

**MINUTES OF THE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING DECEMBER 3, 2025**

A meeting of the Conservation Commission was held on December 3, 2025, in the CD Conference Meeting Room in Town Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Georgia Brust, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruth Tanner Isaks
<input type="checkbox"/> Caitlin Fitzpatrick, Vice-Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alan Lord
<input type="checkbox"/> Claire Karibian, Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claudia DeFuria
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keith Stramaglia, Town Council Representative	<input type="checkbox"/> Glen Edwards, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/> Lorie Ball, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Sean Lewis, Alt.

Also Present: Crayton Brubaker, Community Development Program Manager, Julie Isabelle Recreation Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 pm. Ms. Brust introduced the commission members.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

1. November 5, 2025 Minutes

Motion: Mr. Lord made a motion to approve the minutes.

Second: This was seconded by Mr. Stramaglia.

Vote: 4-0; motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

2. 365 North Main Street – Review of NHDES Wetlands Permit by Notification (PBN) for replacement of existing legal retaining wall

a. Wetlands PBN review and Conservation Commission signature

Mr. Brubaker said the applicant is not here, but this is for a NHDES wetlands permit by notification. This is for the replacement of an existing retaining wall. Mr. Brubaker showed some pictures of the existing condition of the wall. Mr. Brubaker said it is just to rebuild the existing wall in the same location and use the same materials. He said it is 68 feet by 5 feet.

The Commission said they did not have any problems with this.

Public Participation

Mr. Hawkins was present. He said it looked like the stones were cemented and asked what the disposal would be.

Mr. Brubaker said he did not know, and they can include that as a comment.

Mr. Stramaglia made a motion to approve this with proper disposal.

Second: Ms. DeFuria seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0; motion passed unanimously.

WORK SESSION**3. Open Space Master Plan Presentation, Review and Discussion**

Ms. Brust said there was no one available to make the presentation. She asked if everyone looked it over and if they had any comments.

Mr. Brubaker said he was hoping for more narrative. He said the idea was to update the current open space plan. He said they did a good job compiling data and visualization maps. He said he thinks they need to beef up the narrative section. He said they should look at the 2010 plan. He said it does not draw any conclusions or recommendations.

Mr. Stramaglia said he would like to see ways to preserve green space.

Ms. Brust said she was looking for areas to have pocket parks.

Mr. Brubaker said they will give the Commission an updated parcel list. He said a good thing to describe in the narrative would be protection as far as easements. He said he sees this as multiple meetings, and they will prepare some revisions.

Mr. Lord said the maps are great, but there are no write-ups that go with them.

Ms. Brust said the public would not know why they came up with that map.

Mr. Lord said they should have the map and a discussion.

Mr. Brubaker said this is not finished but when it is done to the satisfaction of the Commission and it is adopted, he was going to bring it to the Planning Board and the Town Council.

Mr. Brubaker said he sees it as a natural resource inventory the way it is now.

Mr. Hawkins said the maps are not descriptive. He said he cannot make heads or tails of it.

Mr. Lord asked what the story map was.

Ms. Brust said she created a story map with different wildlife facts. She said it is a wildlife corridor like fish and game. She said it is an interactive map and you can upload photos.

Mr. Brubaker showed everyone how to access the storyboard.

There was discussion about the loss of green and open space and not having enough hiking trails.

Ms. Brust asked for an overlay of some maps. She said they should promote the story map.

4. CC Bylaws Update Initial Review

Mr. Brubaker presented the memo he wrote regarding the proposed bylaws changes. He said he changed the start time to 5 pm. He also added an unexcused absence policy.

Mr. Lord said the policy must be changed because it says for more than 50% of meetings, but it does not say a timeframe.

Mr. Brubaker said that it does say the member shall forfeit their position for 50% or more absences in the calendar year.

There was discussion about if this should be for no call no shows or for notifications as well.

Ms. Brust said they should take out unexcused and use the word absence only.

Mr. Brubaker said this would not include alternates.

Mr. Stramaglia said they should put something in about if alternates are called, and they do not show up they should be cut.

There was discussion about how this would affect Glen if they added this for the alternates.

Ms. DeFuria said there are no clear expectations for alternates.

The Commission explained how alternates worked.

Mr. Lord said he does not see how they can do 50% if they are not required to attend.

Mr. Hawkins said putting the requirements might draw people away from the position.

Ms. Brust said she does not think that an alternate should be turned away because they cannot attend all the meetings.

1 Ms. Brust asked if it could be up to the chair to remove alternates.

2 Mr. Stramaglia said they might be up to the Town Council since they appointed them.

3 There was discussion about the wording of the alternate attendance.

4
5 *Ms. Isaks joined the meeting at 5:41 pm.*

6
7 Mr. Brubaker said there are changes to the ethics portion. He said they removed the municipal
8 code, and they now have the charter. He removed those references. He said in section 6.9 he
9 added that members that are abstaining must state a reason why.

10 Ms. Isaks asked what the purpose for that was.

11 Mr. Stramaglia said the charter says you cannot abstain from any vote just to abstain and that you
12 must give a reason.

