



TOWN OF NEWMARKET NEW HAMPSHIRE

Conservation Commission

May 14, 2026 7:00 PM

Town Hall Auditorium

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present: Zack Angelini (Chair), Luke Fromm (Vice-Chair) Ellen Snyder (Treasurer), Jeff Goldknopf (Planning Board Rep.), Michal Zahorik (Alternate), Cris Blackstone (Alternate Member), Scott Blackston (Town Council Rep.)

Absent: Colin Lawson, Jessica Cann, Andrea Frey (Alternate), Elizabeth Dudley (Alternate), George Anderson (Alternate), Emma Fortin (School Liaison)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

The voting members will be: Zack Angelini, Luke Fromm, Ellen Snyder, Jeff Goldknopf, Michal Zahorik, Cris Blackstone

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

3. Appoint Alternates as Voting Members (if applicable)

Zack appointed **Cris** and **Michal** as voting members for the night.

4. Public Comment

Samsong, Tokuno who lives at 30 Elm Street, spoke. He moved to Newmarket in 2004 and has been here for about 21 years. There is a neighbor at 32 Elm Street, on the west side of the house who bought their property in 1994. The neighbor rents the entire building and has not put any money into cleaning or repairing it.

The speaker explained that his house was built in 1890. He has improved and maintained his property and was once asked by the building office to make updates.

The neighbor recently repaired their roof, but no other repairs have been made. The speaker asked how this issue, of the building falling into disrepair, can be resolved. He has brought pictures to the building department, but no action has been taken. Previously, the speaker was required to get an occupancy permit to stay up to standards but the neighbor has not been kept up to the same standards.

Zack thanked **Samsong** for sharing his concerns.

5. Approve Meeting Minutes

- April 9, 2026

Action:

Motion: **Cris** made a motion to approve the April 9, 2026 minutes, as written.

Second: **Luke**

Discussion: None

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

6. Treasurer's Report

Ellen summarized the treasurer report:

The conservation fund balance is \$134,126.03. The total fund is in flux as TurtleFest money moves in and out of the account. There was some interest deposited and a little money is going out for the Rosa Project which will be squared away in the next couple months.

The Shanda Park fund balance will transfer to the Town in the next few months.

The general fund balance is \$3,167.10. This fund will expire at the end of June.

Ellen would like to contract with Veronique, the Land Stewardship Coordinator at Durham, to support two student workdays during Newmarket Cares. Also, the commission could use some supplies for activities like monitoring and TurtleFest. Both would be approximately \$200. She noted that the Town has been flexible with letting the commission spend money toward different line items since the budget is created so far out.

Cris would like to see safety vests purchased for activities like monitoring and invasive species removal. Most vests tend to range from \$8 to \$15 a vest.

Ellen noted that this might put the general supplies costs up to approximately \$300.

Action:

Motion: **Ellen** made a motion to approve hiring Veronique to support Newmarket Cares workdays for up to \$200

Second: **Luke**

Discussion: None

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

Motion: **Zack** made a motion to approve up to \$300 for general commission supplies.

Second: **Luke**

Discussion: None

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

7. TurtleFest 2026 Recap

Zack summarized TurtleFest and noted that planning for next year will start soon.

Cris thought the crowd size was the same as the year before, but the kids seemed more meaningfully involved. Cleanup was very fast and it felt like a hard stop to get people out of room. Highschool staff wanted to clean up and leave.

Zack commented on how great Tailwinds was and appreciated Heidis talk with specifics about Newmarket and calls to action.

Luke noted that the first talk seemed a little technical but there was a lot of engagement and questions at the end. Between the first and second session a lot of kids showed up.

Ellen noted there were more exhibitors and thought there might have been more attendees than the year before. Fourteen people attended the woodland walk. During the walk nets were provided to pull things out of the vernal pool.

Cris shared that people on the bird walk were very impressed with the bridge at Wiggin Farm and a lot of participants learned about the Merlin App.

Ellen reviewed the TurtleFest finances. She noted that more T-shirts were ordered this year but fewer were sold. The remainder of the T-shirts are at the library and will be sold at half price.

Jeff suggested that more mediums are ordered next year.

Luke said a lot of people were looking for an even smaller youth size.

Cris explained that smaller sizes aren't available for organic cotton T-shirts.

Ellen noted that the commission agreed to fund a scholarship and give the raffle money to New Hampshire Turtle Rescue.

Cris asked if donating to the scholarship would include a Conservation Commission logo on the T-shirt and asked if it makes sense to use the TurtleFest logo. **Cris** reached out to **John** to verify that the logo can be used. **John** responded via text message that the logo can be used.

Action:

Motion: **Zack** made a motion to approve \$275 to the SELT camp scholarship and \$500 to NH Turtle Rescue.

Second: **Luke**

Discussion: None

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

8. Rain Barrel Community Program – June 6

Ellen explained that the commission is promoting the sale of rain barrels and that sales are passed through, the commission does not purchase the rain barrels. So far, 23 barrels have been ordered, and people can order until the end of the month. This is open to anyone but only Newmarket people will get the coupon. Marketing material hasn't been sent out to surrounding communities yet but can be sent to other locations, including Newfields.

Cris noted that the Newfields garden club and the Great Bay stewards currently have a rain barrel sale under way.

9. Schanda Park Application

Zack reviewed the Schanda Park use application form Stella Martinez. The application does not go into much detail but appears to be for an informational event.

Cris spoke with the applicant previously and was told the event would be informational to get the word out about a project.

