



TOWN OF **NEWMARKET** NEW HAMPSHIRE

Conservation Commission

June 13, 2024 7:00 PM

Town Hall Auditorium

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ellen Snyder (Chair), Jessica Cann (Alternate), Cris Blackstone, Colin Lawson (Alternate), Emma Fortin (Student Liaison), Jeff Goldknopf (Planning Board Representative), and Brian Ward (Town Council Rep. ex officio)

Members Absent: David Bell, Melissa Sharples (Vice-Chair), and Julianna Tyson

Guest: Duane Hyde, Director of Land Conservation, SELT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

The Chair appointed **Jessica Cann** and **Colin Lawson** as a voting members this evening. The six voting members include **Ellen Snyder, Jessica Cann, Cris Blackstone, Tom Jones, Colin Lawson, and Julianna Tyson.**

3. Welcome Emma Fortin!

The Chair was pleased to introduce **Emma Fortin** to the members. She is our new Non-Voting Student Liaison and the ConCom is very happy to have her join us as a liaison with the Newmarket Jr/Sr High School!

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Public Hearing

The Chair opened the Public Hearing at 7:03 PM and read the proposed RSA:

This Public Hearing is to determine whether the Conservation Commission should recommend to the Town Council a contribution of \$100,000 (approximately \$87,000, the remaining balance from the 2002 Land Acquisition Bond, and approximately

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\$13,000 from the Conservation Fund) toward the approximately \$2.2 million acquisition and permanent conservation by the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire (SELT) and the NH Fish and Game (NHFG) of approximately 132-acres of the Mitchell family land on Bald Hill and Jacobs Well Roads (all or a portion of the following Newmarket Tax Maps: R7 Lots 21, 21-1, and 27. (1.3 acres in Epping Tax ap 18 Lot 32). NHFG will acquire approximately 61-acres on the east side of Bald Hill Road. SELT will acquire and NHFG will hold an easement on approximately 71-acres on the west side of Ball Hill Road. The recommendation would include the Town of Newmarket holding a Third Party Right of Enforcement on approximately 70-acres on the west wide of Bald Hill Road, entirely within Newmarket.

Duane Hyde, Director of Land Conservation from the Southeast Land Trust, rose to review the project with the members. Please see the Approved Minutes of the Conservation Commission for May 9, 2024 for the detailed presentation. https://www.newmarketnh.gov/sites/g/files/vyhliif3536/f/minutes/approved_minutes_concom_may_9_2024.pdf Please also look at the complete proposal on the four pages of Addenda attached to the May 9 Minutes.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 7:17 PM. She opened the discussion for the members and all questions were addressed. A motion will be entertained. If approved, the Resolution will be forwarded to the Town Council and a letter of support indicating our commitment of funds will be sent to the SELT.

Action

Motion: **Colin Lawson** made a motion to approve the draft of the resolution for the Mitchell Land Conservation project to go forward to the Town Council and a letter of support be sent to the SELT.

Second: **Cris Blackstone**

Discussion: It was noted that both the PB and the TC were positive about this project.

Vote: **Unanimously 6-0-0**

Duane mentioned that there will be several more opportunities for public field trips in the near future. He will let the ConCom know of these opportunities. Thank you Duane!

6. Approve Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2024

Action

Motion: **Colin Lawson** made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 8, 2024 as drafted.

Second: **Cris Blackstone**

Discussion: **Jeff Goldknopf** had a few changes to the draft regarding his report from the PB.

Motion: **Tom Jones** made a motion to approve the Minutes as amended.

Second: **Cris Blackstone**

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

7. Financial Summary

The Chair reported that the Conservation Fund has a balance of \$135,412.52, the Schanda Park Fund has \$4,621.11 for a total of \$139,938.63. There was some income from interest posted. The General Fund is currently \$1,347.81.

8. Master Plan Update: Open Space Plan, Land & Water Conservation Chapter

The Chair summarized the progress so far. The Open Space Plan is near completion.

Jackson Rand (SRPC) prepared two new maps for inclusion (co-occurrence maps).

Members were able to discuss the new maps and ways to better describe the focus areas. The themes to be included in every chapter were identified and defined:

1. Vibrancy, 2. Connectivity – trails & people, 3. Accessibility, 4. Affordability, and

5. Resiliency (like Ash Swamp road). **Jeff** asked to include the Audubon parking area to the Trails & Trailhead Map. The Land Acquisition Worksheet is done and has been used several times since its' creation.

9. Committee/Board Reports

Town Council: **Brian** reported about the recent Town Council meeting. He mentioned traffic calming efforts on Hersey Lane and Ash Swamp Road for humans and turtles. Please see the minutes for additional information: [2023 Town Council Meeting Minutes | Newmarket NH](#) .

Planning Board/Town Planner: **Jeff** reported that the PB is working on the Master Plan Questionnaire. They are also investigating re-zoning efforts. Please refer to the meeting packet for detailed information: [Planning Board Meeting | Newmarket NH](#) . The PB would welcome any comments from the ConCom members about the re-zoning efforts. The SRPC seems to be pushing away from open space subdivisions and they want to increase density. The SRPC also projected that some 700 new residents could move to Newmarket in the coming years. **Ellen** reported on the Master Plan SubCommittee – the SRPC is working on a “build-out” model for development. There are many constraints on building houses because we do not have a lot of available property in Newmarket.