13 Ms. Isaks said it is getting into why people are voting a certain way.

14 Ms. Isaks said she does not see why it is not ok to abstain.

15 Mr. Hawkins said when he served on a Board, they had three options – yes, no, and abstain.

16 Mr. Brubaker said it looks like it is just for the Town Council.

17 Mr. Brubaker said they have to keep a list of all nonpublic session notes and whether they are
18 sealed or not. He said he created that, and he is putting that in to make it formal.

19 In section 7, he changed the timelines for wetlands permits and conditional use permits to align
20 with their calendar. He said the application due dates are 14 days before the meeting. He said for
21 conditional use permits they need to meet with himself or Mr. LaFontaine. He said the wetlands
22 permit language says it may require a meeting.

23 Mr. Brubaker said he removed section 7.7. He said the applicant has never notified abutters of
24 site walks. He said he renumbered the articles as well.

25 Ms. Brust asked if they wanted to keep the site walks at a different time, or do they wanted to
26 make them more required.

27 Mr. Lord said Saturday in the morning is better for him.

28 Ms. Brust said they will add site walks to the next agenda.

29
30 **OTHER COMMISSION BUSINESS**

31 **5. Recreation Coordinator Update**

32 Ms. Isabelle said in November she met with the JROTC. They did a lot of work cutting back the
33 buckthorn at William Valentine Park. They thanked them for the work. She said they are
34 interested in more volunteer work.

35 Ms. Isabelle said there was a plan to take the seniors for a walk, but they did not go because there
36 was snow. They are going to reschedule. There were 6-7 seniors that signed up. She also had a
37 zoom info session with the compost bin company. That program would not work. She is getting
38 information about the rain barrel program. She also met with the DPW about the island adoption
39 program. They are going to be working on a pilot program to bring back to the DPW.

40 Ms. Brust said they have to look into if they are planters.

41 Ms. Isabelle said there are some restrictions on what they can put there. She said the idea is that
42 clubs will maintain the islands and there will be a sign.

43 Ms. Brust said this should go on for January when there is a better plan.

44 Ms. Brust said if they use Conservation funds, it has to have a conservation purpose.

45
46 **6. Conservation Fund Report**

1 Mr. Brubaker said they got \$6,500 in interest. They also paid the deposit for the new kiosks. The
2 total of the funds right now is \$1.97 million.

3
4 a. \$500 – Send It Tree Services – Extra Tree Removal in Town Forest

5 Mr. Brubaker said there was a tree that split in half in the middle of the trail. They had this
6 cleaned up, and there is a \$500 invoice for that removal.

7
8 ***Motion: Mr. Lord made a motion to spend \$500 from the Conservation Commission fund for***
9 ***the work that was completed for the trail clean up by Send It Tree Service.***

10 ***Second: This was seconded by Mr. Stramaglia.***

11 ***Vote: 5-0; motion passed unanimously.***

12
13 b. \$144.96 – Town of Salem – Disposal of Old Kiosks

14 Mr. Brubaker said the DPW asked them to pay for the disposal of the kiosks.

15
16 ***Motion: Mr. Lord made a motion to spend \$144.96 from the Conservation Commission fund***
17 ***for the removal of the kiosks.***

18 ***Second: This was seconded by Mr. Stramaglia.***

19 ***Vote: 5-0; motion passed unanimously.***

20
21 **7. Town Forest**

22 Mr. Brubaker said Glen did not submit an update for December.

23 Ms. DeFuria said there is 1 tree left on L where the trail is closed. She said that people have been
24 asking her if they can plant new trees because people are concerned that they only see trees
25 removed.

26
27 a. Possible Boy Scout Project – Town Forest Signage

28 Ross Tremblay, a boy scout, was present for the meeting. The Commission members introduced
29 themselves. Ms. Isabelle said he is here to pursue a project in the Town Forest. She said in
30 August he removed the old signage from the Town forest. He is here to talk about a proposal for
31 the new project.

32 Ross said the plan is to continue removing more signage. He said there were 4 of them that went
33 out. They removed 14 signs in the first half of the forest. He said this time there will be 15 scouts
34 going out. He will be having fundraisers during the winter. The fundraisers are to build new
35 signs and install them. He said they are little plaques. He said some of the older signs were
36 cemented into the ground. He said he does not know if they want that to happen. He said they
37 would be wooden signs stuck into the ground. He said he would like to replace the signs and to
38 spread them out throughout the forest.

39 Mr. Lord asked how the wet areas will impact this.

40 Ms. Brust said these are the dry areas.

41 Ms. Brust told Ross that Trail F is very wet, and they are considering not using that trail
42 anymore, so it will not need a sign.