Ellen noted there isn't a date on the application and that the applicant signed where the commission would sign.

Cris was able to connect with the applicant and the request was withdrawn.

Ellen noted that Bart is preparing a staff report related to Schanda Park that will be presented at the Town Council Meeting.

10. Land Protection

Rosa Property

Ellen explained that her and Bart are meeting with the surveyor tomorrow. The boundary is a little complex with different Towns and restrictions around the existing cemetery. On the 20th the commission should hear back on the last grant and a deposit has been put down out of the conservation fund. The grant would be provided at closing so the commission will need to pay for a few things up front that would be reimbursed. A separate account will be set up for the property, and the warrant article will go in there.

Mitchel Project

Ellen explained that things are moving slowly. There has been some indication that not as much money will be needed. If this is the case, the commission might be able to keep some of the money that was allotted to the project. This property is almost entirely in Newmarket with one acre in Epping. SELT will own one side with a Fish and Game easement, and Fish and Game will own the other side with a SELT easement. Fish and Game has been taking a while to review everything. Additionally, the commission is taking an interest in the property and there are several grants which as made things complicated. Recently, the Town Council has been asking more about public access, and they have been tabling some projects that have already been approved. Some sites can be difficult to guarantee public access if everything isn't known about the property.

Jeff noted that if the town is spending money on a parcel, it makes sense to make sure there is access allowed.

11. Committee/Board Reports

Town Council

Scott shared that the town of Newmarket buys electricity directly from Eversource. The average cost in Newmarket is \$0.09 per kWh and 47% is from non-fossil fuel sources. The State regulation is that 25% has to come from non-fossil fuel sources. The Town Council discussed renaming the Beech Street Extension to be Cheswill Street in honor of the 250-year celebration. They are in the process of gaining approvals.

Planning Board

Jeff shared that the planning board did not have a meeting this month because there was nothing on the agenda and he could not attend the April meeting.

Scott attended the meeting in April. During the meeting there was discussion of the subcommittee that is being formed.

Technical Review Committee

Luke explained that he reviewed plans that were submitted for a development on New Road but was unable to make the meeting. From the last submission, they reduced the resource impacts significantly. They reconfigured the plan to maintain an isolated wetland that wasn't on the original set and pulled back some lawn and proposed stormwater management controls away from the wetlands.

Ellen asked about clear cutting in the back and the stream crossings.

Luke explained that the back area is not going to be cleared and regraded because of soil testing results. The applicant is discussing a potential conservation area. The intermittent stream crossing is still round culverts, not an open bottom structure, and this was flagged in the report.

Jeff asked about open bottom culverts, what would require someone to build one and if there are specific stream sizes that should require a certain crossing.

Ellen suggested speaking with Stream Works and other local experts. Creating paths for people and wildlife is an important part of the commissions goals, which could include promoting regulation around when stream crossing standards are required.

Scott noted that in the past people have gone to the planning board to get regulations passed to make sure things are constructed a certain way and this could happen with stream crossings as well.

Energy and Environment

George was not present to report.

Riverfront Advisory Committee

Jess was not present to report.

School Liaison

Emma was not present to report.

12. Land Stewardship

Newmarket Cares Day

Ellen explained that there will be student workdays at Heron Point Sanctuary and Follett's Brook. They will be at Heron Point Sanctuary from 8:30-11:30 on Friday and will mostly be sprucing things.

14. Other Business / Updates

Backyard Bash Discussion

Zack noted that there has been discussions about having a booth at Backyard Bash.

Cris shared that she doesn't think the visitors to Backyard Bash are interested in visiting a booth by the commission. It is a higher energy night, and most visitors don't want to stop at a booth like theirs and other booths already provide an opportunity for kids to interact with animals.

Zack asked if recreation camps are an opportunity to interact.

Cris said there could be opportunities and **Zack** should reach out to Amy. There are a lot of new councilors, but engagement could be as simple as having a small walk with someone from the commission to identify plants or a small clean up. Additionally, there could be a partnership with the recreation department to provide transportation either before or after TurtleFest and there are several vans available. There could also be more opportunity for a passive recreation outings, including to the Piscassic River- Loiselle Conservation Area.

Zack suggested a tour of the walking trails.

Cris suggested that the commission does a tour of all sites to be able to see what the conservation areas look like, and what access is like. Also, people are concerned about ticks and there could be education around this, and other things connected to passive recreation with the recreation department.

Rec Connect

Ellen noted that there is an event, Rec Connect, that the commission is invited to but she, Zack and Luke cannot make it.

Cris said Energy and Environment might be attending and if there is something specific for the commission she can share it while there.

Ellen explained there isn't anything specific to pass out. The commission has a 30-year-old heavy display and it would be worth getting one that is easier to transport and unrolls. She suggested the 'Nature of Newmarket' as a theme for the display that includes a map highlighting the nature components of Newmarket instead of the roads and buildings.

Cris suggested getting a display from staples. The standard size is approximately 26" wide. She will send the costs to **Zack**.

Ellen asked if there would be a meeting in August and noted that there has not been one for the last two years. If there isn't one the budget will need to be approved in July.

Zack suggested the commission won't meet in August unless something urgent comes up.

Michal asked about the public comments.

Jeff suggested that the concerns could be brought to code enforcement.

13. Adjournment

Action:

Motion: **Jeff** made a motion to adjourn.

Second: **Ellen**

Discussion: None

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

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Biegert

DCAT:

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekkdEeRsk0JHQVHAvKJVka7_5VjxKP/videos