

## **BOLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

### **Regular Meeting**

**Monday, July 7, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.**

### **Zoom Only Meeting**

**Members Present via Zoom:** Chair Rod Parlee, Alan Bicknell, Brenda Cataldo, Matt Rivers

**Members Absent:** Vice-Chair/Treasurer Peter Van Dine, Kimberly Fofana (Alternate)

**Others Present via Zoom:** Board Clerk Kacie Cannon

#### **1.0 Call Meeting to Order – Roll Call**

Chairman R. Parlee called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

#### **2.0 Minutes Review of June 2, 2025, Regular Meeting**

M. Rivers suggested the following corrections:

- Item No. 4.3: Correct the spelling of “gauge” in the title of the item
- Item No. 7.0: Correct “re stripping” to “restriping” and change the last name “Fofano” to “Fofana”

A. Bicknell suggested the following corrections:

- Item No. 4.1: Correct “2 3 25 – 4.4” to February 3, 2025 – 4.4” and change “had approved” to “had been approved” in the third sentence.
- Item No. 5.3: Add “(west of Stony Rd.)” to clarify the location of the wetlands in the fourth sentence as follows: “There were concerns about getting through wetlands the other direction (west of Stony Rd.) before doing any trail work there.”
- Item No. 5.4: Split and rephrase the second to the last sentence as follows: “Most agreed that the intent of the underutilized Bolton commuter lot was to be exclusively for the East Coast Greenway. Requiring a sign stating where the overflow parking will be would be helpful.”

A Bicknell MOVED to APPROVE the June 2, 2025 meeting minutes as amended. M. Rivers SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

B. Cataldo asked if anyone has heard from Treasurer Peter Van Dine. R. Parlee stated that he has not heard from him and is unsure why he is not responding. He added that it is unclear if K. Fofana is stepping down from the Bolton Conservation Commission.

#### **3.0 Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **4.0 Financial Report**

##### **4.1 End of Fiscal Year Budget**

R. Parlee stated that the budget has not been approved yet for the new fiscal year and encouraged members to vote on the budget referendum scheduled for July 15, 2025. He explained that the budget submission process was difficult and time consuming and suggested that a staff member assist with completing the budget form for the BCC in the future.

##### **4.2 Confirmation of Payments**

R. Parlee mentioned that Jason from Hedges and Hedges was finally paid in June for the Vernal Pools brochures that he did in March. He explained that the BCC approved the payment in March but it

appears P. Van Dine failed to submit the request for payment to the Finance Department. He also explained that funds had to be transferred around to cover payroll, general supplies, and Fairy House contest prizes.

#### **4.3 CACIWC Co-Membership Renewal**

R. Parlee stated that funds will need to be reappropriated to cover the CACIWC membership fees for the 2025-2026 year. He explained that he attempted to pay the fees in May; however, the Finance Department could not accept an early payment for the coming fiscal year since it would interfere with their audit process. The BCC will need to re-approve the payment of \$75.00 in the near future, and the Inlands Wetlands Commission (IWC) will submit it with their payment of \$75.00 as the two commissions share a co-membership.

#### **4.4 Rain Gauge from Onset and/or LBL Level Indicators**

R. Parlee reminded the group that P. Van Dine was looking into getting a rain gauge from Onset. He added that FBL already has level indicators for Lower Bolton Lake. R. Parlee asked if this item should remain on the agenda since P. Van Dine has been unresponsive. M. Rivers suggested that the item be tabled until the BCC has a better understanding of the budget and how the rain gauge would be used. R. Parlee agreed and stated he will try to find out the status of the research from P. Van Dine.

### **5.0 New Business**

#### **5.1 Bear Sightings in Bolton**

R. Parlee stated that he has received numerous phone calls about bear sightings in Bolton and suggested providing a brochure or position statement clarifying misinformation and advising residents on prevention methods. He shared an article about an individual who was attacked by a bear when he came between the bear, his dog, and her cub and received minor injuries and refused medical attention and pointed out unnecessary exaggeration of the injuries made by the author. He noted that the article suggested methods of deterring bears including keeping yards clear of trash, pet food, and birdseed, ensuring dogs are leashed during walks, and carrying bear deterrents such as whistles and bear spray.

