

**Enfield Conservation Commission – Meeting Minutes**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS/MICROSOFT TEAMS PLATFORM**

**May 2, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Shirley Green (Chair), Jean Hinshaw (via Teams), Edward Rippe (Vice Chair), Kate Plumley Stewart (Selectboard Representative), John Welenc

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Carol Wyman

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Whitney Banker-Recording Secretary

**GUESTS:** Jerold Theis, Paul Currier, Mel Tennison

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**

Chair Green called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Without a quorum, Chair Green moved the agenda's order to discuss items that did not require a decision/vote.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Taking Action for Wildlife Discussion**

Mr. Welenc shared that the application requires a commitment from 3 to 4 people from either the commission or the town. He was uncomfortable submitting the application without having others committed and ready to pursue this.

**School Programs – Jay Welenc**

Chair Green highlighted that Mr. Welenc put together a blurb for the May town newsletter that was very informative.

Mr. Welenc shared that the focus of education within the schools began with the Enfield Village School in the fall. He noted that he felt hands-on programs would be best for the elementary students, possibly in the spring.

Ms. Hinshaw arrived at the meeting at this time (about 7:08 pm) via Teams.

Mr. Welenc has a presentation scheduled for May 22 at Mascoma Valley Regional High School. He provided an overview of the plan for this presentation.

Mr. Welenc is working on an ongoing relationship with the schools so that Conservation Commission members can make detailed presentations when needed.

Mr. Welenc is still developing a relationship and outreach plan for the Indian River School.

### **Old Home Days Discussion**

Mr. Welenc will send a short write-up about the Conservation Commission hike to Chair Green.

Mr. Welenc shared that he is also interested in doing a presentation about New Hampshire's Wild History. This presentation would need to occur where projecting a PowerPoint can be supported. Members discussed utilizing the Chosen Vale Performance Center (through the Enfield Shaker Museum), which is also ADA-accessible. A tentative date of the Saturday evening of Old Home Days was discussed; Chair Green will check whether the location is available for this date and at what times.

### **Earth Day Follow Up**

Chair Green asked members if they could clean up their neighborhoods as discussed and reminded them to send along any pictures of unusual items they found during this exercise to share in the following town newsletter.

### **Guest Inquiry – Paul Currier**

Mr. Currier explained that he is the Vice President of the Mt. Cardigan Snowmobile Club, which maintains trails in Canaan, Grafton, Dorchester, and Enfield. He shared that their club is interested in addressing water runoff issues along the Enfield section of Mud Pond Road to help with trail grooming in this area.

Mr. Currier said that they are interested in using an excavator to replace culverts and do some ditching work that will help with water runoff, which is impacting the road. He said they are not looking for money or materials but support from the Commission so that they may do this work.

Mud Pond Road is a Class VI road. Mr. Currier invited Conservation Commission members to the site to better understand what they wanted to do. Members agreed that this road is in bad shape.

Due to the potential impact on the waterway, Mr. Morris wondered if permits from the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) would be required to do this work. Mr. Morris will check with Mr. J. Taylor to see what permits or permissions may be needed and will contact Mr. Currier to let him know his findings.

### **Ground Dwelling Bird Loss & Outdoor Cats – Jerold Theis**

81 Mr. Theis noted that the article he shared at the last meeting points out an excessive loss of  
82 ground-dwelling birds due to outdoor cats. He proposed that the Conservation Commission post  
83 an update to its website to encourage community members to keep cats indoors to help with bird  
84 populations.

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86 Mr. Rippe noted that the article pointed out some additional measures that can be taken to help  
87 make outdoor cats more visible to bird populations.

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89 Members agreed it was a good idea to post/link the article to help inform community members  
90 about the impact outdoor cats can have on bird populations.

#### 91 92 **Farmers Market**

93 Chair Green reminded members that they discussed attending the May 11 Farmer's Market.  
94 Chair Green will also inform Mr. Marker (Recreation Director) that they will attend. Mr. Welenc  
95 will provide the 12x12 pop-up tent. Mr. Theis will give a box of 40 copies of the Natural  
96 Resources Inventory that can be passed out during the market.

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98 Mr. Welenc will attend this market. Chair Green will also likely attend.

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100 Mr. Morris clarified that this would not need to be posted as a meeting unless four members  
101 were in attendance and they were discussing commission business (not just handing out  
102 conservation information).

#### 103 104 **Membership Change**

105 Chair Green noted that the commission is sorry to hear Ms. Davis will not reapply for  
106 membership to the Conservation Commission. Members all agreed they appreciated her valuable  
107 work and contributions to the commission over the years.

