

Atkinson Conservation Commission Minutes
Wednesday, June 29, 2022, 7:00 PM
Atkinson Town Hall

DRAFT

Members Present:

Paul Wainwright, Chair
Bill Steele, Vice Chair
John Fournier, Secretary
Suzie Newman
Scott Kukshel
Jeff Nenart
Pete McVay (arrived late)

Others Present:

1. Call to Order, and Attendance:

Chair Paul Wainwright called the meeting to order in person at Atkinson Town Hall at 7:02PM on Wednesday, June 29th, 2022. Chair Wainwright took attendance and all members were present except for Member McVay. No alternates were present.

2. Review and approval of minutes:

a. May 25, 2022 Public

Chair Wainwright presented the minutes of the May 25, 2022 public meeting and asked for comments or corrections. Member Fournier noted a spelling correction for Mike Trasatti as the Chair of the Atkinson Water Resource Committee.

Member Fournier motioned to approve the public meeting minutes of the 05/25/2022 meeting, as amended above. Member Kukshel seconded the motion. Members Steele & Newman abstained from the motion because they were not in attendance. Vote: 4/0/2, the motion carried.

Member McVay joined the meeting at this time.

b. May 25, 2022 Non-public

Chair Wainwright presented the minutes of the May 25, 2022 non-public meeting, stated that he corrected the attendance list and asked for other comments or corrections, there were none.

1 **Member Nenart motioned to approve the non-public meeting minutes of the**
2 **05/25/2022 meeting, as written. Member McVay seconded the motion.**
3 **Members Steele & Newman abstained from the motion because they were**
4 **not in attendance. Vote: 5/0/2, the motion carried.**
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7 **3. Review and Reconsider All Minutes That Are Currently Sealed**

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9 Chair Wainwright stated that each June, the Commission reviews any non-public
10 minutes that have been sealed since the previous review. Chair Wainwright
11 produced a list of such minutes (a redacted copy is attached to these minutes),
12 and suggested the following:

- 13
- 14 • Unseal the minutes from 09/23/2021 regarding the Beckhorn Land
- 15 donation, which has already gone through.
- 16 • Unseal the minutes from 04/04/2022 & 04/11/2022 regarding the Page
- 17 Farm backland, a deal which has fallen through.
- 18

19 Chair Wainwright stated that there are numerous other minutes regarding the
20 Beckhorn Land but they cannot be unsealed because there were other potential
21 land acquisitions also discussed at those meetings which are still active. Chair
22 Wainwright continued that there are other non-public minutes which concern
23 other lands that are still open opportunities, and as a result these should remain
24 sealed as well.

25
26 **Member Kukshtel made a motion to unseal the non-public Conservation**
27 **Commission minutes from 09/23/2020, 04/04/2022, and 04/11/2022, and to**
28 **continue to seal the remaining list of non-public minutes, as shown in the**
29 **table of sealed minutes, for reconsideration at the June, 2023 meeting**
30 **unless the issues discussed have been resolved and the minutes have**
31 **been unsealed at an earlier date. Member Nenart seconded the motion.**
32 **Vote: 7/0/0, the motion carried.**
33
34

35 **4. Conservation Land Monitoring and Stewardship Policy – Brainstorm**

36

37 Chair Wainwright stated that the Commission needs a written Land Monitoring
38 and Stewardship policy in order to apply for the LCHIP grant. Chair Wainwright
39 continued that he thinks the Commission does a good job of keeping track of
40 conservation lands, but we do not have our policy written down. Chair
41 Wainwright stated that he was planning on putting together a one to two-page
42 policy for the Commission's review by next month's meeting so a vote can be
43 made. Chair Wainwright continued that he would like to have an open-ended
44 discussion around the following suggested goals:

- 45
- 46 1. The primary goal of stewardship shall be the protection of contiguous
- 47 blocks of open space in support of:
- 48 • Watershed protection
- 49

- Wildlife habitat protection
- Rural character protection
- Etc.

Discussion: Member Nenart stated that the words “and other environmentally valuable lands” should be added because the Commission is concerned about more than just contiguous blocks of open space. The Commission agreed.

2. Passive recreation shall be secondary to these goals, and shall be managed in such a way to minimize the impact of human presence on the above primary goals.

