



TOWN OF  
**NEWMARKET**  
NEW HAMPSHIRE

## Conservation Commission

June 11, 2026 7:00 PM

Town Hall Auditorium

### APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

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

**Absent:** Jessica Cann, 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, Colin Lawson, 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

None.

#### 5. Approve Meeting Minutes

- May 14, 2026

#### Action:

**Motion:** Colin made a motion to approve the May 14, 2026 minutes, as written.

**Second:** Ellen

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** Approved 7-0-0

#### 6. Treasurer's Report

Ellen summarized the treasurer report:

##### Conservation Fund

The conservation fund balance is \$136,893.81

There was interest paid into the account. On May 4<sup>th</sup> there was a current use deposit of \$20. This is when someone takes their land out of its current use, the town gets half and the commission receives the other half.

Final donations and expenses for Turtlefest were deposited and paid in May.

General Fund

General fund balance is \$2,673.85

Funds were taken out to contract with Veronique for the Newmarket Cares day, and for posting the Public Hearing for Rosa. The General Fund will expire at the end of June.

Shanda Park Fund

This fund is shifting over to the town.

**Ellen** shared that the rain barrel sale was successful. \$250 of the donation was used. Val sent a check for this amount, and it was passed through to the Rain Barrel company.

**Ellen** noted that high school seniors raised funds for the Herron point improvements, mainly through bake sales. Signs to restrict bike access still need to be ordered.

**Ellen** recommended renewing the contract with SELT to continue monitoring the Hilton and Nostrom Farm easements and the Piscassic River-Loiselle conservation area, and adding the Silverman conservation easement. When a property is under private ownership it is better if another entity completes monitoring. Last year monitoring was \$1,200 and SELT is recommending \$1,500 to add the additional property. This would come from the general fund.

Action:

**Motion:** **Ellen** made a motion to hire SELT to complete monitoring of the Hilton, Nostrum Farm and Silverman Easement and the Piscassic River-Loiselle Conservation Area for \$1,500.

**Second:** **Zack**

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** **Approved 7-0-0**

**Ellen** suggested the commission hire Veronique to help with a few different stewardship projects for this next financial year.

**Jeff** asked if she would provide hours prior to starting a project.

**Ellen** noted that the commission would want this to be a discrete work arrangement and the commission would give her direction for how much time she should be spending on certain properties. Her hourly rate is approximately \$65 an hour and \$5,000 is being proposed. Her work would include organizing volunteer work groups.

**Andrea** suggested working on the small pocket parks on Riverbend Road. There are a lot of autumn olive and other invasive plants in the area.

**Ellen** suggested that the neighborhoods get together to determine what should happen with the space or a survey could be sent to the neighborhood.

**Andrea** noted that one of the neighbors cut down some trees on one of the sides but most of the other abutters are respectful of the space.

**Cris** suggested having a meeting or information session that gives people an opportunity to share what they want to see out there. It could include a site walk.

**Zack** asked if Veronique would be an independent contractor.

**Ellen** noted that she has to provide information to the town including a 1099, and she could attend the next commission meeting.

**Andrea** shared that Newmarket cares days can be overwhelming for the teachers and additional assistance would be helpful.

**Action:**

**Motion:** **Ellen** made a motion to approve a contract with Veronique for up to \$5,000 for FY27.

**Second:** **Zack**

**Discussion:** Cris noted this is pending insurance certificate.

**Vote:** **Approved 7-0-0**

**Jeff** asked if there is an August meeting since the commission discussed not having one at the last meeting.

**Action:**

**Motion:** **Zack** made a motion to not meet in August.

**Second:** **Jeff**

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:** **Approved 7-0-0**

**10. Land Protection**

**Rosa Property**

**Ellen** shared that the commission received the last grant for the Rosa property and they are now working through the due diligence including the property survey. The first step is figuring out the town boundary. The surveyor is very busy during this time of year and there isn't a schedule set yet.

**Mitchell Property**

**Ellen** explained that a portion of this project is still held up at Fish and Game. SELT will own the parcel on the west side of the road that town funds are being contributed to through an open space bond. The commission is contributing \$87,500, the original bond amount. The closing is tomorrow morning (June 12<sup>th</sup>). Duane Hyde (SELT) was successful with fund raising and no longer needs \$13,000 that was going to come from the conservation fund.

