

**Town of Chester  
Conservation Commission  
June 14, 2022  
7:00 PM  
Approved Minutes**

**Members present:**

Chairman Victor Chouinard  
Kristina Snyder  
Deb Munson  
Rick Sibley  
Kathleen Neff Ragsdale  
Ted Broadwater  
Nick Tranquillo

**Members absent:**

Selectman Chuck Myette, Liaison

**Guests present:**

Ann Podlipny  
Chester PACT

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Chouinard called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

**II. New Business**

**A. Open Space Delineation**

- **Jenkins Farm**
- **Wilcombs Way**
- **Penacook**

Chairman Chouinard reported there are three subdivisions that were built before the Conservation area delineations were mandated. (Currently, when a subdivision is built, the open space is required to be signed with Conservation markers.) The Commission has been asked to install markers in these three subdivisions. He is contacting the surveyors to find out if survey pins exist. If not, the areas will need to be surveyed.

**B. Legislative Summary**

- Ms. Snyder reported that the House and the Senate cannot come to agreement on HB 307 (regarding firearm use on local recreational property) and it will likely die for the year.
- HB 1454 (regarding landfill site-specific setbacks) was agreed on by the House and the Senate and is going to the governor.
- HB 1227 (regarding the definition of prime wetlands) was laid on the table.

- SB 263 (establishing the New Hampshire Youth Environmental Education and Conservation Council) passed out of the Senate, but was deemed inexpedient to legislate (ITL) in the House by roll call vote. All five New Hampshire representatives voted against it.

Ms. Munson reported the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions (NHACC) invited the Commission to attend a youth-related conference. She will send more information to the members.

### C. Photo Contest Recap

Ms. Snyder reported the Third Annual Dandelion Contest was a success. The winning photographs have been posted on the Facebook page. The winners were given gift cards. Unfortunately, participation was not as high this year as in previous years.

*Ms. Munson moved to reimburse Ms. Snyder \$150 for the purchase of gift cards given as prizes for the Dandelion Contest. Ms. Neff Ragsdale seconded the motion. A vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

### D. OHRV Issues

Ms. Neff Ragsdale contacted the president of the New Hampshire ATV Club and discussed the issues Chester is having with OHRVs, including keeping them off private property and the destruction of sensitive habitat. He said they try to educate people on these issues and experience the same problems. They are an all-volunteer group that puts on rallies and educational conferences, and are willing to meet with the Commission. She believes it might be helpful for the Commission and Fish & Game to have a presence at their events to share information on approved trail, fines for violations, etc. She thought a meeting of the two groups would be helpful to brainstorm possible solutions.

Chairman Chouinard suggested inviting them to attend a Commission meeting. Ms. Neff Ragsdale will issue the invitation for them to attend the August meeting and will share information about their meetings for any Commission members interested in attending.

The Commission discussed ways to educate OHRV drivers on the laws and the fines as well as the damage they do to the environment.

### E. Invasives

Chairman Chouinard shared a poster from the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture about invasive plants. He would like to have it displayed in the Town Offices; Mr. Tranquillo will follow up on this. The Commission discussed other locations where these posters could be displayed. Ms. Munson will inquire if they have a similar poster for insects.

Mr. Tranquillo said Arianna from the Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD) would like to conduct a site visit at Spring Hill Farm (SHF) and Wason Pond the first of October to assess the invasives on those properties. Ms. Snyder reported the Ortins are starting a goat business to remove invasive plants and would like to use a portion of

Spring Hill Farm as a testing area. They will present this idea to the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee at their next meeting. A representative from the Department of Agriculture plans to inspect these sites as well. Ms. Munson shared information regarding a machine that removes invasives. The Commission agreed there are hard-to-reach areas where many methods will not work, but will continue researching all possible alternatives.

### **III. Regular Business**

#### **A. Review Minutes – May**

On line 146, delete the line, "Mr. Broadwater volunteered to oversee the trail maintenance."

*Ms. Neff Ragsdale moved to approve the minutes from the May 10, 2022 meeting amended. Mr. Tranquillo seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **B. Subcommittee reports**

##### **1. Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Neff Ragsdale reported the following:

###### *Savings account:*

\$ 523,730.70	starting balance
51.66	interest
\$ 523,782.36	ending balance

###### *Conservation Forestry account:*

\$ 41,288.49	starting balance
4.07	interest
\$ 41,292.56	ending balance

###### *Lincoln Lane account:*

\$ 501.54	starting balance
0.05	interest
\$ 501.59	ending balance

###### *Emerson Conservation Easement:*

\$ 10,240.40	starting balance
1.01	interest
\$ 10,241.41	ending balance

###### *Regular account:*

\$ 175.44	starting balance
278.25	expenditures (275.97 conservation easement monitoring, 2.28 misc.)
\$ -102.81	ending balance (over budget)

138 She reported that she received information on April current use for a total of  
140 \$32,000, \$17,000 of which has been abated by the Board of Selectmen, regarding the  
Scott property.

