

BOLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Monday, March 3, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.
Meeting held virtually utilizing Zoom

Members Present Via Zoom: Chairman Rod Parlee, Alan Bicknell, Brenda Cataldo (joined the meeting at 7:18 p.m.), Matt Rivers, Kimberly Fofana

Members Absent: Peter Van Dine

1.0 Call Meeting to Order – Roll Call

Chairman R. Parlee called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2.0 Minutes Review of February 3, 2025, Regular Meeting

K. Fofana made a motion to approve the February 3, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. A. Bicknell seconded.

M. Rivers requested the following amendment to the minutes:

- Replace the word “sometime” with “sometimes” in the first sentence of the second paragraph of Item 5.1

K. Fofana moved to approve the February 3, 2025 meeting minutes as amended. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0:2.

3.0 Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4.0 Financial Report

4.1 Onset Weather Station on Bolton Lake funded with CAF – Peter Van Dine

R. Parlee noted that P. Van Dine is looking into the cost and data sharing capability of an Onset rain gauge that would be installed at Bolton Lake. The item was tabled until P. Van Dine can share his findings.

4.2 FY 2025-26 Budget

The item was tabled since no updates have been provided on the budget request.

4.3 CLCC Conference on 3/22

R. Parlee reported that a payment request was submitted to the Town for the CLCC Conference and, if paid on time, the attendees will receive the early bird rate. A. Bicknell and R. Parlee will be attending.

4.4 Vernal Pool Brochures, Earth Day T-Shirts & NCCD Plant/Seedling Order

Vernal Pool Brochures: R. Parlee noted that the supply of Vernal Pool brochures has run out and recommended appropriating funds to order more. He added that a 50-pack costs approximately

\$6.00. The Commission discussed the various funds available and agreed to use the Conservation Activity fund.

B. Cataldo made a motion to appropriate up to \$80.00 out of the Conservation Activity fund for the reprint of Vernal Pool Brochures. M. Rivers seconded. The motion passed 4:1:1 (K. Fofana abstained, P. Van Dine absent).

Earth Day T-shirts: R. Parlee reported that he reviewed a flyer from Earth Day Shirts company but could not find an appropriate design. B. Cataldo stated that she looked at other places, such as 4imprint, but the cost is \$12.00 to \$15.00 per shirt and is only reduced for bulk orders. She will consult her daughter on whether she can design the shirts. R. Parlee noted that an order of 16 shirts will need be placed before the April meeting. He added that the BCC spent approximately \$225.00 on shirts last year.

A. Bicknell made a motion to appropriate \$230.00 for Earth Day T-shirts from the Conservation Activity Fund. B. Cataldo seconded.

Discussion: A Bicknell confirmed that B. Cataldo's daughter would not make more t-shirts than needed. B. Cataldo confirmed that she would only provide 16 shirts as requested.

The motion passed unanimously 5:0:1.

NCCD/Plant Seedling Order: R. Parlee explained that the BCC plans several events each year including the photo contest. The events are listed in a calendar the BCC sells which also highlights the winning photographs. He stated that funding will need to be appropriated for photo contest prizes in the following four photo categories: 1) Beauty of Open Space and Nature, 2) Green Buildings and Farming, 3) Wildlife in Bolton, and 4) People in the Environment. R. Parlee noted that the Cropleys have donated \$200.00 to provide \$100.00 first-place prizes for the first two categories.

R. Parlee noted that first-place prizes for the other two categories and second-place prizes for all of the categories need to be determined. He added that that third-place prizes usually consist of an Earth Day T-shirt and bareroot seedlings. The Commission discussed concerns about the size of trees the bareroot seedlings produce and suggested offering blueberry plants and other shrubs instead. R. Parlee stated that the Commission spent approximately \$400.00 in prizes last year with funding that is generated from the calendar sales.

B. Cataldo made a motion to appropriate up to \$400.00 from the Conservation Activity Fund for the purpose of providing photo contest prizes in the form of plants and shrubs. M. Rivers seconded.

Discussion: B. Cataldo mentioned that small plants could also be provided as third-place prizes. A. Bicknell also suggested providing May apples plants.

The motion passed unanimously 5:0:1.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Importance of Archiving BCC Data

R. Parlee invited BCC members to meet at the Town Hall work station at 6:30 p.m. prior to the April meeting to review the website and archive options for BCC documents, photos and other materials. He added that he is working with Cam Larson to transfer the data in a secure manner. R. Parlee emphasized the importance of archiving photos from the photo contests that have been submitted since 2001 since they provide historical snapshots of the Town. M. Rivers and A. Bicknell noted that they will attend the meeting.

5.2 Complete Streets in Bolton

R. Parlee stated that K. Fofana has been actively working on creating safer streets and, as a founding member of the Connecticut Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Board, he also focuses on bike and pedestrian safety. He described how unsafe the streets are in Bolton for pedestrians and noted that Bolton had the highest fatality rate in Connecticut for pedestrians last year. R. Parlee and K. Fofana would like to maintain this topic as a regular item on the agenda.

K. Fofana stated that she is circulating a petition to install traffic calming measures on Vernon Road, where she lives, to slow down speeders. She added that Bike Walk Bolton has been very supportive of her efforts. Bike Walk Bolton and other concerned residents will be joining K. Fofana to speak on street safety issues during Public Comment at the Board of Selectmen meeting tomorrow. K. Fofana is scheduled to provide a formal presentation at the BOS April meeting and will forward the presentation to BCC members.

5.3 Reformatted Photo Contest Flyer & Calendar Sales

B. Cataldo noted that she removed the rules from the flyer, added a catchy phrase and description, and will be adding the QR code to the flyer. R. Parlee suggested that A. Bicknell assist B. Cataldo with the revisions and adding new photos, including some of the contest entries that did not win. B. Cataldo and R. Parlee will pick up the calendars and calendar revenue from various locations in town and will provide the funds to P. Van Dine.

