

**Atkinson Conservation Commission Minutes**  
**Wednesday, September 27, 2023, 7:00 PM**  
**Atkinson Town Hall**

Approved November 29, 2023

**Members Present:**

Paul Wainwright, Chair  
Bill Steele, Vice Chair  
John Fournier, Secretary  
Suzie Newman  
Jeff Nenart  
Sandy Cannon, Alternate

**Others Present:**

**1. Call to Order, and Attendance:**

Chair Paul Wainwright called the meeting to order in person at Atkinson Town Hall at 7:00PM on Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Chair Wainwright took attendance and noted that all members are present except for Members Kukshtel, Pitts, Walker, and Chretien; Alternate Member Cannon will be voting in their stead. Chair Wainwright stated that this afternoon an application for a wetland setback variance was submitted, so the agenda will be a bit different than originally anticipated.

**2. Review & Approval of Minutes**

**a. July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Discussion: Chair Wainwright presented the minutes of July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and asked if there were any comments or corrections, there were none.

**Vice Chair Steele made a motion to approve the minutes of 07/26/2023 meeting, as written. Member Nenart seconded the motion. Vote: 6/0/0, the motion carries.**

**b. August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Discussion: Chair Wainwright presented the minutes of August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and asked if there were any comments or corrections, there were none.

**Member Fournier made a motion to approve the minutes of 08/08/2023 meeting, as written. Member Nenart seconded the motion. Vote: 6/0/0, the motion carries.**

**c. August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023**

Discussion: Chair Wainwright presented the minutes of August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 and noted a few corrections.

**Member Fournier made a motion to approve the minutes of 08/23/2023 meeting, as amended. Member Newman seconded the motion. Vote: 6/0/0, the motion carries.**

**d. September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Discussion: Chair Wainwright presented the minutes of September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and asked if there were any comments or corrections, there were none.

**Member Fournier made a motion to approve the minutes of 09/06/2023 meeting, as written. Vice Chair Steele seconded the motion. Vote: 6/0/0, the motion carries.**

**3. 2023 Expenditures Report and Projected Expenditures Discussion**

Chair Wainwright produced the latest 2023 expenditures report and stated that he submitted the budget the Commission discussed at the September 6 meeting, and increased the special programs line-item to \$1,500.00 to accommodate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary plans for next year. Chair Wainwright continued that the total proposed budget is \$12,378.00 which amounts to a 25% increase, but he reminded the Budget Committee that this is the first proposed budget increase in five years. Chair Wainwright stated that the Budget Committee didn't make any changes, but in the event the proposed budget does not pass final approval the Commission can always make their case for the increase at Deliberative Session. Chair Wainwright shared a document which explained each line-item increase for the Commission's consideration. There was no discussion.

Chair Wainwright stated that the latest expenses have been for the Recording Clerk, Woodlock Park trail maps, some paint for trailblazing, and roughly \$600 for stone which was used in the Caroline-Orr town forest after the trail washout last spring.

Chair Wainwright shared a list of projected 2023 expenditures (see attached), and stated that he has to add two other items; the NHACC dues, which is due in October, and the conference tuition which is estimated to be as much as \$600. Chair Wainwright stated that there is an anticipated expenditure for Peter Steckler for the Maple Avenue turtle-friendly culvert design review that will be discussed shortly. Chair Wainwright continued that Peter also needs to be paid for the final work on the Land Management Plan for the Lang Parcel. Chair Wainwright stated that the printing of the plan should amount to less than \$200.

Chair Wainwright continued that Member Chretien should come up with a wish list of turtle sign locations in case there is money purchase additional signs towards the end of this year. Member Newman suggested getting local businesses to sponsor the sign purchases to help defray the cost, and Chair Wainwright stated he liked this idea. The Commission discussed whether they deployed the turtle sign covers too soon in the season as there have been reports of turtles being observed recently.

#### **4. Maple Avenue Culvert Replacement – Northeast Consulting Services Work Proposal**

Chair Wainwright stated that this has been on his radar for at least three years. Chair Wainwright continued that this is culvert located at the connecting point between the East and West Sawmill Swamp prime wetlands on upper Maple Avenue. Chair Wainwright stated that he has seen a lot of turtles in this area, and he has reported them to Fish and Game. Vice Chair Steele stated that this is part of a Town road so the Town should be paying for it. Chair Wainwright stated that there is a State program which has maps of all the stream crossings and culverts all over the State. Chair Wainwright continued that this particular culvert would probably not be eligible for State funding because connecting the two wetlands isn't a priority for fish migration, which is the primary focus of the State's stream restoration program.

