

Atkinson Conservation Commission Minutes
Wednesday, June 23, 2021, 7:00 PM
Atkinson Town Hall

Approved July 28, 2021

Members Present:

Paul Wainwright, Chair
Bill Steele, Vice Chair
Pete McVay, Secretary
Jeff Nenart
Scott Kukshtel
John Fournier
Monique Chretien, Alternate
Hannah Freed, Alternate
Denise Legault, Alternate

Others Present:

Bob Worden, Selectman Liaison
Charles Stahley
Tim Lovell, Chair of Hampstead Conservation Commission
Dave Williams, Station Manager, ACTV

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, June 23rd, 2021. Chair Wainwright took attendance and all members are present with the exception of Member Newman; Alternate Member Hannah Freed will be voting in her stead.

2. Review and approval of minutes: May 26, 2021

Chair Wainwright requested comments on the minutes of the May 26th meeting, there were none.

Vice Chair Steele made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the May 26, 2021 public session of the Atkinson Conservation Commission. Member McVay seconded the motion. Vote: 7/0/0.

3. Treasurer's report

Chair Wainwright produced the latest Treasurer's report, noted that there is plenty left in this year's budget and he showed the boundary markers that he planned on implementing around Town lands. Chair Wainwright stated that the UV coating was unacceptable on the Conservation Land markers because it would not last through the harsh New England weather extremes, as a result he is having another run printed with a better coating. Chair Wainwright stated that he is still waiting for the receipts from Member Newman for the Pollinator Pathways expenses.

4. The “Worden Report” – Fit Trail and Default Budget

Selectman Liaison Bob Worden invited all to the Atkinson Fit Trail grand opening at Woodlock Park this coming Saturday. Mr. Worden discussed the features and events that will be held at the Fit Trail grand opening. He continued that he is looking forward to finishing the trail in the fall.

Selectman Worden stated that the 2021 Operating Budget failed at Town Meeting, therefore the Selectman had to rearrange the budget to ensure all departments at least met their basic needs. Mr. Worden continued that the Conservation budget has not been affected as a result of these rearrangements. Mr. Worden mentioned that the funding for the Road Agent’s extended duties failed at Town Meeting last March, and stated that since it failed, it has led to some difficulty in the Highway Department. Mr. Worden stated that the Board of Selectmen is working on resolving this matter by reorganizing the Road Agent’s duties, but they’re looking forward to next March when they hope to educate residents on the why it’s important to pass warrant articles that extend job descriptions such as this one.

5. Workshops: Tree ID retrospective, and Invasive plant ID and Birding walk being planned

a. Tree ID – retrospective thoughts

Chair Wainwright stated that the Tree ID workshop went very well and had about twenty attendees – mostly from Atkinson. Chair Wainwright continued that he will aim to open the next workshops up to Atkinson residents and non-residents alike. Chair Wainwright stated that one highlight of the workshop was discovering the American Elm trees on Town land.

b. Invasive plant ID with Arianna Spear, RCCD

Chair Wainwright stated that the Rockingham County Conservation District has funds to run workshops like this but these individuals do not work weekends so this will be held during the week. Chair Wainwright continued that this will probably be in late August and he will pass the date along as soon as he knows it.

c. Birding with Matt Tarr, UNH Cooperative Extension

Chair Wainwright stated that he heard back from Matt Tarr and all of his Saturdays in September are booked but he suggested an evening birding workshop. The Commission had a discussion around which Town lands would be best for this workshop – Sawyer, Caroline Orr, etc.

d. Wildlife tracking with Atkinson resident Charles Stahley

Chair Wainwright introduced Charles Stahley, who stated that he is working towards his wildlife tracking certificate, and that he is willing to help with or lead a wildlife tracking workshop. Mr. Stahley stated that the best time to lead a tracking workshop for beginners would be in the winter months when snow will likely be present. He continued that he likes to limit groups to ten attendees. Chair Wainwright stated that we could revisit this topic in the fall in order to schedule a winter wildlife tracking workshop date.