43 Ross said he was thinking about a car wash and a bake sale for a fundraiser.

44 Ms. Brust asked what the Commission could do to help with the project.

45 Ross said the information for the signs would be very helpful.

46 Mr. Lord asked if they are allowed to put pressure treated wood into the ground.

1 Ms. Isabelle said she can send pictures to SELT.
2 Ms. Brust explained SELT and said they would get their permission.
3 Mr. Hawkins said they could use marine posts or sleeves.
4 Ross will come back to the January meeting when there is more of a plan, and he knows what his
5 fundraiser will be.
6 Mr. Hawkins will do some research with the environmental department.
7 Ms. Brust said Fish and Game and UNH Extension have a lot of information.
8 Mr. Lord asked if he could make a map with the map placement and where they are located.
9 Ms. Brust asked him to bring the information that he is going to put on the sign before he prints
10 the signs.
11 The Commission thanked Ross for coming,
12

13 **8. Other**

14 a. Tuscan Village / Salem Rail Trail – Local Concerns Meeting Wednesday, Dec 17 at
15 6pm – Salem Town Hall, Knightly Room
16

17 Mr. Brubaker said there is a public meeting for the local concerns for the rail trail phases 4 and 5.
18 This is part of a grant. The project is for the length of rail trail from Main Street to Rockingham
19 Park Boulevard. He said there are several wetlands to the west side of the rail trail. He said they
20 are going to pave this between the electric poles. For the Conservation Commission, he wanted
21 to give the notice they are having the meeting.
22 Ms. Brust said they should have some plantings between the pavement and the wetlands.
23

24 **UNSCHEDULED COMMISSION MATTERS:**

25 Mr. Brubaker said the number of alternates was out of sync when they completed the charter.
26 The council approved a charter amendment to fix that at their meeting on December 1. The other
27 thing that was discussed last night was the potential change to the land use change tax. The
28 Commission currently receives 100% of that and they are proposing to change that to the
29 Commission receive 50% and the general fund get 50%.
30 Mr. Stramaglia said they have a public portion, and they can come and speak.
31 Mr. Brubaker said they saw the fund's balance, and they are interested in moving future funds to
32 the general funds.
33 Ms. Isaks said they have not purchased anything recently and when they do, the fund will be
34 significantly lower.
35

36 Mr. Brubaker said the kiosks are not installed. They did not make the deadline. He said they
37 were going to install them on December 16, but it has snowed. He said now he was going to do a
38 mini excavator. He asked what time timeline was. He said the options are to ask him to try on
39 December 16 or we can wait until the spring.
40 The Commission said they should take the safe route and wait until Spring.
41 Ms. Isabelle said she was asked for a QR code and paper with some Town Forest information.
42 She is going to put that up soon.
43

44 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

45 **MOTION BY: Keith Stramaglia**

46 *To enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(d)*

1 **SECOND BY: Claudia DeFuria**

2 **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

3 **GEORGIA BRUST – YES**

4 **CLAUDIA DEFURIA – YES**

5 **ALAN LORD – YES**

6 **RUTH TANNER ISAKS – YES**

7 **KEITH STRAMAGLIA – YES**

8 **VOTE: 5-0**

9 **The motion passed unanimously.**

10
11 *The meeting entered non-public session at 6:53 pm.*

12
13 *The meeting entered public session again at 7:35 pm.*

14
15 **MOTION BY: Georgia Brust**

16 *To seal the minutes of the 12-5-25 Conservation Commission non-public session because it is*
17 *determined that divulgence of this information likely would render a proposed action*
18 *ineffective.*

19 **SECOND BY: Keith Stramaglia**

20 **ROLL CALL VOTE:**

21 **GEORGIA BRUST – YES**

22 **CLAUDIA DEFURIA – YES**

23 **ALAN LORD – YES**

24 **RUTH TANNER ISAKS – YES**

25 **KEITH STRAMAGLIA – YES**

26 **VOTE: 5-0**

27 **The motion passed unanimously.**

28
29 **UNSCHEDULED COMMISSION MATTERS (continued):**

30 The Commission discussed the possible LUCT warrant article that was presented at the
31 December 1 Town Council meeting. The Commission asked for information as to how much
32 money the Conservation fund has received from LUCT.

33
34 **MOTION BY: Keith Stramaglia**

35 *Motion that the Chair writes a memo to the Town Council recommending against the idea of a*
36 *50/50 split of the LUCT.*

37 **SECOND BY: Alan Lord**

38 **VOTE: 5-0**

39 **The motion passed unanimously.**

40
41 **MOTION BY: Alan Lord**

42 *Motion to request to the Town Manager to have a non-public session with the Town Council*
43 *regarding the LUCT.*

44 **SECOND BY: Claudia DeFuria**

45 **VOTE: 5-0**

46 **The motion passed unanimously.**

- 1
- 2 **MOTION BY: Keith Stramaglia**
- 3 *Motion to adjourn at 8:05 pm.*
- 4 **SECOND BY: Claudia DeFuria**
- 5 **VOTE: 5-0**
- 6 **The motion passed unanimously.**
- 7
- 8 **Adjournment at 8:05 PM.**
- 9
- 10 Minutes by: Jennifer Hernandez, Recording Secretary; Crayton Brubaker, Community
- 11 Development Program Manager