

Exeter Conservation Commission
May 13, 2025
Nowak Room
10 Front Street
7:00 PM
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight's meeting were: Vice-Chair Conor Madison, Andrew Koff, Trevor Mattera, Keith Whitehouse, Valorie Fanger, Nick Campion, Alternate Kyle Welch, Alternate Michele Crepeau, Alternate Bill Campbell (remotely), Alternate Sean Torrez, and Dave Chartrand – Select Board Representative (non-voting).

Staff Present: Kristen Murphy, Conservation and Sustainability Planner

Vice-Chair Madison called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and introduced the members.

2. Public Comment

Vice-Chair Madison asked if there were any public comments, outside of agenda items.

Action Items

1. 2025 Trail Project Discussion

Mr. Torres gave a presentation on trail work for Henderson Swasey and the Oaklands. He noted that he hasn't had a chance to meet with Kyle, Dave and Toby yet. He posted maps showing the parcels and where some work could be done by volunteers. He asked where town roads stop and start and what DPW could help with. He noted that the hemlock planks had rotted away at Henderson Swasey and would be quite an effort. Mr. Torres indicated that Sig Sauer had offered to volunteer to repair and replace one. Ms. Murphy noted there was a structure put together with tarp and zip ties that should be considered being removed and the Police Department should be notified if someone is camping in it. Mr. Torres reviewed some areas on the north side of Oaklands and noted that the entrances affect the most people and there is poor drainage. Ms. Murphy noted a lot of negative comments when larger stones were used.

Ms. Fangor recommended having a site walk. The Commission agreed that 5:30 PM was a good time for the site walk and Ms. Murphy will send out a poll to select a date before the next meeting.

Ms. Murphy reviewed some of the private easements. Mr. Koff recommended focus on conservation land and permitting that might be required from NH DES as well as considering wildlife presence and vernal pools.

Mr. Torres noted both parking lots need some work.

Ms. Murphy noted that the parking area from Newfields Road to Oaklands should be expanded and recommended the Commission look at that when they are out there.

Mr. Torres indicated he would get a couple of work dates set up in July/August and develop a list.

Ms. Murphy noted that a grant could be targeted. There is a land and water conservation grant opening and that application is open until June 27th. The Commission agreed that one may be too soon to be ready for. Great Bay will have one in the fall.

2. \$850 NHACC Dues Request

Ms. Murphy noted that every year the Commission has funded NHACC and this year dues are \$850 down from \$900 last year. She noted that she serves on the Board of Directors and NHACC offers a lot of lunch and learns and training sessions. Vice-Chair Madison agreed that they have stepped up with workshops. Mr. Koff noted that they are helpful with understanding changes to legislation.

MOTION: Mr. Whitehouse motioned to authorize the dues to be paid this year. Mr. Koff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Intern Planning

Ms. Murphy noted that she will be interviewing interns for the two parti-time positions to help with monitoring and trail projects. There has been approximately four years since interns were hired. The pay is approximately \$17/hr. and 15 hrs. per week for approximately five weeks. She indicated that the position would be ideal for a candidate pursuing a degree in conservation or natural resource, and even recreation. She noted the degree would be optional. There would be a lot of boundary walking, and the candidate should have compass skills. Mr. Koff noted there is \$10,000 in the budget for interns. Ms. Murphy asked if anyone was interested in sitting on the interview panel to let her know.

4. Committee Reports

a. Property Management

i. McDonnell Gate. Ms. Murphy noted that volunteers are helping with the gate.

ii. Raynes Farm. Ms. Murphy noted that Steven will be back to work soon. He requested to have the perimeter of the barn mowed regularly. Mr. Whitehouse offered to help with that and recommended purchasing a mower.

Ms. Murphy will contact the Word Barn to see the status of their event.

Ms. Murphy reported that she applied for the Great Bay Protection Stewardship Grant which was due on April 15th.

iii. Drinkwater Road/Smith Paige

Mr. Whitehouse reported that Smith Paige is in pretty good shape but there is parking issue on Drinkwater Road that is coming before the Select Board to have an ordinance passed to ban parking from 25 Drinkwater Road to the Kensington town line. Mr. Chartrand noted the third reading is on June 2nd at 7 PM.

Mr. Koff noted the town just finalized the Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan and it is worth looking at that report. Ms. Murphy noted it can be found on the town's website.

iv. Swasey/Resiliency Grant

Ms. Murphy reported that the community is developing a climate resiliency plan for Swasey Parkway to see what can be done about inundation. They will be interviewing candidates.

b. Outreach Events

i. 60-Year Anniversary of the Exeter Conservation Commission – Celebration Ideas

Ms. Murphy noted the Commission has existed for 60 years and recommended planning a celebration that would line up with the dedication bench at Raynes and tree donation from the Tree Committee. She asked that those who wish to volunteer to help plan the event let her know.

iii. 5/31 Great Bay Trout Unlimited River Festival at the YMA (9 AM to 12 PM Clean up Little River/Morrisette (12 PM to 4 PM Table Volunteers

Ms. Murphy noted that the clean up will be taking place in the morning and tables will be there in the afternoon if anyone would like to assist her. The Commission had agreed to partner with event at its last meeting.

iii. Alewife Festival

Ms. Murphy noted that the festival was moved to town hall due to rain and was well attended.

c. Other Committee Reports (River Study, Sustainability, Energy/CPAC, Tree, CC Roundtable)

5. Approval of Minutes

129 April 8, 2025 Minutes

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131 MOTION: Mr. Mattera motioned to approve the April 8, 2025 meeting minutes. Mr. Whitehouse
132 seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

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134 Next Meeting: 6/10/25, Submission Deadline: 5/30/25

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136 6. Correspondence

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138 Ms. Murphy reported that a resident notified her that her hiking group got lost at Henderson Swasey.

139 Ms. Murphy is hoping that the interns can work on blazing some of the side trails that normally are not
140 blazed. She recommended hikers use openstreetmap.org.

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142 Ms. Murphy noted that the NH Turtle Rescue Group of Epping NH is having educational Zoom meetings
143 and looking for volunteers to transport.

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145 7. Adjournment

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147 MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 PM. Vice-Chair Madison seconded the
148 motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

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150 Respectfully submitted,

151 Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary

152 Via Exeter TV

153

154 Zoom Webinar ID: 868 3014 0309