



# **TOWN OF ATHOL**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2015-2016**



**ATHOL COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**Photo Credit Greenfield Recorder**

**TOWN OF ATHOL**  
**REPORTS OF TOWN DEPARTMENTS, OFFICIALS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES**  
**July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Elected Officers & Town Boards
  - i. Board of Selectmen
  - ii. Town Manager
  - iii. Town Clerk
  - iv. Finance & Warrant Advisory Committee
  - v. Library Trustees
  - vi. Athol Housing Authority
  
2. Finance
  - i. Accountant
  - ii. Assessor
  - iii. Treasurer & Collector
  
3. Public Safety
  - i. Fire Department / Emergency Management
  - ii. Police Department
  - iii. Animal Control
  - iv. Board of Health
  - v. Building Dept
  - vi. Wiring Inspector
  
4. Public Services
  - i. Council on Aging
  - ii. Public Library
  - iii. Veterans
  - iv. Sealer of Weights & Measures

5. Public Works

6. Elections / Town Meetings

7. Schools

- i. ARRS
- ii. Monty Tech

8. Committees

- i. Athol Historical Commission
- ii. Athol Orange Cable Advisory Committee
- iii. Board of Planning and Community Development
- iv. Capital Program Committee
- v. Charter Review Committee
- vi. Conservation Commission
- vii. Economic Development & Industrial Commission
- viii. Memorial Building Committee
- ix. Shade Tree Commission
- x. Vacant & Abandon Building Committee
- xi. Zoning Board of Appeals

# CHAPTER ONE

## PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Reports of the Board of  
Selectmen, Town Manager, Town  
Clerk, Finance Warrant &  
Advisory Committee, Library  
Trustees & Housing Authority



**Lee E. Chauvette, Chairman**  
**Anthony A. Brighenti**  
**Alan D. Dodge**  
**Stephen R. Raymond**  
**William J. Caldwell**

**Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager**  
Email: [ssuhoski@townofathol.org](mailto:ssuhoski@townofathol.org)

**Heather J. Brissette, Administrative Asst.**  
Email: [selectmen@townofathol.org](mailto:selectmen@townofathol.org)

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### To the Citizens of the Town of Athol:

The Board of Selectmen welcomed another new member to the Board in April's Annual Town Election when William Caldwell was elected to fill the vacancy of Mitchell Grosky who chose not to run for re-election after completing the term vacated by Susannah Whipps-Lee to State Representative after she was elected to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Franklin District.

### Policy Discussions:

The Board worked along with Town Manager Shaun Suhoski and members of the Economic Development & Industrial Commission to continue with the progress at North Quabbin Commons. This year local shoppers welcomed Marshalls, Maurice's and the Shoe Dept.

The Board continued its negotiations with collective bargaining units, the City of Gardner and the state E-911 department towards regional police and fire dispatch. This agreement was signed contingent upon receipt of grant funding, successful collective bargaining, and provides multiple "escape hatches" for both communities should things not progress as anticipated. The regional dispatch final agreement is anticipated for FY17.

The Board of Selectmen reluctantly said goodbye to long time Police Chief Tim Anderson of Athol and created a search committee for a new Chief. Sitting on that committee was Selectman Tony Brighenti, Selectman Alan Dodge, FWAC representative Paul Nelson, Worcester County Sheriff Chris Donelan and former Fitchburg Chief Ed Cronin.

### Licensing:

In November the Board completed its annual licensing by approving the following permits and licenses for the 2016 calendar year.

Class II Motor Vehicle Licenses for Bills Motor Mart, 12 Lewis St., C&D Towing located 158 Marble St., Dales Auto Body located at 25 Bickford Drive, Flint's Garage Sales located at 990 So. Main St., Hancock Motor Sales, 201 Daniels Shays Hwy., Victory Lane Motors located at 22 Chestnut Hill Ave., Wilson & Steely, Kustom Coachworks, LLC of Main St.

Class III Automobile Licenses for Hayes Auto Body of 81 Rich Place.

Common Victualler's Licenses for Global Montello Energy DBA Mr. Mikes, American Lithuanian Naturalization Club, Athol Pizza House, Atholl House, Inc., Blind Pig LLC, Bon Appetit, Conway Petro, LLC, Country Convenience, Route 13 Donuts, Inc. Dunkin Donuts, 2143 Main St. and 1643 South Main St., Edward H. Phillips Post Home, Inc., Eight Dragon Restaurant, Franco American De Naturalization Club, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Athol Orange Aerie #4545, Inc., Hannaford Brothers Co., Larry's Meat &

Produce, Losier's Café DBA The Dery Bar, McDonalds Restaurant, Olde Time New England Seafood Co., Tea Garden, Tool Town Pizza, Village Grill & Pizza, & Zedas of Athol.