6. Sawyer: culvert replacement and well filling

Chair Wainwright mentioned the well filling project and asked for an update. Member Nenart stated that per RSA 482-B:15, RSA485:37 & RSA485:38, this abandoned well needs to be properly filled and closed by a certified professional to protect the quality of the watershed and prevent contamination. Member Nenart continued that since the well is covered and fenced it is not an immediate safety issue, but it will need to be filled rather than left in its current state.

Chair Wainwright mentioned the culverts on the Foote Brooke in Sawyer Town Forest, and stated that they need to be replaced with larger diameter culverts to prevent future clogging. Member Nenart stated that the cost for the two new 18" culverts was \$420.00 each, which will include delivery to the jobsite. Chair Wainwright stated that this project will be contingent upon the Road Agent Ted Stewart being able to assist with machinery. Member Nenart suggested waiting until the next meeting before voting on the matter so he may speak with Mr. Stewart to see if and when he will be able to help.

7. Cleanup work days – especially Sawyer – how to plan and organize?

Chair Wainwright stated that there is an overwhelming amount of invasive mitigation work to be done, and he wants to ensure that other residents are involved so the work does not all fall on the Commission. Chair Wainwright stated that maybe it was best to wait for the fall to plan the next cleanup day in order to wait for cooler weather.

8. Scout Activities?

Vice Chair Steele stated that Eagle Scout candidate Jack Carrubba, who proposed the bench project, is just waiting for his project plan to be approved by the Eagle Scout Board. Vice Chair Steele continued that Jake Martineau is still working on creating his proposal.

9. Hunting policy and maps – Scott

Member Kukshel produced the following two documents:

- Hunting FAQs: Answers to common questions about hunting in Atkinson
- Atkinson Town Forest Hunting Access and Parking: Map, with details of what kind of hunting is allowed on which Town Forest parcels

Member Kukshel stated that he made updates to these documents by elaborating on existing rules and editing for consistency; no policy changes were made, but there are some grey areas to straighten out. The four items that need to be addressed are the following:

- Resolve where the current regulations actually say people can hunt due to some confusion around the difference between Town Forest Land and Town Owned Land.
- The FAQ document prohibits all hunting activities on lands with recreational fields, but it's not clear if there are regulations that back that up, and the term "recreational fields" could also be open to interpretation.
- Fish & Game does not allow rifle hunting of deer in Rockingham County; however, there is no written rule that prohibits using a rifle for hunting other small animals.
- Update the links on the Town Conservation website so the documents are current and easily accessible.

Member Kukshel stated that, previously, hunting was allowed on all Town lands, but in the year 2000 there were a few incidents where houses were struck by stray bullets from neighboring wooded areas, and as such the residents voted to prohibit all hunting on fourteen specific parcels of Town owned lands (see TM 2000-31). Member Kukshel continued that since hunting was prohibited, Lyme disease was more prevalent and deer were appearing in residents' driveways, so in the year 2013, the residents voted to allow bow hunting in certain areas with an approved permit from the Board of Selectmen (see TM 2013-06). Chair Wainwright showed a map of the Town with various areas highlighted which showed Town Forest Lands and he suggested that an updated hunting map could be created from this map.

10. Short Reports and Discussions

a. Boundary Markers have arrived

As discussed earlier, the Conservation Land markers have been returned, and a new set will be produced.

b. Trails and Maps – Tim Lovell

Tim Lovell, Chair of the Hampstead Conservation Commission, approached the Commission and provided an 11" x 17" map that he'd like to post on a kiosk at the Chambers-Fila Conservation Land. Chair Wainwright stated that he'd like to ensure Dennis Krause has had a chance to review the proposed kiosk to ensure it is in line with what Atkinson has implemented. Mr. Lovell stated that one of the biggest reasons for posting this map is for search & rescue efforts as well as ensuring hikers are aware of their location while in the woods.

