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## Resident sues town, officials for \$3 million

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ATKINSON - A civil lawsuit filed by a former Budget Committee chairman against the town and three officials was made public yesterday.

Mark Acciard is suing the town, police Chief Philip Consentino, selectmen Chairman Jack Sapia and town moderator Frank Polito for \$3 million. He also is seeking compensation for damages, lost wages, and loss of reputation and standing in the community, Acciard said yesterday.

Three pages of the seven-page lawsuit Acciard filed in Rockingham Superior Court reference specific issues he has had with Consentino. The two have tangled for several years, trading accusations and charges in court. Acciard filed conflict-of-interest charges against the chief, which Consentino appealed all the way to the state Supreme Court.

The other pages of the lawsuit reference dates the other defendants made public comments that Acciard claims defamed him. Each person is being sued individually, not in their official capacity, according to the lawsuit.

Acciard also claims the town did not protect his reputation during incidents between 2004 and December 2007.

"The beauty of it is that 90 percent of it all happened on camera," Acciard said. "It's not a question of whether it happened, but whether it was justified and if it did any damage."

Many of the incidents cited refer to statements read about Acciard at selectmen's meetings, times he was accused of violating the law and of lying at those meetings, the document states.

Acciard also claims Consentino used the 2005 town report to damage his reputation. In the report, Consentino wrote of two individuals who made his time as a selectman unpleasant.

"No one elected official should ever be subjected to the ridicule and abuse that I have gone through over the past 18 months," Consentino wrote in the report. "Town government can and will continue to function in a fair and positive manner only if personalities are taken out of the politics. There is no place for this type of personal vendettas and I hope in the future that the Board of Selectmen will not allow the selectmen's meetings to continue to be a place for a few residents to portray their own personal vindictive views."

Acciard said everyone in town knows that he was one of those people.

Primex, the town's insurance company, will represent the individual town officials, as well as the town.

Consentino had little to say about the case yesterday.

"It's a pending litigation and I feel that it is strictly a source of harassment," he said. "And it is now going to be settled once and for all in a court law."

Sapia's answering machine message said he was traveling yesterday and would not be available. Polito did not return phone calls from The Eagle-Tribune.