All Alcoholic Liquor Licenses Issued under Section 12 for American Lithuanian Naturalization Club located at 365 South Main St. and managed by Paul Sundstrom, Atholl House, LLC located at 491 Main St. and managed by RaeAnne Meunier and Brian Dodge, Bon Appetit located at 460 South St., and managed by Michelle LaBelle, Blind Pig, LLC located at 98 Exchange St. and managed by David Veautour. Edward H. Phillips Post Home, Inc. located at 325 Pequoig Ave. and managed by Thomas Pierce, Ellinwood Country Club located at 1928 Pleasant St. and managed by Vicki Johnson, Franco American De Naturalization Club of Athol located at 592-594 South St. and managed by Norman LaFountain, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Athol Orange Aerie #4545, Inc. located at 99 Hapgood St., and managed by Clyde Woodbury, Losier's Café DBA The Dery Bar of Athol located at 5 Pine St. and managed by Richard Dery, Mark IV Lounge DBA Traverse St. located at 73 Traverse St and managed by David Caldwell, The Tea Garden located at 631 Main St., and The Steel Pub located at 11 Exchange St. and managed by Irvin Hartin.

Wine & Malt Liquor Licenses Issued under Section 12 for Athol House of Pizza located at 522 Main St. and managed by Agathi Spanakis, Olde Time New England Seafood located 2143 Main St. and managed by Leon Drouin, Tool Town Pizza located at 246 Exchange St. and managed by Ayman E. Fares.

All Alcoholic Liquor Licenses Issued under Section 15 for Foster Liquors Corp DBA Athol Spirits located at 9 Tunnel St. and managed by Shawn Foster, Stan's Liquor Mart located at 1586 South Main St. and managed by Constance Milusich, Uptown Package Store located at 2280 Main St. and managed by John Cotter and Brad Cass.

Wine & Malt Liquor Licenses Issued under Section 15 for Athol General Store located at 390 Crescent St. and managed by Bhavikaben (Jake) J. Patel, Country Convenience located at 49 So. Main St. and managed by Gaurang Patel.

Auto-amusement licenses for American-Lithuanian Naturalization Club for six (6) video, one (1) jukebox, two (2) pool tables, Blind Pig, LLC for 3 video, Edward H. Phillips Post Home, Inc. for 3 video machines, Franco-American de Naturalization Club for 4 video, 1 jukebox, 2 pool tables, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Athol Orange Aerie #4545, Inc. for one (1) jukebox, two (2) pool tables, three (3) video, Losier's Café for 4 video, 1 jukebox, 1 pool table, 1 target game, Traverse St Café for 1 pinball, 4 video, 1 jukebox, 1 pool table, Tool Town Pizza for one (1) pool table and five (5) video, The Steel Pub for two (2) video, one (1) jukebox, two (2) pool tables.

Live Entertainment Permits for American Lithuanian Naturalization, including Sunday, Blind Pig, LLC, NOT including Sunday, Edward H. Phillips Post Home, Inc., including Sunday after 1 p.m., Franco American De Naturalization Club of Athol, including Sunday, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Athol Orange Aerie #4545, Inc., including Sunday, Losier's Café DBA / The Dery Bar of Athol, NOT including Sunday, The Steel Pub, including Sunday after 1 p.m.

Sincerely,



Lee E. Chauvette, Chairman

Anthony A. Brighenti

Alan D. Dodge

Stephen R. Raymond

William J. Caldwell

**TOWN MANAGER  
ANNUAL REPORT**

How time flies! This is my third annual report as your Town Manager, and, during the past few years, many positive strides have been made to improve the long-term health of the town of Athol thanks to the commitment of department heads, board and committee volunteers, elected officials and residents.