Member McVay made a motion to approve allowing the Hampstead Conservation Commission to construct an adjoining kiosk at the Chambers-Fila trailhead, conditioned upon Chair Wainwright and Dennis Krause reviewing and approving the design of the kiosk. Member Nenart seconded the motion. Vote: 7/0/0.

c. Pollinator Pathways – Suzie

This discussion will be tabled until Member Newman is present.

d. *Wild Atkinson* – status and next steps – Pete, Scott, Bill, and Dave W

Dave Williams, the Station Manager for ACTV, joined the discussion and stated that he was able to work with the students to get the narration sound bites recorded, but there is still some editing and formatting work to do for it to be ready for use in the video. Member McVay stated that the video footage is about ready to be paired up with the narration. Mr. Williams stated that if the finished video is sent to him, he can begin to sync up the audio in order to furnish the final product. Chair Wainwright requested a preview of this video at the July Commission meeting.

e. Moose Plate Land Conservation Plan – Paul

Chair Wainwright referred to the map he showed earlier that he created as part of the Land Conservation Plan, and alluded to a spreadsheet full of information that goes into creating that map. Chair Wainwright stated that he is working with two people from the Nature Conservancy to update the GRANIT database with current information about the town's Conservation lands, which has not been done in a long time. Chair Wainwright showed various areas of Town and highlighted particular areas that are designated as Conservation Land.

Alternate Fried, as part of the soon-to-be formed Page Farm Homeowner's Association, asked about the list of responsibilities of an HOA for managing the development's Open Space land; Chair Wainwright replied that this is a general issue for Cluster Open Space land. The Commission had a discussion around HOA roles & responsibilities. Member McVay suggested consulting her lawyer or taking cues from other HOAs in Town, and stated he will send her the guidelines from his own condominium's HOA.

f. Other reports?

Senate Bill 129: Chair Wainwright stated that there was a piece of legislation that would legalize the payment of a fee in exchange for developing rights in an area of threatened or endangered species that passed a vote at the State House. Chair Wainwright continued that he believes that there will likely be a lawsuit that follows this because of the widespread implications this has in many areas.

11. Other Business

12. Next meeting: July 28, 2021 (4th Wednesday at 7:00)

13. Hold the date: NH ACC Annual Conference will be Saturday, November 6, 2021

14. Adjournment

Member McVay made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Nenart seconded the motion. Vote: 7/0/0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Zachary Gilberti, Recording Clerk

Attachments:

a. Treasurer's Report

Town of Atkinson Conservation Commission 2021 Expenditure Tracking

Account Number	Description	TM Approved 2019 Budget	What	Amount	Date Prepared	Date Submitted	Amount Submitted	YTD Total	YTD Unspent
			Rounding				\$ -		
			May 2021 Minutes	5	\$91.80	5/17/2021	5/17/2021	\$91.80	
			April 2021 Minutes	5.5	\$100.98	5/17/2021	5/17/2021	\$100.98	
			March 2021 Minutes	6	\$110.16	4/16/2021	4/16/2021	\$110.16	
			February 2021 Minutes	4	\$73.44	3/12/2021	3/12/2021	\$73.44	
			January 2021 Minutes	4.5	\$82.62	2/8/2021	2/8/2021	\$82.62	
		Rate --> 18.36	December 2020 Minutes	5.5	\$100.98	1/7/2021	1/7/2021	\$100.98	\$ 559.98
			Budget Adjustment - removed			00/00/2020		\$ -	remove \$ -
40.46111.110.00	RECORDING CLERK	\$ 1,200.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 640.02
			Rounding				\$ -		
			May 2021 Minutes		\$5.69	5/17/2021	5/17/2021	\$5.69	
			April 2021 Minutes		\$6.26	5/17/2021	5/17/2021	\$6.26	
			March 2021 Minutes		\$6.83	4/16/2021	4/16/2021	\$6.83	
			February 2021 Minutes		\$4.55	3/12/2021	3/12/2021	\$4.55	
			January 2021 Minutes		\$5.12	2/8/2021	2/8/2021	\$5.12	
			December 2020 Minutes		\$6.26	1/7/2021	1/7/2021	\$6.26	\$ 34.72
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/17/2019		\$ -	remove \$ -
40.46111.220.00	FICA .062	\$ 75.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 40.28
			Rounding				\$ -		
			May 2021 Minutes		\$1.33	5/17/2021	5/17/2021	\$1.33	
			April 2021 Minutes		\$1.46	5/17/2021	5/17/2021	\$1.46	
			March 2021 Minutes		\$1.60	4/16/2021	4/16/2021	\$1.60	
			February 2021 Minutes		\$1.06	3/12/2021	3/12/2021	\$1.06	
			January 2021 Minutes		\$1.20	2/8/2021	2/8/2021	\$1.20	
			December 2020 Minutes		\$1.46	1/7/2021	1/7/2021	\$1.46	\$ 8.12
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/17/2019		\$ -	remove \$ -
40.46111.225.00	Medicare .0145	\$ 20.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 11.88
			Charlie Moreno - timber appraisal on 20-37-1		\$318.75	2/11/2021	2/11/2021	\$318.75	\$ 318.75
			Budget Adjustment - added			12/16/2019		\$ -	add \$ -
40.46111.390.00	OTHER PROF SERVICES	\$ 2,500.00	Budget Adjustment - added			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 2,181.25
			Hamp Print & Copy - Trail Maps & Brochure		\$453.16	5/17/2021	5/17/2021	\$453.16	
			Hamp Print & Copy - Trail Maps & Brochure		\$336.00	2/18/2021	2/18/2021	\$336.00	
			Hamp Print & Copy - Marshall brochure		\$50.00	2/3/2021	2/3/2021	\$50.00	\$ 839.16
			Budget Adjustment - Added			12/17/2019		\$ -	add \$ -
40.46111.550.00	PRINTING AND BINDING	\$ 1,000.00	Budget Adjustment - added			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 160.84
			NHACC Dues					\$ -	
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/16/2019		\$ -	add \$ -
40.46111.560.00	DUES/SUBS/MEMBERSHIPS	\$ 500.00	Budget Adjustment - added			8/12/2019		\$ -	\$ 500.00
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/16/2019		\$ -	remove \$ -
40.46111.620.00	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$ 1.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 1.00
			Budget Adjustment - Added			12/17/2019		\$ -	add \$ -
40.46111.625.00	POSTAGE	\$ 1.00	Budget Adjustment - added			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 1.00
			Conservation Land Boundary Markers		\$450.00	6/22/2021	6/22/2021	\$450.00	
			Easement Boundary Markers		\$523.60	6/22/2021	6/22/2021	\$523.60	\$ 973.60
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/15/2019		\$ -	add \$ -
40.46111.650.00	CARE OF GROUNDS	\$ 2,500.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 1,526.40
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/15/2019		\$ -	remove \$ -
40.46111.740.00	NEW EQUIPMENT	\$ 300.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 300.00
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/15/2019		\$ -	remove \$ -
40.46111.820.00	(2021 rate: \$0.56 per mile) MILEAGE	\$ 39.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 39.00
			Barry Conservation Camp - Jake Martineau		\$330.00	4/21/2021	4/21/2021	\$330.00	
			Jack Carrubba - Eagle project (estimate)		\$94.03				
			Acrylic holders for Ryan Torris' Eagle project		\$56.04	3/12/2021	3/12/2021	\$56.04	\$ 386.04
			Budget Adjustment - removed			12/15/2019		\$ -	remove \$ -
40.46111.840.00	SPECIAL PROGRAMS	\$ 1,000.00	Budget Adjustment - removed			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 613.96
			NHACC Handbooks for Monique and Hannah		\$20.00	4/20/2021	4/20/2021	\$20.00	\$ 20.00
			Budget Adjustment - Added			12/17/2019		\$ -	add \$ -
40.46111.850.00	EDUCATION & CONFERENCES	\$ 250.00	Budget Adjustment - added			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 230.00
			Replacement signs for Marshall TF vandalism		\$30.00	4/16/2021	4/16/2021	\$30.00	
			Revised Sawyer trails plastic signs		\$38.92	2/24/2021	2/24/2021	\$38.92	\$ 68.92
			Budget Adjustment			12/17/2019		\$ -	add \$ -
40.46111.875.00	SIGNS	\$ 500.00	Budget Adjustment - added			12/7/2020		\$ -	\$ 431.08
			TOTALS					\$ 3,209.29	\$ 6,676.71