A. Bicknell agreed that the Commission should work on educating the public on best practices for deterring bears. B. Cataldo noted that DEEP has several resources on the subject, and she will request handouts from them for distribution. The group also discussed various ways to encourage residents to compost their garbage to reduce waste (tonnage at the curb) and agreed to discuss the matter further at the next meeting. M. Rivers will compile composting resources and information such as free online tutorials, low-cost and low-energy methods of composting, and various composters for the discussion.

#### **5.2 Recycling at Common Gathering Venue**

[https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_446d.htm#sec\\_22a-241k](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_446d.htm#sec_22a-241k)

R. Parlee stated that all towns in Connecticut have a Recycling Coordinator, and Town Administrator Jim Rupert serves as the coordinator for Bolton. He explained that he spoke with Samuel Saunders, the Recycling Coordinator for the Town of Ellington, and learned that legislation mandates that both trash and recycling bins be provided at common gathering venues. R. Parlee shared Section 22a-241k of the Solid Waste Management's Regulations outlining the requirements for recycling bins at public gatherings. He noted that when attempting to get recycling bins for the Winter Faire during the Recycling Challenge, he was informed that the public does not recycle properly and creates extra work for staff as they have to separate trash from the recycling bins. R. Parlee will send the mandate to John Butrymovich to ensure recycling bins are provided at future events.

B. Cataldo recommended asking if the Town can provide recycling bins with cutouts in the lids for cans and bottles to reduce the amount of trash being put into the bins. A. Bicknell also suggested that more education be provided in the schools to teach students how to recycle properly. R. Parlee will copy the school superintendent on the e-mail to J. Butrymovich asking about the recycling lids and providing education on recycling in the schools.

### **5.3 Plan Freja Park Workparty & Swap Temperature Monitors**

R. Parlee stated that the water bars need to be cleaned out at Freja Park and the temperature monitors need to be swapped out; however, there is a concern that there is a new beaver dam over a monitor. He suggested scheduling a time to assess the area and determine if the monitors need to be relocated, and scheduling a second meeting to clean out the water bars and address other new issues with the dams. R. Parlee and A. Bicknell will meet at Freja Park on June 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. for the assessment, and M. Rivers will join if he is available. The members will schedule the second meeting between August 11<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup> to complete the work.

### **5.4 Beaver Solutions for Notch Pond**

R. Parlee reported that he met with Sylvia Ounpuu and Jim Adams and they discussed humane ways to deter beavers at Notch Pond. The Commission discussed the potential of using beaver baffles and whether they are successful. They also noted that state approval would be required to use baffles and suggested funding may be an issue. B. Cataldo will reach out to Michael Callahan of Beaver Solutions to get more information.

## **6.0 Continuing Business**

### **6.1 Progress on Archiving BCC Data & Purchase of Flash Drive**

R. Parlee stated that a flash drive is now available to download the Conservation Commission archives and data and asked B. Cataldo to download contest photo entries, winning photo collages, and any other important data to the flash drive. He added that he would like P. Van Dine to download the stream temperature and vernal pool data first; however, he has been unable to reach him since he stepped down as Treasurer. B. Cataldo stated that she will attempt to reach out to him.

### **6.2 Photo Contest Prize Distribution and 2026 Calendar Photos**

R. Parlee stated that the photo contest prizes were distributed, and he enjoyed meeting the winners and hearing their stories. He asked B. Cataldo to print the collage of the winning photos to post at Town Hall and suggested sending a digital copy to the Town as a small file that they can open. B. Cataldo will print the collage, e-mail it to Town staff, and work on selecting photos for the 2026 calendar.

### **6.3 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Trails Day Results & Vernal Pools**

R. Parlee reported that the Trails Day was a success and noted that he, M. Rivers, and A. Bicknell were in attendance. He added that there is a Vernal pool further along the trail that needs to be verified and proposed doing a pool-to-pool hike next year for Trails Day. M. Rivers noted that the hike would be six miles long across difficult terrain and it may deter people from participating in Trails Day. R. Parlee stated that people might enjoy the long hike but he will consider other alternatives.