The following report reflects activity in the fiscal year running from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

With the guidance and support of the Board of Selectmen and Finance & Warrant Advisory Committee, one of the first actions I undertook when I began my tenure in 2014 was to convene "Finance Team" meetings with the Accountant, Treasurer-Collector and Principal Assessor, which soon yielded the first written financial policies for the Town. I reference this achievement because adhering to pragmatic fiscal policies is now returning dividends that will save taxpayer money over the long haul through:

- Consistent planning guidance for operational budgets, free cash, borrowing, the capital program, reserve fund and annual stabilization fund allocations and targets
- improved bond rating to investment grade (AA- Standard & Poor's)
- reduced use of one-time revenues for operating budget and elimination of subsidies by FY18

These reforms may not make the headlines, but, having taxpayer funds managed in a consistent and conservative-leaning posture has and will alleviate wide fluctuations from budget cycle to budget cycle.

Over the period of this report the Town has also made progress on a variety of fronts including job creation, tax base growth, increased code enforcement through the Housing Task Force, continued efforts to eliminate slum and blight in neighborhoods through re-sale or demolition of vacant properties, and planning for future infrastructure and development. Some key accomplishments include:

- Advanced parcel assembly required for additional development at Route 2, Exit 18 interchange
- Recruited Eric Smith, AICP as new Director of Planning and Development to provide streamlined permitting as well as coordination for the Board of Planning and Community Development
- Provided preliminary development review (one-stop) for additional commercial investment at North Quabbin Commons and for major expansion of Athol Hospital
- Obtained Town Meeting authority to complete parcel assembly to allow reconstruction of intersection of Lake Ellis Road and Templeton Road while allowing redevelopment of gas station/convenience store site
- Secured federal and state funding commitment for feasibility study of new Route 2 interchange at South Athol Road for future development and transportation access
- Executed "Community Compact" between the Board of Selectmen and Commonwealth

Every person within Athol – whether citizen, elected official, committee volunteer or paid staff – are essential to carrying forth our mission to provide a safe and attractive community with outstanding educational opportunities. This formula will generate long-term strength and success.

I am honored to serve as your Town Manager. Please email me at [ssuhoski@townofathol.org](mailto:ssuhoski@townofathol.org) should you have any questions or suggestions surrounding the operations of local government. Thank you!

Sincerely,



**Shaun A. Suhoski**

Town Manager

## FACTS ABOUT ATHOL

**HISTORY** April 20, 1733, General Court of Massachusetts laid out the township of Pequage. September 17, 1735, the first five families settled here. March 6, 1762, the township was incorporated and the name changed to Athol.

**LOCATION** North central Massachusetts, 38 miles north of Worcester, and 71 miles west of Boston.

**AREA** Land 32.34 square miles  
Water .73 square miles  
Total 33.07 square miles

**POPULATION** 11,584

**REGISTERED VOTERS** 6,327

**POLLING PLACES** Precinct 1 – 3: Athol Senior Center  
82 Freedom Street

**ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION** First Monday in April

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** Second Monday in June

**FALL TOWN MEETING** Third Monday in October

**TOWN GOV'T** Open Town Meeting  
Five Member Board of Selectmen  
Town Manager

**TAX RATE** \$18.43

**TOWN HALL OFFICE HOURS** Mon, Wed., Thurs. 8:00 AM-5:00 PM  
Tuesday 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM  
Friday CLOSED



## STATE OFFICIALS

### **Governor**

Charles D. Baker  
State House, Room 360  
Boston, MA 02133  
Tel: 617-725-4000  
Fax: 617-727-9725

### **Lieutenant Governor**

Karyn E. Polito  
State House, Room 360  
Boston, MA 02133  
Tel: 617-725-4000  
Fax: 617-727-9725

### **Attorney General**

Maura Healy  
One Ashburton Place, 20th Floor  
Boston, MA 02108-1698  
Main number connecting all bureaus 617-727-2200  
TTY: 617-727-4765  
Fax: Call for specific fax numbers

#### **Attorney General Hotlines:**

Consumer Hotline: 617-727-8400  
Elder Hotline Toll Free: 1-888-AG ELDER (243-5337)  
Fair Labor: 617-727-3465  
Insurance Hotline Toll Free: 1-888-830-6277  
Insurance Fraud Tipline: 617-573-5330  
Utilities Division Hotline Toll Free: 1-888-514-6277

### **Secretary of the Commonwealth**

William Francis Galvin  
State House, Room 340  
Boston, MA 02133  
Executive Office: 617-727-9180  
General Information: 617-727-7030

### **Treasurer and Receiver-General**

Deborah B. Goldberg  
State House, Room 227  
Boston, MA 02133  
Executive Office: 617-367-6900  
Connecting all divisions: 617-367-3900