142 Chairman Chouinard will contact the Lincoln Lane residents to inquire about their  
144 intentions for the remaining funds in the Lincoln Lane account.

*Ms. Munson moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented by Ms. Neff  
146 Ragsdale. Mr. Broadwater seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in  
148 favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

## 2. Spring Hill Farm

150 Ms. Snyder reported the Fall Festival will be held on September 10<sup>th</sup>. The  
152 Commission will have a table to share information. New trail signs have been  
154 installed at the loop intersections. There is a Boy Scout project being discussed to  
install an information kiosk at the pond.

156 The Ortins suggested installing natural-looking parking signs to help visitors know  
158 where to park in the limited space available. There is an Eagle Scout project planned  
to update the chicken coop and planters were delivered as part of another Scout  
project.

160 The SHF Trust approved a payment of \$500 to draw up professional architect plans  
162 for the ADA ramp. They did not receive the AARP grant, but an anonymous donor  
through Schwab Investment donated \$12,000. So, there is a total of \$20,000  
164 available for the ramp project.

166 Ms. Snyder and other representatives will visit Wason Pond and SHF to inspect the  
168 pollinator plants and spread milkweed seeds. The SHF workday was held and some  
projects were completed. They are considering holding another workday.

## 4. Wason Pond Conservation Area

170 Ms. Neff Ragsdale reported there is a proposed Eagle Scout project to install a kiosk  
172 near the beach that will include information on the local flora and fauna. The WPC is  
going to visit the caretaker's cottage and the bathhouse to inspect the buildings and  
174 learn more about them. The Commission discussed what could be done with these  
buildings. Ms. Snyder spoke with the Town Maintenance Department regarding the  
manner of control being used for the rodents.

176 For Recreation, Ms. Snyder reported that Summer Camp is being held July 5 –  
178 August 5. July 23 is the 5K race and the Firemen's Muster, both being sponsored by  
the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee.

## 5. Easements, Monitoring, and Stewardship

182 Mr. Tranquillo spoke with Town Planner Andrew Hadik regarding the Emerson  
conservation easement, who has had no response to his inquiries.

184 He presented an estimate from the RCCD to monitor two properties (Scott Root  
186 Farm and Wilson Farm) of \$630.

188 *Ms. Munson moved to approve the expenditure of \$630 for monitoring the Scott*  
190 *Root Farm and the Wilson Farm easements. Mr. Broadwater seconded the motion.*  
*A vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

192 The RCCD has not scheduled the baselines; they typically schedule with the  
194 landowner the week before. There are issues with the contact information the  
Commission provided and Mr. Tranquillo is helping to resolve this. Most of the  
196 monitoring is anticipated to be completed in the fall.

198 There are several dozen pieces of property that require easements. He will present  
some of these at the next meeting. He reported that several submissions were  
200 missing surveys and/or plans, so the RCCD is in a holding pattern. Chairman  
Chouinard explained the Commission would need to have the bounds surveyed. He  
202 will check with the Board of Selectmen regarding the surveying they have  
commissioned.

#### 204 **6. Strategic Land Protection**

A non-public session will be held at the end of the meeting.

#### 206 **IV. Plan Reviews**

208 Chairman Chouinard presented a summary of the Shattigee Road culvert project. It has  
been approved by the DES and the Chester Planning Board, so the Commission will rely on  
210 their expertise.

#### 212 **V. Miscellaneous Business**

Ms. Snyder shared the New Hampshire Fish & Game's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife  
214 Program's request for a donation to their annual fund campaign. The Commission donated  
\$125 last year and agreed to do the same this year, noting the organization does outreach to  
216 the public and is supportive of the Conservation Commission.

218 *Mr. Broadwater moved to approve a \$125 donation to the New Hampshire Fish &*  
*Game's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program's annual fund campaign. Mr.*  
*Tranquillo seconded the motion. A vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion*  
220 *passed unanimously.*

222 Ms. Ann Podlipny attended the meeting as a guest, due to her interest in becoming a  
member of the Commission. She explained the activities she's interested in and her  
224 experience, and the Commission discussed how she could be of help.

#### **VI. Non-public meeting - Strategic Land Protection**

*Chairman Chouinard asked for a motion to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II(d). Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. Ms. Munson made the motion and Mr. Broadwater seconded the motion. A vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

The cameras were turned off at 8:26 PM.  
The meeting room was reopened.

*A motion was made and seconded for the Commission come out of non-public session. A vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **VII. Return to Regular Meeting**

*A motion was made and seconded to seal the minutes for the non-public session indefinitely. A vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **VIII. Adjourn**

*A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Hanggeli, Recording Secretary