#### 108 109 **Correspondence**

110 Chair Green noted that there was a total of 4 intents to cut (2 from the original meeting packet  
111 and two additional that came in after the packet was sent to members).

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113 Mr. Rippe noted concerns about the application stating intent to cut 49 out of 50 acres. Mr.  
114 Morris said that the board could only decide about this with a quorum present. Mr. Theis added  
115 that he had previously discussed with Ms. Huntley that, often, the applications don't contain the  
116 exact acreage.

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118 Ms. Stewart arrived at the meeting at this time, about 7:46 pm.

#### 119 120 **RECORD ATTENDANCE**

121 With a quorum now, Chair Green took attendance via roll call.

**REVIEW MEETING MINUTES: April 11, 2024**

Ms. Stewart moved to approve the April 11, 2024, minutes as amended. Mr. Welenc seconded. Roll call vote in favor of the motion (7-0).

**Amendments:**

Line 121 – MLA to City of Lebanon

Line 281 – the period after Conservation Commission and remove the end of the sentence

**Roll Call Vote:**

Shirley Green (Chair), Jean Hinshaw (via Teams), Edward Rippe (Vice Chair), Kate Plumley Stewart (Selectboard Representative), John Welenc **all voting Yea.**

**None voted Nay.**

**None Abstained.**

Chair Green reminded members that minutes can only be adjusted at the meeting, and any edits need to be discussed at the meeting before they are made.

Mr. Morris reminded members that the minutes are intended to be a general discussion overview. Some context is added for certain decisions, but the minutes are not intended to be a transcript.

**NEW BUSINESS****Open Meeting Laws – Ed Morris, Town Manager**

Mr. Morris shared that he provided an overview packet of the Open Meeting Law that is typically sent to new members of committees/commissions.

He reviewed several best practice highlights:

- That a quorum must be present in person for members to vote.
- Any time a quorum of members is together, it should be posted as a commission meeting.
- Quorum meetings that are warranted do require minutes, even for property walks. Minutes for things like a property visit can be very simple.
- Electronic communication can be problematic; all communications should be run through Mr. Taylor to prevent issues.
- Word-of-mouth discussions regarding Conservation Commission ideas and conversations can also be problematic; these should come to the regular commission meetings.
- Legally, sub-committees that meet do not have to have minutes, but keeping them is a best practice.
- Perception is critical to the Open Meeting Law. The law intends to keep decisions within the public eye and openly visible to the public.

Whenever there are questions or uncertainties about Open Meeting, members may contact Mr. Morris for clarification.

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**Knotweed Remediation**

Mr. Morris shared that the town is in the process of removing Japanese knotweed from town-owned property.

Conservation Commission involvement to gather volunteers and lead projects on knotweed removal would be very helpful.

**Signage Discussions**

Chair Green noted that Ms. Hinshaw was interested in discussing signage. Chair Green had informed her about the previous Wildlife Crossing signs that the Select Board (SB) elected not to utilize.

Ms. Hinshaw clarified that she was interested in making members aware of a signage resource she came across if there are any needed in the future.

Ms. Stewart provided additional background information on why SB elected not to utilize the former wildlife crossing signs, pointing to data from a national study showing that having more signage often means that people pay less attention to it.

**Hawley Drive Culvert Replacement**

Mr. Rippe shared that his road association met to vote on replacing the culvert, but the association ultimately voted not to proceed at this time.

Mr. Rippe thanked Mr. Morris for coming with Mr. J. Taylor to review the culvert in person, provided suggestions, and provided the name of a potential company to work with.

Ms. Stewart suggested that the commission continue to focus on the more significant runoff problems throughout town. Mr. Morris also noted that the commission should look at global concepts but not talk about specific areas (such as the previous discussion of dredging in one location). The commission should focus on educating the public in general about good stewardship.

**North Village Community Association Shoreline Landscape Practices**

Chair Green noted that, for those interested in attending, this talk will take place May 4 at 4:00 at the Chosen Vale Performance Center.

Mr. Welenc and Ms. Green will both plan to attend.

**Soak Up the Rain**

203 Ms. Stewart shared that she has contacted Ms. Fried about continuing with the Soak Up the Rain  
204 efforts. She suggested a subcommittee meeting prior to discussing this with the commission and  
205 putting it on the agenda for July.

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207 **NEXT MEETING:** June 2, 2024

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209 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT:**

210 Ms. Stewart moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. Mr. Rippe seconded.

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212 The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.