### **State Auditor**

Suzanne M. Bump  
State House, Room 230  
Boston, MA 02133  
Tel: 617-727-2075  
Fax: 617-727-5981

### **State Senator** (*Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex*)

Ann M. Gobi  
State House  
Room 513  
Boston MA 02133  
Phone: 617-722-1540  
Fax: 617-722-1078  
[anne.gobi@masenate.gov](mailto:anne.gobi@masenate.gov)

### **State Representative** (2<sup>nd</sup> Franklin District)

Susannah Whipps Lee  
State House  
Room 540  
Boston MA 02133  
Phone: 617-722-2090  
[Susannah.WhippsLee@mahouse.gov](mailto:Susannah.WhippsLee@mahouse.gov)

## FEDERAL OFFICIALS

### **U.S. Senators**

#### **Elizabeth Warren**

##### *Boston Office*

2400 JFK Federal Building  
15 New Sudbury Street  
Boston MA 02203  
Phone: 617-565-3170

##### *Springfield Office*

1550 Main Street  
Suite 406  
Springfield MA 01103  
Phone: 413-788-2690

##### *Washington Office*

317 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510  
Phone: 202-224-4543

#### **Edward Markey**

##### *Boston Office*

975 JFK Federal Building  
15 New Sudbury Street  
Boston MA 02203  
Phone: 617-565-8519

##### *Fall River Office*

222 Milliken Blvd, Suite 312  
Fall River MA 02721  
Phone: 508-677-0523

##### *Springfield Office*

1550 Main Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Springfield MA 01101  
Phone: 413-785-4610

##### *Washington Office*

255 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510  
Phone: 202-224-2742

### **U.S Congress** (2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District)

#### **James McGovern**

##### *Washington DC Office*

438 Cannon HOB  
Washington DC 20515  
Phone: 202-225-6101

##### *Leominster Office*

24 Church Street, Room 29  
Leominster MA 01453  
Phone: 978-466-3552

##### *Northampton Office*

94 Pleasant Street  
Northampton MA 01060  
Phone: 413-341-8700

##### *Worcester Office*

12 East Worcester Street  
Suite 1  
Worcester MA 01604  
Phone: 508-831-7356

## **ELECTED TOWN OFFICERS**

### **MODERATOR**

Lawrence P. McLaughlin, 2017

### **BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Anthony A. Brighenti, 2017

Alan D. Dodge, 2017

Lee E. Chauvette, 2018

William J. Caldwell, 2019

Stephen R. Raymond, 2019

### **ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

From Athol:

Lee E. Chauvette, 2017

Mitchell Grosky, 2017

Joao Baptista, 2018

Deborah Kuzmeskas, 2018

Dale H. Lougee, 2019

Joseph F. Maga, 2019

Amber Parker, 2019

From Royalston:

Nancy D. Melbourne, 2017

Carla Rabinowitz, 2018

Charles Pretti, 2019

### **LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

John R. Greene, 2017

Margaret L. Young, 2017

Francis W. Foster, 2018

Christine Miranda, 2018

Sharon A. Brighenti, 2019

Margaret Feldman, 2019

### **ATHOL HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Cathy Savoy, 2017

Edward Ledgard, 2019

Edward C. Sawin, 2020

Cathy Muzzy, 2021

Joseph Hawkins, 2021 (State Appointee)

### **CONSTABLES**

Randy Mitchell, 2017

Kenneth A. Vaidulas, 2018

Kevin Materas, 2019

## APPOINTED TOWN OFFICERS

Admin. Asst., Board of Selectmen/Town Manager	Heather Brissette
Alternate Inspector of Buildings/Zoning Agent	Robert Legare
Animal Control Officer	Jennifer Arsenault
Assessor	Lisa Aldrich
Asst. Agent Board of Health	Melanie Rajaniemi
Assistant Collector	Susan M. Sargent
Assistant Gas Inspector	Robert Mallet
Assistant Municipal Coordinator	Jeffrey Parker
Assistant Plumbing Inspector	Rick Geyster
Assistant Superintendent of Public Works	Duane Truehart
Assistant Town Accountant	Kala Fisher
Assistant Town Clerk	Carol Bachelder
Assistant Treasurer	Bridget Jowder
Assistant Wire Inspector	Gordon Dickie
Board of Health Agent	Deborah Karan
Civil Defense Director	John Duguay
Collector/Treasurer	Eileen Bristol
Deputy Fire Chief	Jeffrey Parker
Director, Council on Aging	Cathy Savoy
Director of Veterans' Benefits & Services	Neil McGuirk
Emergency Management Director	John Duguay
Fire Chief	John Duguay
Inspector of Animals	Jennifer Arsenault
Inspector of Buildings/Zoning Agent	Brianna Skowrya
Inspector of Gas Piping & Appliances	Daniel Joly
Inspector of Wires	Gary Terroy
Library Director	Jean Shaughnessy
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Committee	Toni L. Phillips
Municipal Coordinator	John Duguay
Parking Meter Attendant	Ronny Cote
Plumbing Inspector	Daniel Joly
Police Chief	Timothy Anderson
Police Lieutenant	Kevin Heath
Sealer of Weights & Measures	John R. Greene
Superintendent of Public Works	Douglas Walsh
Superintendent of Schools	Anthony Polito
Town Accountant	Christine Mailloux
Town Clerk	Nancy E. Burnham
Town Counsel	Mark Goldstein
Town Manager	Shaun Suhoski
Town Planner	Andrea Buglione