Discussion: The Commission agreed with this goal and had no proposed changes.

3. Selective timber harvests shall have the primary goal of improving the health and diversity of the forest in support of a diversity of wildlife habitat.

Discussion: The Commission agreed with this goal and suggested mentioning flora and fauna so the wording isn't restricted to wildlife. Chair Wainwright stated that by mentioning diversity, this captures plants and animals.

4. Public access to conserved lands shall be in accord with the policies and guidelines for the Use of Conservation Land document adopted by the Atkinson Conservation Commission on 07/22/2020, which may be amended from time to time as needed.

Discussion: Chair Wainwright stated that it does not make sense to add too many requirements because the Commission will then be responsible for following up on them. Chair Wainwright asked Member McVay if he had a chance to look into the form for documenting our monitoring activities. Member McVay stated that he has software that can turn forms into an electronic version, but the current form needs some modifications. Member McVay continued that he noticed that the current form is very linear and the sections should be updated as well. Chair Wainwright asked how often the Commission thought they should be completing these forms because most easements require annual monitoring. The Commission agreed that doing monitoring once annually should be sufficient and not be too big of a burden on the Members. Chair Wainwright asked how in-depth the monitoring needs to be. The Commission agreed that the monitoring would need to be done with a site walk to successfully monitor the lands.

Chair Wainwright stated that a form should be created for this purpose that can be filled out electronically, or in hard copy and scanned in. Member Fournier suggested that the Commission's page of new Town website could have a section dedicated to land stewardship in which the lands could be documented with photographs over the years.

1 The Commission had a brief discussion around whether or not two Members
2 should be required for these land monitoring efforts. Member Nenart stated that
3 it may make sense to keep the requirement to one Member per land for
4 monitoring so two Members won't need to line up their schedules to achieve the
5 goal. Member Fournier asked if the land monitoring could be done by one
6 Member and another neighbor who knows the lands well; the Commission
7 agreed that this would be acceptable.

8
9 The Commission came back to the discussion around how in-depth this
10 monitoring needs to be, and agreed that the boundaries do not necessarily need
11 to be walked each time but occasionally if any concerns arise.

12
13 Member McVay stated that he should have a draft of the reporting form by the
14 next meeting.

15
16 Chair Wainwright asked what specific items should be monitored during these
17 inspections, and suggested the condition of the trails and kiosks should be
18 documented. Member Nenart suggested that the health of the forest is
19 important. Member Steele suggested that the presence of invasive plant species
20 and obstacles such as downed trees should be monitored, as well as any
21 apparent encroachments. Member Fournier stated that any prohibited behaviors
22 should be monitored such as cutting trees and ATV use. Chair Wainwright
23 suggested adding a feature to the new web page where residents can
24 anonymously report their concerns regarding town-owned lands and their use.

25
26 Chair Wainwright stated that these documents will need to be stored on file in
27 Town Hall. Chair Wainwright continued that if any violations are found, the
28 Commission's responsibility is to notify the Code Enforcement Officer and
29 potentially find a surveyor to settle encroachment concerns. Chair Wainwright
30 produced some maps for the Commission's review and pointed out a one-acre
31 parcel of wetlands owned by the Town on Hall Farm Road. Chair Wainwright
32 stated that this land was donated to the Town by a developer who could not build
33 on the land and did not want to continue to pay taxes on such a land; the Town
34 no longer accepts such donations. Member Kukshel stated that it may make
35 sense to create a schedule to ensure that each land is inspected at a certain time
36 of year and potentially alternate winter and summer so the health of the trees can
37 be assessed. Chair Wainwright suggested that this not be a requirement but
38 more of a guideline. Chair Wainwright asked if there were any other comments,
39 there were none.
40

41 42 **5. Conservation Commission on New Town Web Site – Brainstorm**

43
44 Member Fournier stated that he received an email from Selectman Beth
45 Cacciotti, and the next step is to set up a 20-minute phone call with Town
46 Administrator John Apple to review a list of questions & concerns. Member
47 Fournier continued that the new Town Website should have launched by now but
48 they must have hit a few snags.
49

