floor that is inaccessible and not being used so it just sits there collecting dust and contributes to the poor quality of air
- The exterior is in need of repair
- There is insufficient parking for the public

The Chief went on to explain the first step would be to obtain a conceptual design which can be paid for by asset forfeiture funds. This can be done by sending out an RFP to Engineering Firms and will cost between \$25,000 - \$40,000. Chief Brackett explained he does not have the funding now, however expects to within the next year. The next few steps would include creating a capital improvement plan, identify land, square footage, etc. Mr. Baldwin explained he is aware and in agreement with these problems and would like to share several options with the Chief. Chief Brackett concluded this update by explaining he has already used about \$22,000 in asset forfeiture funds to make improvements to the current building by having the flooring replaced, having the fencing replaced, and having all paintable surfaces repainted and he is currently looking for new signage.

Tasers

Chief Brackett explained his goal is to use some of the asset forfeiture funds to purchase 7 Tasers for the police officers. The Chief explained there is training involved, to make one officer the trainer for the rest of the department. The plan would be to get enough Tasers for all the full-time officers and then buy two more per year until there is enough for the part-time officers as well.

Active Shooter Table Top Exercise

Chief Brackett explained the Police Department has partnered up with Atkinson Academy to conduct an active shooter table top exercise. There will be practical training held on April 18th. Homeland Security will be funding this program.

Budget

Chief Brackett reported the Police Department budget to be in good shape overall. Heating/Oil is over budget, but everything else is on track.

Community Center/Recreation overview – Noriko Travers

Ms. Travers appeared before the Board of Selectmen to give an overview of the Community Center/Recreation Departments:

- The current program offers exercise, activities, and trips to seniors and children
- There is a senior luncheon coming up as well as a trip to Newport, and a health clinic
- Saturday, April 3rd will be the Easter Egg Hunt, however depending on how the fields look the hunt may be moved to the Community Center
- There will be repair work done to the playground
- Ms. Travers recently had a meeting with the leaders of the sports leagues to coordinate space and game times
- Lacrosse will repair damage done to the barn out of their budget
- The Community Center/Recreation budgets are on target except that heat and electricity are almost double. Mr. Baldwin asked Mr. Innes to look into insulating the building better and to look into new windows
- Revenue is about \$4,100 for rental fees
- Ms. Travers would like to purchase a computer software program that costs between \$4,500 and \$9,000 and has a touch screen to keep track of her data better. The Salem, NH Community Center uses this database system. Mr. Innes will work with Ms. Travers on this request
- Ms. Travers asked permission to add a link to the Community Center's Facebook page. Mr. Innes will work with Ms. Travers and create a "social media" policy for the town before this can take place.
- Ms. Travers would like to offer money associated with an internship position. The Board of Selectmen declined this request because it is not necessary to pay an intern, since the intern is gaining experience and credits through the town
- Ms. Travers presented the current newsletter and will add meals on wheels to it per the Selectmen's request

Mr. Baldwin thanked Ms. Travers for all her hard work and dedication as the Director of the Community Center.

Old Business:

Updated Building & Planning Department Administrator Job Description

Mr. Innes presented an updated Building & Planning Department Administrator Job Description to the Board of Selectmen for approval.

H. Morse made a motion to approve the updated Building & Planning Department Administrator Job Description as presented by Mr. Innes. Second. J. Grosky. 4/0/0.

Mr. Innes will post the position immediately and start the interview process.

Conflict of Interest Decisions

**Mr. Consentino recused himself from the discussion:

Mr. Baldwin explained there have been three recommendations from the Conflict of Interest Committee that has been brought forth to the Board of Selectmen to resolve.

Recommendation 1:

J. Grosky made a motion to reject the Committee’s recommendation of censure for the following reasons: (1) The ordinance prohibits any town official from knowingly participating in a matter without first disclosing all relationships and possible conflicts. The recommendation indicates that the Committee did not consider any past court documents as a basis for its decision, or the nature of the relationship between Selectman Consentino and the school board candidates. The Committee’s decision contends that merely knowing a person and not disclosing that fact places a town official in violation of the ordinance, without any further basis (2) Selectman Consentino knew three of the four candidates to fill the vacancy, and probably knows thousands of citizens in the town. The Selectmen observe that it is probably the case that other town officials know many residents, and this is to be encouraged (3) The Board if persuaded that it was neither the intent of the voters, nor the language of the ordinance as reasonably considered, to censure a town official for not disclosing that he or she simply knows a person. Therefore the Board concludes that Selectman Consentino could not have knowingly violated ordinance. Second. H. Morse. 3/0/1. P. Consentino recused himself from this motion.

Recommendation 2:

J. Grosky made a motion to reject the Committee’s recommendation for the following reasons: (1) On December 15, 2014, Selectman Consentino made the following motion: “To revise the motion submitted last week for Atkinson Police Department employees covered by the union contract that whether they are union or non-union they will get the same rate of pay increase as stated in the union contract, except step increases are for certified police officers only” – the vote provided a pay increase to members of the Police Department who were not entitled to a pay increase under the union contract (2) We have confirmed with the Police Chief that Mr. Consentino’s wife is union eligible and entitled to the benefits of the union contract, without the need for a vote of the Board of Selectmen (3) Therefore, the basis for the Committee’s decision is without foundation, as the vote of the Board of Selectmen provided no benefit to Selectman Consentino’s wife. Second. H. Morse. 3/0/1. P. Consentino recused himself from this motion.