## TOWN BOARDS/COMMITTEES

### AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

Pam Browning, 2017  
Laurie Parker, 2017  
Sydney Adams, 2018  
Ranee LaPointe, 2018  
Casey Smith, 2019

### AMERICANS WITH DISABILITES ACT COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

John Gostan, 2017  
Vacant, 2017  
Vacant, 2017  
Vacant, 2017  
Vacant, 2017

### ATHOL CULTURAL COUNCIL

Robin Brzowski, 2016  
Brenda Buck, 2016  
Anne Cutler-Russo, 2016  
Joann Deacon, 2016  
Tabitha DeHays, 2016  
Marie Lehmann, 2016  
Jean Shaughnessy, 2016  
Brianna Haskins, 2017  
Christine Hause, 2017

### BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Kenneth A. Vaidulas, 2017  
Heather Brissette, 2018  
Lisa Aldrich, indefinite

### BOARD OF HEALTH

Martin Miarecki, 2017  
Norma Purple, 2018  
Joan Hamlett, 2019

### BOARD OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Calvin Taylor, 2017  
David Small, 2018  
Jacqueline Doherty, 2019  
Richard Hayden, 2020  
Steve Wills, 2020  
Aimee Hanson, 2021  
Kathy Norton, 2021

### BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE

Timothy Anderson, 2017  
Nancy Burnham, 2017  
Kala Fisher, 2017  
Toni Phillips, 2017  
Jean Robinson, 2017  
Vacant, 2016  
Vacant, 2016

### CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Daniel Carey, 2017  
Mark Wright, 2017

### CAPITAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Erik Euvard, 2018  
Michael Butler, 2017  
Kathy Norton, 2017  
Linda Oldach, 2017  
Robert Muzzy, 2018  
James Smith, 2019  
Gino Tontodonato, 2020

### CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

Heather Brissette, 2017  
Nancy Burnham, 2017  
Lee Chauvette, 2017  
Ben Feldman, 2017  
Joan Gross, 2017  
Jason LeRay, 2017  
Lawrence McLaughlin, 2017  
Charles Ponusky, 2017  
Keith Williams, 2017

### CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Heather Bialecki-Canning, 2017  
Gary Dey0, 2017  
Heidi Stickland, 2017  
Thomas Tourigny, 2017  
Vacant, 2017

### CONSERVATION COMMISSION

John R. Greene, 2017  
Laura Smith, 2017  
Walter Lehmann, 2018  
Robert Muzzy, 2018  
Katheryn Harrow, 2019  
Dennis Killay, 2019  
James Smith, 2019

#### Associate Members:

Elwin Bacon, 2017  
Jamie Briggs, 2017  
Nicholas Tarara, 2017  
William Wheeler, 2017

### COUNCIL ON AGING

Ruth Black, 2017  
Kathy Cygan, 2017  
Linda Grenier, 2017  
Lillian Bachelder, 2018  
Walter Lehman, 2018  
Jean Ryder, 2018  
Arthur Herk, 2019  
Stephen Larry, 2019  
Margaret Young, 2019

**DOWNTOWN VITALITY COMMITTEE**

Carol Ambrozy, 2017  
 Diana Beland, 2017  
 Richard Godin, 2017  
 Ranee LaPointe, 2017  
 Stephen Raymond, 2017

