



Atlas Tack Working Group

MINUTES

July 23, 2026

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
RCUD 2026 AUG 11 AM 9:39

8/6/26
approved

Present: Chair-Ken Blanchard. Doug Brady- Vice-Chair (left at 5:30), Patricia Estrella- via zoom, Michael Sherman, Brian Messier, Dave Gerber, Fernando Llemos, Patrick Carr via zoom, Keith Silvia- guest

Meeting Called to Order: by Chair Ken Blanchard 5:04 PM

Minutes: voted to accept minutes of 06-25-26 Motion by Michael S.- Second Fernando L, All in favor by roll call vote.

Chair's Report:

- The chair reported that the Select Board had considered disbanding the group but ultimately decided to keep it moving forward and requested to update the Charge of the working group.
- The Select Board would like to discuss possible changes to the charge at their next meeting on 07-27-26
- A meeting notice was sent out to members for 07-27-26 which was to "attend the Select Board meeting" which was posted in case the group had a quorum present and to avoid any possible open meeting law violations.
- Reports from the EPA will be discussed at the next meeting
- This meeting to focus on the revisions of the Charge the group would like to make. The group received a first rendition of the Charge with suggestions and comments for review and possible changes.

Discussion / Action Items

- The group reviewed and discussed proposed changes to their charge.
- Brian recommended reordering the priorities on the first rendition. The group discussed reordering the bullet points in their proposed charge to make the progression more logical and less defensive. Brian proposed changing the order to: number 2 (gather and review information) first, number 4 (advocate for site remediation) second, number 3 (coordinate with government and non-government entities) third, number 1 (promote public safety) fourth, and number 5 (report to selectmen) fifth
- Mike suggested adding language to characterize the Atlas Tech Working Group as facilitating community participation and serving as a resource to the town administrator. The group agreed to incorporate all suggestions into a revised charge for the Select Board's approval.
- The group discussed finalizing a charge document for the Select Board, with a deadline set for Saturday noon to allow for completion by Monday morning in order for Ken to send into the Select Board prior to their meeting that night.
- concerns were raised about the incomplete EPA environmental assessment report, which only addressed exterior contamination and did not include interior building testing for contaminants
- The group emphasized that public safety remains their top priority and that the building must be tested and deemed safe before any further action can be taken.
- Patricia mentioned that there was issues with unauthorized public access to the property and the need for better signage to deter trespassing.

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- The group agreed that their work is not complete until the interior of the building is tested and deemed free of contamination, and they decided to first secure approval of their updated charge from the Select Board before proceeding with other priorities.
- At the next meeting a deeper review of the reports and discussion on the next steps

Committee Member Items:

None noted.

Public Comment – Limited to two minutes- None

Correspondence - None

News and Announcements

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 30,2026 at 5:00 PM and will advise via email to confirm.

Adjournment – 6:45 PM

Submitted by: Doug B. Vice - Chair / Clerk

Atlas Tack Working Group Charge

Purpose

The Atlas Tack Working Group is established by the Fairhaven Select Board to serve as an advisory group to the Town regarding matters related to the Atlas Tack property which is currently designated a Superfund site. The Working Group shall advocate on behalf of the Town to promote the timely final remediation of the site and to support the protection of public health, public safety, and the environment.

Responsibilities

The Atlas Tack Working Group shall:

1. **Promote Public Safety**
 - Continue to work with the Town to ensure appropriate steps are taken to address and mitigate the reasonably foreseeable public safety risks associated with the current condition of the Atlas Tack property buildings, including potential building collapse and other site hazards.
2. **Gather and Review Information**
 - Collect, analyze, and disseminate information relevant to remediation, environmental conditions, redevelopment opportunities, public safety, regulatory actions, and community impacts.
 - Conduct public informational gathering sessions to gauge sentiment for possible re-use
 - Review potential zoning of the site.
3. **Coordinate with Governmental and Non-Governmental Entities**
 - Communicate and collaborate with all appropriate federal, state, regional, local, and non-governmental agencies and organizations involved with or having responsibilities related to the Atlas Tack property and Superfund site and to identify opportunities to improve coordination among agencies and the Town.
4. **Advocate for Site Remediation**
 - Advocate, but not negotiate on behalf of the Town to develop a policy that may convince and encourage the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to utilize their statutory authorities to ensure the effective investigation and final remediation of the site.
5. **Report to the Select Board**
 - Update the Select Board and Town Administrator periodically.
 - Once charge has been fulfilled, prepare a final comprehensive report with findings to the Select Board and Town Administrator to assist in determining future courses of action regarding the Atlas Tack property.

Membership

The Atlas Tack Working Group shall consist of members of the community appointed by the Fairhaven Select Board.

Duration

The Atlas Tack Working Group shall remain in existence until such time as the Select Board determines that its purpose is to be modified, fulfilled or otherwise votes to dissolve the Working Group. The Working Group shall not automatically disband upon completion of any single report or project.

Authority

The Atlas Tack Working Group is advisory in nature only. It shall have no authority to:

- Enter into agreements or contracts on behalf of the Town;
- Make commitments or representations that bind the Town;
- Promise or authorize expenditures of Town funds;
- Sign any document, whether written or electronic, or make any verbal commitment that would legally bind the Town of Fairhaven.

Guiding Principles

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Atlas Tack Working Group shall:

- Act in the best interests of the Town of Fairhaven and its residents;
- Promote transparency and informed public engagement;
- Support sound environmental stewardship, public health and safety.
- Encourage cooperation among regulatory agencies, elected officials, and the community; and
- Provide objective, fact-based recommendations to assist Town decision-makers.