1 Member Fournier stated that he was also going through the Commission's
2 Microsoft Outlook account and found that the Commission has a OneDrive
3 account as well, so this may be useful in posting content on the web page.
4 Member Fournier continued that the new web page could have images as well as
5 links to other conservation organizations or videos such as Matt Tarr's birding
6 videos. Member Fournier added that he is hoping to have a calendar on the
7 page to keep track of Commission activities and events. Chair Wainwright
8 suggested that the page should have

- 9
- 10 • A list of Members and their term limits
- 11 • Meeting dates & times
- 12 • How to contact the Commission, potentially a form that generates a
- 13 message to Town employees so it gets immediate attention
- 14 • The Commission's Mission Statement
- 15 • The Commission's By-laws
- 16 • The Conservation Land Use Policy
- 17 • The Stewardship Policy
- 18 • Hunting information
- 19 • Trail maps & other maps
- 20

21 Member Fournier mentioned the fact that the Chair has been graciously hosting
22 the Commission's resource information web page and associated files, so he will
23 need to find a way to migrate the information to the new page.

24
25 Chair Wainwright agreed that the Commission's notes should be on something
26 more secure than on his hard drive. Chair Wainwright continued that when these
27 notes are moved to the Town's digital 'Silo' it will be important to have a section
28 for private documents and a section for public documents.

29
30 Chair Wainwright asked what other content should be on the new page. Member
31 McVay stated that there could be a link to GIS maps, and although they do need
32 constant updating, they are a useful resource. Member Kukshtel stated that a
33 news feed would be a good idea to advertise current events with the
34 Commission; Facebook posts and Town Newsletter articles could include links to
35 the news feed to generate traffic.

36
37 Member Newman asked if there were other educational resources the
38 Commission would like to post links for. Chair Wainwright stated that there is
39 plenty of content generated by UNH and one video he would like to post in
40 particular is why selective logging is done on Town forests. Member Steele
41 asked if the videos of the meetings would be posted, Chair Wainwright stated
42 that the Town manages storage of the videos so that will not be on the new page.
43 Member Fournier suggested that there should be a link to the literature on
44 invasive plant species.

45
46 Chair Wainwright asked if there were any other content suggestions; there were
47 none. Member Nenart stated that this is a living document, so things can always

1 be added. The Commission agreed that photos are important on the page and
2 any subtending microsites. Chair Wainwright added, finally, that he also would
3 not mind some hidden “Easter eggs” for residents to find.
4
5

6 **6. Short Reports & Discussions**

7 **a. Trails & Maps – Map Re-printing Status**

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9
10 Chair Wainwright stated that Member Krause placed the order for the map
11 re-printing so the maps are printed but he has not yet received an invoice.
12 Member Newman stated that she was on East Road and the kiosk map
13 holder is infested with ants.
14

15 **b. Conservation Email Management - John**

16
17 Member Fournier stated that he has a list of about 10 – 12 questions that
18 he needs to ask John Apple before he can move forward. Chair
19 Wainwright asked Member Fournier to please forward any relevant and
20 time-sensitive emails to his personal email address.
21

22 **c. Troop 9 News – Barry Camp**

23
24 Member Steele stated that Jake Martineau backed out of the Barry
25 Conservation Camp for this summer. Chair Wainwright stated that
26 simultaneously, the bookkeeper forgot to pay the tuition, and as a result, a
27 refund will not be necessary. Chair Wainwright stated that he is very
28 displeased with this Eagle Scout candidate who was unable to block out a
29 small amount of time on his calendar. Member Steele stated that Jake is
30 a great kid and he was surprised to hear that he was unable to make it to
31 the camp.
32

33 Member Steele also stated that he needs to reach out again to Stan about
34 finding volunteers to help fill the well.
35

36 **d. Land Conservation Plan Update**

37
38 Chair Wainwright stated that this project should be wrapped up in about
39 one month. Chair Wainwright continued that he is meeting with Julie
40 LaBranche tomorrow, at which time he should be reviewing the “attributes
41 important to Atkinson” and the “priorities for Atkinson and co-occurrence
42 map.” Chair Wainwright stated that he is hoping to have a presentation at
43 the July meeting which would be open to the public.
44

45 **e. Selective Cut on Stickney, Beckhorn & Marshall**

46
47 Chair Wainwright stated that when he spoke to Consulting Forester
48 Charlie Moreno, Charlie mentioned that the expenses and anticipated
49 revenue are looking like the Town will break even on the Stickney
50 selective cut, so there likely won't be much of a financial benefit to the
51 Town. Chair Wainwright continued that Charlie Moreno suggested

1 expanding the selective cut to cover the Marshall Town Forest as well.
2 Chair Wainwright suggested that the recently acquired Beckhorn Land will
3 also likely need some management soon.