## Associate Members:

Paula Robinson, 2017  
 David Small, 2017  
 Shelly Small, 2017

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION (EDIC)**

James W. Meehan, Jr., 2017  
 Keith McGuirk, 2017  
 Mark Wright, 2017  
 Clinton Sykes, 2018  
 Calvin Taylor, 2018  
 Richard Plotkin, 2019  
 Martin Robichaud, 2019

## Associate Members:

Vacant, 2016  
 Vacant, 2016

**FINANCE AND WARRANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Kenneth Duffy, 2017  
 Erik Euvrard, 2017  
 Jo King, 2018  
 Cynthia Caldwell, 2018  
 Gary Deyo, 2018  
 Ben Feldman, 2019  
 Paul Nelson, 2019

**HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

Shelly Small, 2017  
 Jean Shaughnessy, 2017  
 Vincent Cerez, 2018  
 Carolyn Brouillet, 2019  
 John R. Greene, 2019

**HOLIDAY DECORATING COMMITTEE**

Anthony Brighenti, 2017  
 Patrick DiPietro, 2017  
 Karen Rathburn, 2017  
 Stephen Raymond, 2017  
 Charles Shatos, 2017  
 Roger Watts, 2017  
 Herbert Wheeler, 2017

**INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Lisa Aldrich, 2017  
 Ben Feldman, 2017  
 Kevin Heath, 2017  
 Robert Hughes, 2017  
 Doug Kaczmarczyk, 2017  
 Paul Landry, 2017

**MEMORIAL BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Anthony Brighenti, 2017  
 Nancy E. Burnham, 2017  
 Lee E. Chauvette, 2017  
 Ben J. Feldman, 2017  
 John R. Greene, 2017  
 Vacant, 2016  
 Vacant, 2016

**MEMORIAL HALL REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE**

Bonnie Benjamin, 2017  
 Rene Lake-Gagliardi, 2017  
 Joanne Rich, 2017  
 Ethan Stone, 2017  
 Vacant, 2017

**OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**

Earle Baldwin, 2017  
 Robert Curley, 2017  
 Erik Euvrard, 2017  
 Joshua Feldman, 2017  
 Brian Hall, 2017  
 David Small, 2017

## Associate Members:

Richard D. Godin, 2017  
 Robert Muzzy, 2017

**REGISTRARS OF VOTERS**

Hugh A. Horrigan, 2017  
 Vacant, 2018  
 Gerard Lozier, 2019  
 Nancy E. Burnham, Town Clerk

**SHADE TREE COMMISSION**

Anthony Brighenti, 2017  
 Sharon Brighenti, 2017  
 Andrea Buglione, 2017  
 Margaret Feldman, 2017  
 Travis Knechtel, 2017  
 Gregory McGuane, 2017  
 David Small, 2017

**TAX INCREMENTAL FINANCING COMMITTEE**

Lisa Aldrich, 2017  
 Ken Duffy, 2017  
 Christine Mailloux, 2017  
 Vacant, 2017  
 Vacant, 2017

**TOWN ENERGY COMMITTEE**

Bill Aucoin, 2017  
 Aimee Hanson, 2017  
 James Maxwell, 2017  
 Vacant, 2017  
 Vacant, 2017

**VACANT & UNOCCUPIED BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Anthony Brighenti, 2017  
Alan Dodge, 2017  
John Duguay, 2017  
Harry Haldt, 2017  
Deborah Karan, 2017  
Robert Matthews, 2017  
Brianna Skowrya, 2017  
Calvin Taylor, 2017  
Bruce Winters, 2017

Henry D'Orto, Jr., 2019  
Robert Mallet, 2020  
Richard Coburn, 2021  
Associate Members:  
Kala Fisher, 2017  
Richard Godin, 2017

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Susan Mondy Sykes, 2017  
Elvin R. Chartrand, 2018

**ZONING BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE**

William Aucoin, 2017  
Pam Browning, 2017  
Richard Godin, 2017  
Vacant, 2017  
Vacant, 2017