5.4 New Date: Vernal Pools Day on 3/31 at and behind Bentley Library

R. Parlee shared a draft press release for the Vernal Pools Day, titled "Vernal Pools Sunset Serenade," and noted that Ed Pawlak has agreed to be the special guest. He proposed holding the event on Monday, March 31, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. due to a conflict with the original date.

B. Cataldo made a motion to schedule the Vernal Pools Day event on Monday, March 31, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Bentley Memorial Library. A. Bicknell seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:1.

5.5 Earth Day (Mini-Bio Blitz) on 4/26, Kids to Parks Day on 5/17 and Trails Day on 6/7

Earth Day (Mini Bio-Blitz): R. Parlee noted that the Mini-Bio Blitz the Town held last year has inspired towns in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and the Friends of Robinson Park to hold similar events. He added that Friends of Robinson Park involved children in their event and proposed that the BCC do the same this year. R. Parlee explained that the children would be led on a nature walk

to observe and write down any species they can identify. He noted that volunteers will be needed to lead the walks. A. Bicknell suggested inviting Ray Hardy to be the special guest. B. Cataldo noted that she has a scheduling conflict with the proposed date of the event. The BCC discussed various conflicts among the proposed dates and agreed to change the date, although M. Rivers and K. Fofana will be unable to attend.

A. Bicknell made a motion to change the Earth Day Mini-Bio Blitz to Saturday, March 19, 2025.
B. Cataldo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5:0:1.

Kids to Parks Day: Kids to Parks Day, which is a joint effort between the BCC and the Recreation Department, will take place at Indian Notch Park on May 17, 2025.

Trails Day: Trails Day will take place on June 7, 2025. R. Parlee noted that Matt Largess usually attends as the special guest, and the event will feature a hike at Nathan Hale Greenway.

6.0 Continuing Business

6.1 BNSP Parking Lot Expansion

DEEP replied to the BCC's letter regarding the parking lot expansion but did not address the safety issues. R. Parlee explained that the BOS had also written a letter to DEEP and copied lawmakers which resulted in a meeting being scheduled between the Town, DEEP, and lawmakers. The BOS would like BCC members to attend the meeting. The BCC discussed involving DOT to address potential changes to the road to address the safety concerns.

The BCC began discussing the DEEP bike development and agreed to add the item to the next meeting agenda.

6.2 Function of Deer Crossing Signs

R. Parlee shared deer crossing guidelines from the Manual on Uniform Traffic Devices in Overland Park, Kansas and outlined their recommendations on where deer signs should be located. He shared concerns about the DOT directive that deer signs will no longer be replaced. M. Rivers stated that the Town is within its rights to post its own signs, and he will reach out to Town Administrator Jim Rupert for his input. The directive was issued based on a belief that deer collisions are down; however, R. Parlee believes the collisions are just being underreported.

6.3 Recycling at Bolton Events and Composting

The BCC discussed the placement of recycling bins at town events and suggested offering education on recycling and posting signs at events to draw attention and encourage recycling.

The BCC discussed surveying residents to assess interest and demand for composting options. M. Rivers suggested educating residents on composting options within the Town rather than purchasing composters. A. Bicknell agreed and suggested providing outreach through flyers and events. M. Rivers suggested distributing a compostable booklet. R. Parlee noted that one of the difficulties of buying composters is that they must be bought in bulk and storing them until they sell can be difficult. He asked B. Cataldo about a collapsible rain barrel that she owned and asked her to send him more information on the item.

6.4 FBL, BLWCA, SRWP, CACIWC Reports

FBL (Friends of Bolton Lakes): There was no report since P. Van Dine was absent.

BLWCA (Bolton Lakes Watershed Conservation Alliance): R. Parlee reported that some of the by-laws were recently changed to include Wetland Commission members and persons who own property or have relatives living on the watershed. The BLWCA was also provided with views overlooking the Atlantic White Cedar and osprey nesting platform from Michael Carlo's property.

SRWP (Salmon River Watershed Partnership): M. Rivers reported that he was unable to attend the meeting but noted updates on the wild and scenic designation, conductivity loggers, and MS4 and 2024 Accomplishments reports. He added that the SRWP will be at the Hebron Maple Festival, Machimoodus Spring Fling, and Haddam Agricultural Fair and outlined ongoing SRWP projects.

R. Parlee asked M. Rivers to attend future meetings and provide more detailed reports, particularly on temperature data and conductivity loggers for P. Van Dine. He also asked M. Rivers to provide this report again when P. Van Dine is in attendance and to provide more information on the Black Ledge Golf Course water diversion permit. R. Parlee also asked M. Rivers to upload the map to the website.

CACICW (Conecticut Association of Conversation and Inlands Wetlands Commissions): R. Parlee reported that the Commission is closely following legislative bills that may negatively impact the Commission.

7.0 Correspondence: Re: BCS Playground Renovation Committee from Casey Carini

R. Parlee stated that the playground at Bolton Center School is in need of shade, and Casey Carini has suggested planting trees around the perimeter. He noted that the Town requires trees to be above grade by seven feet to prevent children from running into limbs, and large trees would be required. B. Cataldo suggested installing a shade canopy instead. R. Parlee asked if anyone has heard of the seven-foot rule and to provide him with any information they may have.

8.0 Adjournment

A. Bicknell moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m. B. Cataldo seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0:3 (M. Rivers and K. Fofana left the meeting at 9:03 p.m.).

Next Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 7, 2025 at Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall and/or Virtual utilizing Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by Kacie Cannon,

Kacie Cannon

Please see minutes of subsequent meetings for corrections to these minutes and any corrections hereto.