Chair Wainwright stated that the Public Works Director thinks he can likely replace this culvert as part of the next re-paving of Maple Avenue. Chair Wainwright continued that he is happy that Public Works is putting together a proposal to replace this culvert, but he also wants to make sure that the replacement is a culvert that will support turtle migration. Chair Wainwright stated that this is why he would like to get the advice of Peter Steckler, who is a subject matter expert in this area. Chair Wainwright continued that Peter will be consulting on the Town Engineers' design and giving advice under a contract, not to exceed \$2,000.

#### **5. Marshall and Stickney Trails Report – Charlie, Sandy, Chris, Bill**

Member Cannon shared a map of the Stickney trails, and showed what trail layout work they've done thus far. Member Cannon stated that she has not seen much mountain bike tracks, and also hasn't seen much hiker activity either. The Commission had a brief discussion about the trails and what should and shouldn't be marked. Member Cannon stated that there was one trail that veered off of Town land and they were able to redirect it so it no longer encroaches on abutters' land. A copy of Sandy's map is attached to these minutes.

**Member Nenart made a motion to approve the Stickney Trail layout as Member Cannon has presented. Vice Chair Steele seconded the motion. Vote: 6/0/0, the motion carries.**

The Commission then had a brief discussion about the Marshall trail painting which is currently underway. Chair Wainwright displayed the trail markers he painted with various shapes and colors to differentiate trails. Member Cannon stated that the discussion about Marshall trails can likely wait for the next meeting; the Commission agreed.

## **6. Accessible Trail on the Slade TF – Progress Report - John**

Member Fournier produced a document for the Commission's consideration which contained the project items that have been completed since the last meeting (see attached). Member Fournier stated that Town Administrator John Apple opened an account with Pike's quarry in Hooksett, New Hampshire, so the Town will be billed directly for the trail materials. Member Fournier stated that one of the biggest wins of this entire project thus far was finally finding that a two-to-one mix for the trail bed material is ideal, rather than a one-to-one mix. Member Fournier continued that he ran a few tests and is confident that the two-to-one mix will hold up the best over time. Member Fournier stated that he also found twelve-and-a-half-foot rolls of fabric that will also be needed; the roll can be cut in half to produce two rolls that are just over six-feet wide.

Member Fournier produced a map for the Commission which shows a right-of-way road for the Hampstead Area Water Company. Member Fournier continued that HAWC and the nearby HOA are both amenable to the Commission delivering materials right near the water pump house. Member Fournier stated that he needs to follow up on the agreement that the Town will pay up to \$5,000 for damages if the HOA's road is damaged. Member Fournier continued that the Public Works Director is well aware of this situation, and typically puts in preventive measures to prevent damage to the roads in this area when big trucks come to dump materials.

Member Fournier stated that when the new trail was laid out and surveyed, they were able to mark it within 14 millimeters of accuracy. Member Fournier continued that as the trail is currently laid out, they proved that they met the requirements of laying out a trail that complies with the grade requirements. Chair Wainwright stated his concern for costs, since Architect Bob White mentioned the other day that he would need more money. Member Fournier stated that they have spent seven and a half hours working on this so far, and based on the hourly rate, the contract shouldn't need to be updated yet since there should be sufficient funds remaining. Member Fournier continued that he is still waiting for is the 3D representation of the maps. Chair Wainwright reminded Member Fournier that he has been empowered by the Board of Selectmen to manage the payment of invoices for this project as necessary.

Member Fournier stated that the next step is to remove the obsolete stakes on the pink trail that was created last winter. Member Fournier continued that he has started flagging in red the trees which will need to be removed in Phase 1;

ninety-nine percent of these trees are less than 4 inches in diameter. Member Fournier continued that the biggest tree being taken down is a 6-to-8-inch Red Oak tree. Member Fournier stated that they will soon be ready for volunteers to help with the tree removal portion of the project. Chair Wainwright asked if he had volunteers lined up; Member Fournier responded that he will be emailing them shortly to enlist their help.

Member Fournier stated that, due to their proximity to the trails, the parking spaces had to be cut down to nine feet each rather than ten feet each; nine feet is standard for parking spaces. Member Fournier continued that the parking area still needs to be reviewed by the Public Works Director. Member Fournier stated that Ted Stewart will soon begin stumping and clearing the parking area.

Member Fournier read from an email he received from Jay Scarborough who is the Administrator of the State of New Hampshire Trails Program. Member Fournier continued that the State has selected the Slade Town Forest project and has elected to offer the full requested amount of \$61,804 in grant funding, although this funding won't be available until after July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Member Fournier stated that there has been quite a bit of favor shown toward accessible trails. Member Fournier stated, finally, that he has heard the following question come up a few times, and the Commission will soon need to answer it; will firearm hunting be discontinued on the Slade Town Forest. The Commission had a brief discussion about firearms use in this area and whether or not they'd need to bring any proposed changes to a Town Meeting for consideration. Chair Wainwright asked if there were any questions for Member Fournier, there were none.