**WHEN BOARDS & COMMITTEES MEET**

<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>TIME OF MEETING</b>	<b>PLACE OF MEETING</b>
<b>ATHOL HOUSING AUTHORITY</b>		
1st Wednesday	9:15 AM	21 Morton Meadows
<b>ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE</b>		
3rd Wednesday	6:30 PM	Middle School
<b>BOARD OF ASSESSORS</b>		
Tuesday	As posted	Room 15
<b>BOARD OF HEALTH</b>		
4th Tuesday	4:00 PM	Room 1
<b>BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES (no meeting July &amp; August)</b>		
3rd Wednesday	6:00 PM	Library
<b>BOARD OF PLANNING &amp; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	7:00 PM	Liberty Hall
<b>BOARD OF SELECTMEN</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup> & 3rd Tuesday	7:00 PM	Room 21
<b>CONSERVATION COMMISSION</b>		
4th Tuesday	6:00 PM	Liberty Hall
<b>COUNCIL ON AGING</b>		
3rd Tuesday	1:00 PM	Room 21
<b>EDIC</b>		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	7:00 PM	Liberty Hall
<b>FINANCE AND WARRANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	6:30 PM	Room 21
<b>ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS</b>		
4th Wednesday	7:00 PM	Room 21

Meeting notices and agendas are available on the Town of Athol website at [www.athol-ma.gov](http://www.athol-ma.gov)

## VITAL RECORDS

7/1/14 - 7/1/15 -  
6/30/15 6/30/16

Births	91	116
Marriages	63	50
Deaths	181	199



## **The Annual Report of the Chairman of the FWAC– June 13, 2016**

The members of the Finance and Warrant Advisory Committee are appointed by the Town Moderator to be an independent advisory committee, representing our fellow citizens and taxpayers of the Town of Athol in the process of local town government.

The committee, comprised of seven members, reviews all warrant articles including the town budget and advises the citizens attending the town meeting what we feel is the best course of action to take on a given article. But the voters are not bound by any recommendations made by the committee.

The committee holds monthly meetings throughout the year, meeting with the Town Manager along with various boards, committees and department heads as needed, reviewing any matter of importance that may come before us during the year. We also are responsible for the administration of the town's annual Reserve Account, where we authorize use of these funds by a majority vote of the committee, without the need of town meeting approval for unexpected situations that may occur in a given fiscal year.

While the main focus of the FWAC, other town officials and the town meeting assembly is at the local level – many mandates and regulations which come from the state level can have an effect on how a city or town operates. Some of these state mandates can and do add much cost and added time to the handling of various situations.

During the past winter, the legislature completed its public hearings on the “Municipal Modernization Act” that was filed by the Governor last December.

This bill will benefit nearly every aspect of local government. It features dozens of reforms related to procurement, municipal finance, human resources, economic development and general administration of local government.

The measure is built around four major actions: A) updating and repealing obsolete state laws; B) promoting independence at the local level; C) streamlining state oversight and lastly, providing municipalities with greater flexibility and day-to-day management oversight.

Key reforms in this bill include:

Allowing cities and town to decide whether to exempt various positions from Civil Service – instead of having to pass special home-rule legislation. Most people agree the Civil Service system is outdated and interferes with local recruitment decision making. Most people feel local officials should be able to manage their human resource policies when hiring and making promotions.

Increasing procurement thresholds to eliminate unnecessary “red-tape” and delays for simple purchases made on a regular basis by all cities and towns.

Certifying the full and fair value of properties every five-years, instead of every three-years. Modern software has made the mid-term valuation process more accurate – allowing the need and cost for a full revaluation to be extended.

Replacing many of the mandatory paid classified ads for town meetings, zoning and other such notices with electronic postings as used in the open meeting law. This simple reform will save local governments millions of dollars statewide.

Giving municipalities the ability to fine utility companies that do not remove double-poles within 90 days, as required by state law. Right now telephone and electric companies pay no attention to removing dangerous and unsightly double poles – even when requested to by local officials.

Another part of this act would eliminate the need for prior approval for deficit spending for yearly snow and ice removal. This provision would allow the town manager or chief administrator to authorize deficit spending in this area.

Another important action would concern year-end transfers. This bill would eliminate the limits on the types and amounts of appropriation transfers that can be made by the selectboard and finance committee at the end of a given fiscal year. This would allow end-of-fiscal-year transfers from health insurance, debt-service or other unclassified/non departmental lines and would eliminate the 3% cap on the amount that may be transferred from any one town department.

In all, this important bill contains many useful amendments that will help every city and town in the Commonwealth to some degree.

Many times as a local government - our hands are “tied” either by state or federal regulations – adding time and costs to a matter that could be handled in a much more efficient and less costly manner at the local level.

It is my hope that this Municipal Modernization Act gets the needed support of both the state senate and house members as the process continues its review in Boston. It is a reform package that is needed by all cities and towns in the Commonwealth.