At some point the other side will be protected by Fish and Game.

**11. Committee/Board Reports**

**Town Council**

**Scott** shared that the council voted to transfer the responsibility of Shanda Park to the town department of public works and recreation department (for scheduling) and there will be input from the River Front Advisory Committee.

The water and sewer rates were reviewed during the meeting. Newmarket sells septic serves by taking in septic from other towns and charging a fee. These funds are being used to build a new facility that can be accessed from New Road. The sewer rate is going to stay the same. The water rate is going to increase but compared to surrounding towns, Dover is the only one that has a lower rate.

**Elizabth** asked who is monitoring the amount of sewer that is accepted.

**Scott** explained that Sean Greig monitors how much sewage is accepted and we haven't been close to the maximum amount the system can handle. Waste acts as a type of food for the system and it works better when there is more sewage contributing. The sewage is put in, then the bugs are put in, there are solids left over and

they are sent to the land fill. The charge for additional septic more than compensates the cost to process. The water is processed and cleaned and then it goes into the Lamprey and is regulated.

**Elizabth** asked about the digestion process.

**Scott** said it is constantly being run and there are open house days that anyone can go and see how everything works. The department of the environment in Concord considers Newmarket as a premium location for waste management. Because of this reputation the department will typically give Newmarket new technology to try out. Sean Greig is the head of it and he would likely be willing to give someone a tour.

**Ellen** suggested a site visit could be set up for the commission.

#### Planning Board

**Jeff** shared that the masterplan will have a public hearing next month. There was an application for preliminary discussion with a group representing 308 Wadleigh Falls Road parcel tax map R5 E7. The parcel abuts the Piscassic River-Loiselle Conservation Area. Planning board asked if the commission would allow a trail connection from the property to the Conservation Area. This would create another access point. The concept is very preliminary and there isn't a formal application yet. There is a large wetland between the site and the conservation area, so access might only be possible in the winter. No one is looking for an answer tonight but something to consider. Plans have been posted online in the packet from Tuesdays Meeting. The idea is that people would be allowed to park there during non-church hours.

**Andrea** noted that this is the church that is currently using the school.

**Elizabth** asked how many wetlands are being affected.

**Jeff** noted that the concept is very preliminary but there could be a few stream crossings. It was noted that they can't put stormwater treatment in the wetland buffers. Also, the planning board asked if the applicant would consider lighting strategies that would be beneficial to wildlife.

**Ellen** noted that the town property is very wet so it will need to be looked at closely. Also, they will need to talk through who would maintain the trail. The town conservation area is under an easement from LCHIP and DES.

**Jeff** noted that they still have a lot of design work to complete. There are concerns about traffic safety and sight lines. The applicant didn't site why they specifically selected this property.

**Cris** thanked Jeff for bringing up natural resources.

**Jeff** asked if doing a wildlife study would be beneficial and noted that the zoning board has given relief for wetland buffer impacts on other properties. The zoning board gave relief for a small property right next to the railroad tracks. When zoning gives relief, the project does not need to go to the conservation commission. This one was granted relief because the lot is very small and there is nothing the applicant could do to offset buffer impacts.

**Jeff** noted that the long-range planning committee was voted into existence in April and the planning board appoints the members of the committee. Jeff asked if anyone is interested in being involved. They are looking for one member and one alternative from the conservation commission. The committee would meet four times a year and they would be two-year positions. The idea is to meet with professionals and people in town to see if we are meeting the goals of the master plan or moving toward them. If someone is interested, they can give their name to Zack to give to Bart and a person would be appointed at a planning board meeting.

**Elizabth** asked if she could only be an alternate because she is an alternate commission member.

**Ellen** said an alternate member can be appointed as a representative.

**Andrea** asked if there was anything about the field behind the student parking lot.

**Jeff** did not have any updates.

Technical Review Committee

**Luke** nothing to report.

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**

**Ellen** shared information on two projects, the Follett's Brook Natural Resources and Trail Inventory Analysis and the Wiggen Farm Management Plan. Grants were received from the Great Bay Partnership for \$13,000. They require a match and an application has been submitted to the Lamprey River Advisory Committee for the match. Costs for both projects are similar. \$3,000 for each project has been submitted to LRAC and \$1,500 of in kind services donated by the commission. There is an LRAC meeting on Tuesday to request the funds. They are tight but hopeful since they have been involved in the sites.