## **7. Wetland Setback Variance Application – King's Grant Road**

Chair Wainwright stated that this afternoon, he received an application for a wetland setback variance on King's Grant Road. Chair Wainwright produced a map which showed the area of this setback and the Wright Farm prime wetlands are in very close proximity. Chair Wainwright stated that the proposed structure will not produce any human or animal waste or house any vehicles, so the landowner may not technically need a variance in this case. Chair Wainwright stated that he believes a site walk would be appropriate to understand the impacts of approving or denying the application. The Commission discussed when they could meet for this site walk.

## **8. NHACC Annual Conference: Registration and Breakout Session Discussion**

Chair Wainwright stated that registration for this conference is officially open, and this year they'll be holding a good amount of breakout sessions, some specifically designed for newer Commission members. Chair Wainwright listed some of the sessions that will occur during the conference. Chair Wainwright urged the Members to sign up for the breakout sessions at the same time as registering as they tend to fill up quickly.

## **9. Short Reports & Discussions**

### **a. Policy On Tree Cutting Around Abutters' Land – Suzie?**

Member Newman stated that she has been working on a system for residents to submit potential liability concerns to the Town. Member Newman produced a form for the Commission's consideration – a copy is attached to these minutes. Member Newman stated that this form includes boilerplate information such as name and address, but also includes free-type sections where residents can explain, in detail, the nature of their concern. Member Newman continued that the form also requests diagrams of the land and photographs of the concerns for clarity's sake. Member Newman stated that she will send this draft form to the Member's for review and comment.

### **b. Stewardship Reports (Orr and Williams #4) – Bill, others?**

Vice Chair Steele stated that these walks will occur the second week in November, which is a much better time to view the area after the leaves have fallen. The Commission had a brief discussion on how to achieve both reports in the allotted timeframe.

### **c. 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration Update and the Logo – Suzie, Jeff, Monique, and Pete**

Member Newman stated that she spoke with Noriko Yoshida-Travers about holding the Conservation Fair event at the Community Center in September or October; Noriko stated that there are times available but those are months are busy with events, so the Commission may want to choose a different month. The Commission discussed that "Atkinson Days" will be coming back, and we may be able to piggy-back on one of those events to add a Conservation 50<sup>th</sup> celebration element. Member Fournier stated that the May, June, July timeframe next year would be a good time to encourage fundraising for the accessible trail project on the Slade Town Forest. Chair Wainwright stated that Selectman Beth Cacciotti has offered many different logos that can be used by the Commission, and he encouraged the Members to take a look on the table at the rear of the room and state their preferences before leaving this meeting.

**d. T-Shirt Discussion – Monique**

Chair Wainwright stated that this discussion will wait until Member Chretien is here to speak to it, since she was waiting for a logo to be chosen before moving forward.

**e. NHACC Board of Director's Report – Paul**

Chair Wainwright stated that the photography contest has not gone as well as anticipated but he should have the names of the finalists this week; the winners will be announced at the November NHACC meeting.

**f. Planning Board Report – Paul**

Chair Wainwright stated that there has been a plan presented by Palmer Gas to build propane storage tanks across the street from Palmer Gas. Chair Wainwright continued that the owner wants to place four more 44,000-gallon propane storage tanks, which the Planning Board has been considering over the past few months. Chair Wainwright stated that the approval of these tank installations is contingent upon a few factors including an alteration of terrain permit, and the Fire Department approval for fire suppression methods.

**g. Turtle Sign Report – Monique and Sandy**

Member Cannon stated that the turtle signs have now all been covered until next season. The Commission had a brief discussion around whether or not "Wildlife Crossing" signs should be posted in targeted locations around Town.

**h. Troop 9 News? - Bill**

Vice Chair Steele stated that Troop 9 is back in session, and although they have no Eagle Scout projects on the table right now, he let them know if anyone needs community service or conservation hours to let the Commission know.

**i. Trail Map Status Report from Hannah**

Chair Wainwright stated that Hannah has a good stock of maps right now and is managing the drop-offs to each location monthly.



**j. Other Business**

Member Cannon mentioned that she will be in contact with Jim Wilkinson to map the new layout of trails on Stickney.

Chair Wainwright proposed that we meet the 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday in November to avoid meeting the night before Thanksgiving – there was consensus to do that.