4
5 The Members expressed consensus that the timber harvest should be
6 expanded to include the Marshall and Beckhorn lands.

7
8 Chair Wainwright stated that he will ask Charlie Moreno to write up a cost
9 estimate for adding the Marshall Town Forest and Beckhorn parcel to this
10 project so that the Commission can formally consider this expansion.

11
12 **f. IRS Forms for Susan Beckhorn – Still “In Process”**

13
14 Chair Wainwright stated that Susan Beckhorn still has not received the
15 IRS form from her accountant so this is still in process.

16
17 **g. Other Business**

18
19 Chair Wainwright stated that Member Legault notified him of some
20 Styrofoam debris from an old dock that has washed up in the cove on the
21 Stickney Land, but the Road Agent reports they wouldn't be able to gain
22 access to this area until the water is out of the lake in the autumn.

23
24 Member Steele stated that there was one day he saw a car parked at the
25 canoe launch and the car had a boat trailer. Member Steele continued
26 that he will keep an eye out in case this person returns. Member Steele
27 suggested creating a standard note or sign that can be left for people to
28 spread awareness that they are in violation of conservation rules and
29 regulations.

30
31 Member Fournier stated that last weekend, there was a small group of
32 residents who went out with Greg Jordan for the invasive plant
33 identification workshop. Member Fournier continued that although only
34 four other people showed up in addition to Commission Members, three of
35 the four volunteered their time to help remove invasive plants from Town
36 lands.
37

38
39 **7. Next Regular Meetings: July 27 and August 24, 2022, at 7:00PM**

40
41 **8. Hold the Date: NH ACC Annual Conference will be Saturday, November 5,**
42 **2022**

43
44 **9. Adjournment**

45
46 **Member Nenart made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Steele**
47 **seconded the motion. Vote: 7/0/0**

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49 The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM.

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3 Respectfully Submitted,

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5 Zachary Gilberti, Recording Clerk
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9 **Attachments:**
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- Redacted list of sealed minutes from non-public sessions

Minutes Name	Seal	Release	Topic	Recommendation
2010-08	✓		██████ land purchase	This is still an active project. Recommend not unsealing.
2011-06	✓		██████ Land, SE Passage, Ruth McPherson-Lang-Brown, Kutzelman greenway passage	██████ land purchase still possible.
2011-09	✓		██████ land, Jane Jones Land	██████ land purchase still possible.
2012-07-02	✓		██████, Kinney, Brown (Page) land	██████ land purchase still possible.
2012-10	✓		██████ Land, Bob Allen, ██████	██████ land purchase still possible.
2012-12	✓		██████ meeting	██████ land purchase still possible.
2015_06_01	✓		██████ land	Still pending
2015_07_06	✓		██████ Land	Pending
2020_02_03	✓		██████ Land	Pending
2020_03_02	✓		██████ Land	Pending
2020_05_10	✓		██████ Land	██████ land purchase still possible.
2020_05_27	✓		██████, and ██████ land	All three opportunities are still pending
2020_09_23		✓	Susan Beckhorn land	Land has been donated to the Town; recommend we unseal these minutes
2021_04_29	✓		██████ Land	Pending
2021_08_25	✓		Beckhorn and ██████ land	██████ still pending
2021_09_22	✓		Beckhorn and ██████ land	██████ still pending
2021_10_27	✓		Beckhorn and ██████ land	██████ still pending
2022_02_23	✓		██████ land	Pending
2022_04_04		✓	Page Farm backland	No deal – landowner unwilling to clear title
2022_04_11		✓	Page Farm backland	No deal – landowner unwilling to clear title

Minutes Name	Seal	Release	Topic	Recommendation
2022_04_27	✓		land	Pending
2022_05_25	✓		land and Page Farm Backland	still pending