Riverfront Advisory Committee/Schanda Park: The Chair reported that Sam Kenney is still our representative to the committee. The Moonlight Brook caution sign is now up (without the QR code). They are still working on the ‘Don’t Feed the Wildlife’ signage. The RFAC wants to reach out to the student club, Net Zero, to discuss future projects.

School Liaison: **Emma** reported that today was the last day of school! The Net Zero Club (approximately 30 students) and the National Honor Society are very interested in coordinating more activities with the community...leaf raking, trail work, etc. There are currently students who work with the International Rotary on Interact Club projects. Interact Clubs bring together young people ages 12-18 to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of Service Above Self. Welcome Emma!

10. Trails: Old Lee Class A Trail: LRAC Grant

The Chair announced that LRAC has granted us \$5,600 for trail improvements. DPW will fix the bridge (the labor cost) and the grant will cover the cost of supplies! Thank you LRAC!

11. Projects

Prime Wetlands Mapping Update: PREPA Grant

The Chair gave an update on this project. We received a PREPA Grant ([PREPA Grants | Piscataqua Regional Estuaries Partnership](#)) for \$15,200 to fully fund our new Prime Wetlands Map Update. Mark West will do the mapping – possibly this fall. There were questions on the process of mapping and the Chair will ask Mark to come to the ConCom soon for discussion.

Ash Swamp Road Turtle Crossing/Aquatic Passage Grant Match Request

The Chair reported that the current calming road stripes look great. It is having an impact on speeding. Lyndsay Butler, Town Engineer, had the pre-proposal for aquatic connectivity accepted. She is asking for \$1 million and a match from the Town of approximately \$75,000. The match can be done with in-kind time – covering the Town staff work time. We need a cash match for seed money.

Action

Motion: **Colin Lawson** made a motion to provide \$5,000 as "seed money" for the Ash Swamp Road grant as discussed.

Second: **Tom Jones**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

12. Land Stewardship

SELT is contracted to do the monitoring of both the Hilton and Nostrum Farm easements. We renew this contract annually for approximately \$800. The Chair plans to bring this up for a discussion and a vote in July.

The Chair discussed the recent work at the Heron Point Sanctuary done during Newmarket Cares Day. Paul Marino worked with the students to repair the boardwalk. The Chair bought supplies for the project totaling \$99.67.

Action

Motion: **Cris Blackstone** made a motion expend funds from the General Fund or the Conservation Fund for \$99.67 to refund **Ellen Snyder**.

Second: **Colin Lawson**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

The Chair will ask if these expenses can be taken from the General Fund supply budget or need to be drawn from the Conservation Fund.

The Chair reported on the Wiggin Farm grants. She applied for and received \$7,500 from LRAC toward the entire cost of boardwalk replacement of \$10,340. She also applied to the Great Bay Partnership for \$3,000, but this grant is pending. Greg DiSanto is slotted to do this work with some volunteer help. The bridge will be at least 2' above the water and there will be bumpers with no railings. They hope to reuse the hardware cloth.

13. Events, Outreach, and Education

Bookmarks, Educational Videos, ConCom Member Notebook Update:

Ellen, Cris and **Jessica** (a graphic designer – yeah!) have been working to develop designs for a series of ConCom bookmarks along with educational postcards. **Jessica** described the four bookmarks and the Chair showed the members the preliminary drafts -Glow with Fireflies, Release Bubbles not Balloons, Go Slow for Turtles, and Leave the Leaves along with text about each topic. The four conservation properties to be described include: Wiggin, Piscassic River Loiselle , Heron Point, and Sliding Rock. The members discussed the size of the postcards. **Jessica** likes to use VistaPrint. The estimated cost for the bookmarks & postcards is approximately \$800.

Action

Motion: **Colin Lawson** made a motion to expend funds from the supply budget for the mock-ups of bookmarks and postcards.

Second: **Cris Blackstone**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

Thank you **Jessica**!!

Cris is still working with Tim Cremmens on the videos from our “special guest topics” at the ConCom meetings.

Newmarket Backyard Bash: August 2 from 5:00-8:00 PM; ConCom Display Table

Cris, Ellen, and Jessica will continue to work together on materials for the table for the Backyard Bash. **Bart** has decided to purchase a tent for the Planning Office which we will be using for the event!

Action

Motion: **Jeff Goldknopf** made a motion to ask that the remaining funds in the General Fund be used to pay our outreach efforts.

Second: **Cris Blackstone**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

The Chair will check with the Financial Office.

TurtleFest 2025, May 10th: The date has been set! A subcommittee was appointed to work on the event: **Tom Jones, Jeff Goldknopf, and Cris Blackstone.**

14. Adjourn

Action

Motion: **Colin Lawson** made a motion to adjourn at 8:31 PM.

Second: **Jessica Cann**

Discussion: none

Vote: **Unanimously Approved 6-0-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary

DCAT:

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekdEeRsk0JHqVHAJKJVka7_5VjxKP/videos