**10. Next Meetings: October 25 (4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday) and November 29, 2023 (5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday)**

**11. Hold the Date: NH ACC Annual Conference will be Saturday, November 4, 2023**

**12. Adjournment**

**Vice Chair Steele made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Nenart seconded the motion. Vote: 6/0/0**

The meeting adjourned at 8:39PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Zachary Gilberti, Recording Clerk

**Attachments:**

- **Anticipated expenditures yet to go**
- **Stickney Trail Layout map**
- **Landowner potential liability documentation form**



## Atkinson Conservation Commission - Projected Expenditures as of September 27, 2023

Budget remaining on September 27, 2023	\$ 5,355.73
Anticipated expenses in 4Q 2023 (see below)	\$ 4,650.00
"Yet to Spend"	\$ 705.73

### Anticipated expenses include:

Peter Steckler - complete the Lang management plan - 4 hours @ \$125/ho - done but not yet invoiced	\$ 600.00
Peter Steckler - consulting on the Maple Avenue culvert design - for discussion this evening	\$ 2,000.00
Minutes - Sep, Oct, Nov plus a Public Hearing - we have been running about \$100 per meeting	\$ 400.00
Matt Sullican - materials for repair of washout on Sawyer - committed but not yet done or invoiced	\$ 250.00
Printing the Lang ARM Management Plan - committed but not yet done or invoiced	\$ 200.00
More paint and supplies for trail blazing - already spent but not yet reimbursed	\$ 100.00
? Turtle signs and posts	
Mowing of fields - committed but not yet scheduled or invoiced	\$ 1,100.00



The image is a topographic map of a region around Big Island Pond. The map features contour lines indicating elevation, with labels such as 250, 300, and 350 feet. Major roads shown include Island Pond Rd, Kipcan Rd, Hemlock Heights Rd, and Waters Edge Rd. A prominent water body, Big Island Pond, is located in the lower-left quadrant. A yellow dashed line traces a path through the terrain, starting from the upper-left and moving towards the lower-right. Blue arrows point to specific locations along this path. Handwritten annotations in black ink include 'Hampstead Atkinson' and 'Lichen Trail (0.4 mi)'. The map also shows various landmarks and features, including a 'Lichen Trail (0.4 mi)' and a 'Hampstead Atkinson' area. The map is oriented with North at the top, and the grid lines indicate coordinates.

White



## Slade Accessible Trails Phase 1 Construction

Status update for September 27, 2023 monthly meeting

### Tasks Completed Since Last Two Meetings

1. Finalized terms of contract between Ted Stewart and the Town of Atkinson. This milestone was realized after completing tasks 2-6. Ted will not have to establish credit for materials.
2. Had on-site meeting with Ted Stewart and GPI Architect Bob White. Main concern for Ted was the source and cost of the trail surface material.
3. We found a promising "3/8-inch minus" hardpack material that is being mixed for another trail-builder. Brought home an SUV load of buckets and bins full of free samples of the mix and the components from the Pike Industries quarry in Hooksett.
4. Conducted compaction tests of the 2:1 pre-mixed material. Also mixed our own 1:1 ratio as suggested by another trail-builder and tested this. Determined that the 2:1 mix will work well for us, with no on-site mixing required.
5. Locked in pricing and established credit with Pike for this material to be delivered to the site.
6. Locked in pricing for geotextile fabric from US Fabric and got commitment from John Apple to extend credit for that order.
7. Met with HOA board of neighboring Village at Settlers Ridge condos. Had a very positive discussion and successfully negotiated a preliminary agreement for access to our site from their private road. They had no concerns about allowing public safety/first responder access. They will allow access for construction and materials once we finalize the terms of an agreement for the town to cover any damage to their private road.
8. Bob White and John Fournier staked the Green and Pink Trails to be upgraded to accessible standards in Phase 1 on September 26 after some relocations of the Pink Trail.

# Atkinson Conservation Land Issue Form

\* Required

## 1. Date \*

Please input date (M/d/yyyy)



## 2. Full Name \*

Enter your answer

## 3. Street Address \*

Enter your answer

## 4. Phone Number \*

Enter your answer

## 5. Please describe in detail the current concerns/issues with the conservation land abutting your property \*

Enter your answer

6. In order for conservation to have a better understanding of the current concerns/issues we ask that you provide a diagram of your property clearly marking the location of the concerns and provide corresponding photos. Please confirm this material is attached. \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. How long has this been an issue? \*

☐ less than a month

☐ less than a year but more than a month

8. What was the cause? \*

☐ Time

☐ Weather related

☐ Other

Never give out your password. [Report abuse](#)

This content is created by the owner of the form. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner. Microsoft is not responsible for the privacy or security practices of its customers, including those of this form owner. Never give out your password.