

1 **DRAFT MINUTES Conservation Commission**

2 Meeting Thursday, Sept 13, 2024

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4 **Members Present:** Kelly Short, Ken Stern, Lance Messinger, Audra Klumb, Steve Seron,
5 Beth Blair (Bos Rep). Bob Steenson, Theresa Wyman, Charlie Comey (alternate)

6 **Members Absent:** None

7 **Meeting called to Order 7 pm**

8

9 **Item 1: Approval of Minutes from Meeting 7/11/24**

10 Motion to accept the minutes of July 11th, moved by Steve. Lance seconded. No discussion or
11 changes. Motion approved by voice vote. Bob abstains as he was not at the meeting.

12

13 **Item 2: Budget discussion**

14 Kelly reported that we will need to approve our draft 2025 final budget request at our October
15 meeting. Bob mentioned that discussions at the Budget Committee indicated a steep increase in
16 our next property tax bills probable so that all efforts should be made to submit a budget request
17 close to last year's.

18 The commission reviewed last year's budget line by line. Discussion focused on two items.

19 For conservation easement monitoring, Kelly will reach out to Pete and Emily to get a contract
20 amount for the coming year.

21 For land management, last year's budget amount was \$6,300. Annual mowing will most likely be
22 around \$4,350 though we have some flexibility on the extent of mowing we perform. Other
23 potential projects include: a bridge over the outlet at the Kimball Pond Dam with an estimated
24 cost of \$600, new signage at the Riverland Conservation Area, and removal of the rocks from the
25 RSFCA field. There are no estimates yet for these last two items.

26

27 **Item 3: Wetlands Discussion**

28 **Permits and potential violations**

29 Audra provided some background on wetlands regulations and jurisdiction. The NH Department
30 of Environmental Services Wetlands Bureau has jurisdiction for regulating activities occurring in
31 wetland areas. The precise location of wetlands are determined by trained wetland scientists.
32 Most landowners only have an approximate idea of wetland boundaries. When a landowner
33 applies for a permit, the permit application is forwarded to the town Conservation Commission
34 for comment. Our role is to review and comment on the application and report to DES. Permits are
35 then issued by DES which has the authority and responsibility for enforcement.

36 If a complaint about a potential violation is brought to the Conservation Commission, we should
37 tell the landowner to submit the complaint directly to NH DE. The Commission does not have the
38 right to enter private property to investigate a complaint. Members of the Conservation
39 Commission have the right as individual citizens to file a complaint directly with NH DES.

40 **Wetland buffers, setbacks and Prime Wetlands**

41 The town has the authority to pass local zoning ordinances to establish wetland buffers to
42 regulate activities in proximity to wetlands. A number of NH towns have setback regulations which
43 vary greatly. Proposing an ordinance would fall under the jurisdiction of the Planning Board and be
44 subject to approval by vote at the first session (balloting) of Town Meeting. Enforcing these land
45 use regulations would be an obligation of the Town. At least one previous attempt to change
46 wetland regulations in Canterbury was voted down by residents. Developing and passing any new
47 regulations would be a very large task that would require collaboration among tow boards.
48 Members expressed concern that the Town does not have the resources to monitor and enforce
49 such a regulation if it were to be put into effect.

50 There was a brief discussion about considering the possibility of proposing a Prime Wetland
51 Ordinance. This also would be a major undertaking. Audra will report back with more information
52 on what would be required.

53

54 **Item 4: Property Management.**

55 **Kimball Pond Conservation Area.** The team of Lance, Steve, Bob Fife, Tom Osmer and Geoffrey
56 Hubbell successfully re-installed the beaver deceiver. Many thanks were extended to the group.
57 Beth will write up a description of the effort for the town email and newsletter.

58 **Riverland Conservation Area.** Ken reported that he is waiting for cooler weather before asking
59 Chuck Rose to remove the trees. There are still people using the beach area due to the persistent
60 hot weather. A brush control work day was scheduled for Saturday October 26th at 9 am. Ken will
61 contact Chuck Rose to ensure that the tree removal work is completed by then. The key to the
62 gate is in the possession of the fire department.

63 **Riverland sign project.** Ken stepped down as committee chair; Charlie agreed to join the
64 committee. Kelly will draft a layout for the 2 road signs and will check with NHRPC about a map
65 that will delineate ownerships within the Riverland area. The remaining sign content needs to be
66 written (welcome, thank yous, LCIP acknowledgment, etc.) and bids collected.

67 **RSFCA.** A work day for continuing the hand work of brush control at this conservation area was
68 scheduled for Saturday November 9th at 9 am. Ken will pursue bids for burying the rocks.

69

70 **Item 6: Conservation Projects**

71 The Conservation Commission continues to pursue potential conservation projects in town with
72 willing landowners. We are still in need of a list from Mandy of the owners of the largest properties
73 in town. Kelly will send general info to a resident who is potentially interested. She will remind
74 Mandy of our request for 100+-acre list.

75 **Item 7: Permits**

76 An emergency permit for repair of Lyford Pond dam was issued by NH DES. The neighbors
77 performed emergency repairs to the dam where a sink hole had emerged.

78

79 **Item 9: Website Update**

80 The new and improved town web site should be up and running by the end of the year. Lance
81 offered to produce a list of possible items we may want to appear in the Conservation
82 Commission section.

83 Ken mentioned that the state's GRANIT map is being updated, which should add recent
84 Canterbury conservation projects to the public data layers.

85 **Other Business:** Steve will check the clean-up at the river campsite the day after the camp out.

86 Meeting adjourned 9:03 pm.

87 Next meeting October 10th

88 Respectfully submitted, Ken Stern