The third item involves the Committee’s nonbinding vote regarding the Board of Selectmen’s decision to enter into a nonpublic meeting to discuss the candidates for the school board. Mr. Baldwin addressed this concern by stating the following:

“The Board does not need to vote on this, so I will leave it to each member of the Board to respond if they wish. I would want to respond, even though the Committee had not jurisdiction to consider the case because there was no petition filed against the Board of each of its members. When we entered into a nonpublic session, we believed we were doing the right thing to protect peoples’ reputations. We have since learned that a nonpublic meeting cannot be held when considering the appointment of a public official. We apologize for our mistake, but we were acting in good faith at all times”

Mr. Morse added that he feels the same way and is happy to apologize for that as well.

**Mr. Consentino rejoined the meeting.

New Business:

Update – Police Station Air Quality Issue

Mr. Innes provided the Board of Selectmen with an update on concerns regarding the air quality at the Police Station. The air was recently tested but no issue was found. Two air purifiers have been ordered for the Police

Department for the Police Chief's office and for where the dispatcher sits. Property Liability Trust recommended a Certified Industrial Hygienist who came today and tested for air quality in the building from top to bottom. Those results should come in within the next three weeks. The Hygienist also recommended changing filters on the HVAC system on a quarterly basis as opposed to yearly. Mr. Morse also recommended asking Dave Weymouth to inspect the duct work.

Maintenance Update

Mr. Innes updated the Board of Selectmen that the trustee obtained by Chief Brackett will coming to the town hall to paint the areas that can be painted.

Assistant Bookkeeper

Mr. Innes explained that the Bookkeeper would like to offer the Assistant Bookkeeper job to Sue Coppetta for approximately one hour per week at the rate of pay of \$18.00 per hour. Ms. Coppetta is currently one of the trustees of the trust funds. The Board of Selectmen advised Mr. Innes to send the open position out to the Department Heads first and bring the topic back for discussion next week.

File Cabinets

Mr. Innes asked the Board of Selectmen to purchase six used fire rated file cabinets for the Town Clerk from a second hand furniture company in the amount of \$4,780. The town would pay 75% upon delivery and the rest upon satisfaction with the product.

H. Morse made a motion to authorize Mr. Innes to purchase 6 file cabinets from a second hand furniture company in the amount of \$4,780 and pay 75% upon delivery and the rest upon satisfaction with the product. Second. P. Consentino. 4/0/0.

Insurance Question

Mr. Innes recently had a discussion with Sergeant Fiset regarding the town health insurance and the plan for getting employees to pay 20%. Sergeant Fiset is currently paying 10% and understood that he would pay that amount for two years, then in the third year, the amount will go up to 15%, and then in the 4th year, the amount will go up to 20%. The Board of Selectmen agreed with that plan.

Statement by Mr. Grosky

Mr. Grosky read the following statement out loud:

“We live in a small town of fewer than 7,000 people. I have lived here for 15 years and in that time I have had the privilege to meet many people across the Town of Atkinson. I certainly do not know everyone in town, but I know many, certainly including most of those who are actively involved in local government, town, civic, youth sports, and school matters.

I have read our Conflict of Interest Ordinance many times. I do not believe it was our voters' intent to create an Ordinance where a selectman or any other elected official has a conflict that must be publicly declared based simply on knowing someone.

So where I am at the beginning of my first term on this Board, I want to publicly state one time for the record going forward that there is a good chance that I will know most people who appear before our Board. To our residents, please presume that I know everyone who appears before us, as I do not intend to make a public proclamation on a person-by-person basis.

That said, I promise to recuse myself and publicly announce any matters where I have an actual conflict that disqualifies me from fairly considering a matter before the board, and the same applies should any issue arise before the Board where I and/or a family member have a financial interest.”

Chairman Baldwin explained he would like this to be a blanket statement for the entire Board of Selectmen. All of the Selectmen agreed that this applies to them as well.

Future Dates:

4/2/2015 – Senior Spring Luncheon Community Center – 12Noon – 2pm
4/4/2015 – Easter Egg Hunt – Woodlock Park 11am – Children to age 12
4/9/2015 – Newport Playhouse leave Community Center 9am – return 6pm
4/11/2015 – Boy Scout Electronics Recycling Fundraiser Community Center 8:00 – 12:00
4/14 & 4/16/2015 – AARP Driver Safety Community Center 9am – 12 Noon
5/2/2015 – Fishing Derby Community Center Registration 7:30am – Children to age 12

Announcements:

Edwards Twins

Mr. Consentino announced that the Edwards Twins will be performing on Saturday, May 16th at 7:00pm. A silent auction will be preceding the event beginning at 5:30pm. This event is sponsored by the Lions Club.

2015 Regional Master Plan

Mr. Baldwin announced he has recently received the 2015 Regional Master Plan which is quite interesting with lots of data going back to 2010.

Signatures

Mr. Baldwin reminded the Board of Selectmen to sign off on pending items including minutes, check registry, and the police contract which legal counsel has approved.

P. Consentino made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting on March 30, 2015 at 9:13pm. Second. H. Morse. 4/0/0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda Lueders

William Baldwin, Chair

Phil Consentino

William Friel

Jason Grosky

Harold Morse, Vice Chair