On behalf of the FWAC – I would like thank the various department heads, boards and committees for their help and cooperation during the past year, it has been greatly appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ken Duffy  
Chairman FWAC

FWAC members: Ken Duffy (Chairman) Ben Feldman (Vice Chairman), Gary Deyo, Erik Euvrard, Jo King, Paul Nelson

Athol Public Library  
Report of the Board of Library Trustees  
2015-2016

To: The Board of Selectmen and Citizens of Athol

The PARC Grant project, which included the Millers River Park, the parking lot, and final library landscaping, was completed. A ribbon cutting ceremony for the park was held in September with speeches, music, and cake. The solar panels on the roof of the new library were finally in operation by October 2015 with completion of all the correct wiring and permitting. Training on safe handling of any solar panel emergency issues was held for the fire department and other interested personnel.

An Open House was held for retiring director, Debra Blanchard, on the Saturday of the Downtown Festival. Debra officially retired on September 30, 2015, and Jean Shaughnessy became director on October 1. Angela Dumas was hired as the new Children's Librarian and began her duties on October 26. Angela graduated in May 2016 with a Master's Degree in Library Science and in Children's Literature.

The library once again organized and sponsored Community Reading Day in November. Readers visited every classroom, Pre-Kindergarten to grade 8, in Athol and Royalston, sharing books about food around the world and promoting the importance of reading.

Kevin Kaczmarczyk from the Athol Fire Department conducted two CPR trainings, attended by most of the library staff, and sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

The library was the host site for several community events, including a pre-release party for the first issue of Uniquely Quabbin magazine and a presentation by Heywood Healthcare to explain and build support for proposed renovations to the Athol Hospital and fund-raising efforts for expansion. The library had the honor of hosting the town manager's Compact Signing event

attended by the Lt. Governor, officials from Erving, Hubbardston, and Winchester who were also signing Compacts, and many members of the press and public.

The major event of the year was the Ralys Estate bequest of 1.4 million dollars to the library. Anthony Ralys gave the bulk of his estate to the library in honor of his wife Katherine. The money was invested with Bartholomew and Company as the *Anthony and Katherine Ralys Library Building Fund*. This fund, as stipulated in Anthony Ralys' will, can only be used for "renovations, additions, or building improvements". This announcement created quite a media stir with the library being news on WBZ radio and Channel 4 news, and featured in stories in the Boston Globe, Worcester Telegram, Greenfield Recorder, and Athol Daily News.

Policies that were revised or adopted this year included: Donation Policy, Art Exhibition Policy, Patron Behavior Policy, and Safe Child Policy.

The Board of Trustees reorganized in April and re-elected the following officers: Margaret Young as chair and Susie Feldman as clerk.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret L. Young, Chairman  
Margaret "Susie" Feldman, Clerk  
Sharon Brighenti  
Frank Foster  
J.R. Greene  
Christine Miranda  
Approved 19 October 2016

ATHOL HOUSING AUTHORITY  
ANNUAL REPORT  
7/1/15 – 6/30/16

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen:

The Athol Housing Authority provides affordable housing to low and moderate income families, as well as to the elderly and disabled. Housing is available based on Federal and State Program Regulations.

The Authority owns 78 Elderly/Handicapped units under the Massachusetts Chapter 667 Housing Program as well as 16 units of Family units under the Massachusetts Chapter 705 Housing Program.

Additionally, the Authority administers housing subsidies for 45 families under the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program and 58 families under the Federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Effective January 5, 2015, the Orange Housing Authority (OHA) shares office space with the Athol Housing Authority (AHA). The combined staff is made up of the following:

Christi Martin, Executive Director/Secretary to the Board (AHA)  
Bridget Sullivan, Program Administrator (AHA)  
Connie Parmenter, MRVP Administrator (AHA)  
Linda Lefebvre, Receptionist (OHA)  
Barbara Smith, Receptionist (OHA)  
Stephen Larry, Maintenance Supervisor (AHA)  
Steven Belanger, Maintenance Supervisor (OHA)  
Nicholas Tarara, Maintenance Staff (AHA)

The Authority is overseen by the Board of Commissioners, which meet on a monthly basis. The Board is made up of the following:

Cathy Savoy, Chairperson  
Edward Sawin, Vice-Chairperson  
Ted Ledgard, Treasurer  
Cathy Muzzy, Commissioner

The office of the Athol Housing Authority is located at 21 Morton Meadows and is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Phone 978-249-4848. Fax 978-249-9604.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christi Martin  
Executive Director  
Athol Housing Authority