There are two draft RFPs that can be posted next week. If grants from LRAC are not received the projects may need to be scaled back.

**14. Other Business / Updates**

Turtlefest

**Zack** shared information from a Turtlefest debrief. Overall, the event was successful. The children's craft table had over 100 participants, exhibitors were interactive and sponsorship was successful. The raffle was more work than what was raised. T-shirts were a big hit but future planning should be tighter on sizing to decide what to buy next year. Bandanas were not a hit. NH Turtle Rescue had a big turnout at the library. The Turtlefest group has started planning for next year and talked about moving earlier in the year to create an opportunity to educate people on the Big Night. The commission will start reaching out to speakers to gauge interest and the Word Barn could be an option for a celebration at the end of the event. Next year could include the Harris Center giving a talk about the Big Night and there could be gear available at the library for people to check out. The live birds were a huge hit, so if it isn't raptors again having something similar would be beneficial.

**Ellen** noted that they discussed doing more things throughout the week.

**Andrea** suggested some of the children's activities could be more sustainability focused, potentially decorating bikes.

**Elizabeth** asked about the Big Night and if the event could have police support. If it is an event emphasized during Turtlefest maybe there should be more emphasis on safety when encouraging people to be out there.

**Ellen** noted that we don't want people driving all over town during the Big Night and it would be better to create neighborhood gatherings instead of having people driving a further distance. A group could meet at the library and walk out to Bay Road.

**Zack** said it typically starts around 8:30/9:00 to midnight and there is a weekly forecast.

**Jeff** suggested that a police officer could be hired as a detail if the police department cannot provide an officer.

**Cris** suggested talking to the police department to see how they deal with last-minute requests.

### Backyard Bash Discussion

**Cris** noted that the Commission does not fit with the Backyard Bash and support can be shown by encouraging people to attend.

**Andrea** suggested there is opportunity to interact with recreation and students through projects between the recreation building and high school. The students are back there frequently.

**Cris** noted there is a good amount poison ivy in that area.

**Ellen** asked about the field across the street from the high school.

**Andrea** said it is used for recess sometimes and has been suggested for other projects.

**Ellen** noted that last year everyone met on site to review a potential trail, but no one had the capacity to maintain it. The trail comes out on Riverbend Road, on private land.

**Elizabeth** suggested a boardwalk.

**Jeff** noted that the property owner would need permanent buy-in.

**Ellen** suggested that there could be a loop trail in and out of the area.

### Turtles

**Jeff** shared that there are many turtles out laying eggs and turtles will go back to the same place every year. He has a small pile of dirt next to his garage and a large snapping turtle is laying eggs in the dirt mound. He saw one hit blandings turtle and saw another one near the greenway. There doesn't seem to be a specific time that they are laying eggs and is unsure when the blandings turtle was hit. He has seen up to 50 baby turtles crossing Ash Swamp Road in one day.

There is a grate in place over the existing culvert and adjacent to it there is a heavy traffic area where all the turtles have been coming up the side of the road. Is it possible to have DPW remove the gate for a short period?

**Ellen** suggested that **Zack** email Lindsey and ask if she can do anything and potentially remove the grate for two weeks while the turtles are moving.

**Elizabeth** shared that she saw baby snapping turtles in the bay and that it is currently horseshoe crab matting season. She noted that floating horseshoe crab shells are likely from the crabs molting.

**Cris** noted that NH turtle rescue will take the small, rare turtles and raise them before releasing them.

**13.                   Adjournment****Action:**

**Motion:**       **Zack** made a motion to adjourn at 8:17.

**Second:**       **Cris**

**Discussion:**   None

**Vote:**           **Approved 7-0-0**

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellen Biegert

**DCAT:**

[https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekkdEeRsk0JHQVHAvKJVka7\\_5VjxKP/videos](https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekkdEeRsk0JHQVHAvKJVka7_5VjxKP/videos)