R. Parlee stated that he recently learned from Gwen Marrion that the parcel abutting the east side of the wetlands at the Nathan Hale Corridor Pass belongs to the state. G. Marrion had also informed him that a potential trail has been marked with pink tape, and R. Parlee offered the Commission's assistance

with blazing a trail. He is also awaiting a response from her on why the property was not included with the highway property that was transferred to the town from the state.

R. Parlee mentioned that Ed Pawlak reached out to him after reinspecting the Vernal Pool behind the library. Mr. Pawlak reported that the pool had approximately six inches of water during the first inspection; however, the pool was dry upon the second inspection. He was happy to report that the juvenile metamorphosis occurred prior to the pool drying up and noted that it is a productive and fascinating pool. R. Parlee suggested that the Commission keep an eye on the pool to discourage development and forest fragmentation in the area.

#### **6.4 Meeting with J. Hall (DEEP), A. Bergeron (CTDOT), R. Fournier (BoS) and others re: Safe Access to BNSP off Interstate I-384**

R. Parlee stated that DEEP has asked the Town to reach out to the Department of Transportation (DOT) to discuss concerns about the safety of the entrance to Bolton Notch State Park off I-384. J. Rupert is working on setting up a meeting with DOT, and R. Parlee will keep members apprised of the progress.

#### **7.0 Reports: Bike Walk Bolton, FBL, BLWCA, SRWP, CACIWC**

**Bike Walk Bolton:** R. Parlee provided a report from Kimberly Fofana which stated that Sylvia Ounpuu leads the Bike Walk Bolton meetings, and Jim Adams records the meeting minutes. She has requested that their meeting minutes be shared with the Commission. K. Fofana reported that several members of the Complete Streets sub-committee met with Andover Town Manager Eric Anderson, who oversaw the Complete Streets project in Andover, and noted that the next step is to meet with the Planning and Zoning Commission to present the Complete Streets proposal. She also reported that the Town is working on redesigning the intersection of Vernon and Quarry Roads to make it safer.

**FBL:** R. Parlee stated that a planned herbicide treatment is scheduled for next week on Middle Bolton Lake. FBL and the Alliance are also working on advancing the Bolton Lakes Watershed Management Plan with DEEP and inquiring about the delays in getting the plan approved.

**BLWCA:** The group will be conducting a strategic planning session to work on the vision, mission and goals of the group.

**SRWP:** M. Rivers reported that the last meeting was cancelled due to technical difficulties and provided the following highlights of the previous meeting:

- Hydrilla has been found in Middle Bolton Lake
- The culvert at Beebe Cove is being repaired and the lake is being lowered for the project
- A solar farm is going in above Route 66
- Stream temperature loggers are out in the streams and they will be attending the Haddam Neck Fair

M. Rivers noted that he has sent the Eightmile River Watershed recreation pamphlet to the Commission members and asked if they would like to divide them up for distribution. He added that he will provide a pack of them to Town Hall. R. Parlee recommended providing some of the pamphlets to the Bolton Land Trust and the Board of Selectmen and distributing the rest at the BLWCA meeting. He also asked if the map is available electronically, and M. Rivers stated that he will find out. M. Rivers noted that the map is very detailed and includes numerous towns.

**CACIWC:** R. Parlee reported that a lot of the discussion was related to the long session of the General Assembly this year and the important bills that were passed and signed by the Governor pertaining to CACIWC. The bills include mandatory training for Wetlands Commissioners which CACIWC will assist with, and setting up a diverse working group to work on riparian area corridors.

**8.0 Correspondence:** Bear Sightings in Bolton – 6/30/2025 HC Debate on Hunting Article, 7/2/2025 Email from Samuel Saunders, Ellington Recycling Coordinator, 6/30/2025 Email from Ed Pawlak re: Vernal Pool behind Library  
R. Parlee noted that all of the correspondence was covered earlier in the meeting.

### **9.0 Adjournment**

M. Rivers MOVED TO ADJOURN the meeting at 9:00 p.m. A. Bicknell SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0:2.

Respectfully submitted by Kacie Cannon,

*Kacie Cannon*

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

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