

BOLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 4, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.
In-Person and Zoom Meeting

Members Present in Person: Chair Rod Parlee, Brenda Cataldo, Matt Rivers

Members Present via Zoom: Alan Bicknell

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

Others Present via Zoom: Board Clerk Kacie Cannon, Lorna Sobolewski

1.0 Call Meeting to Order – Roll Call

Chairman R. Parlee called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

2.0 Minutes Review of July 7, 2025, Regular Meeting

M. Rivers MOVED to APPROVE the July 7, 2025 meeting minutes as written. B. Cataldo SECONDED.
MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

3.0 Public Comment

Lorna Sobolewski, a new resident to the Bolton Lake community and neighbor to Alan Bicknell, introduced herself and expressed potential interest in joining the Conservation Commission in the future.

4.0 Financial Report

4.1 End of Fiscal Year Budget

R. Parlee noted that the budget has failed to pass five times, and the sixth referendum is scheduled for August 12, 2025. He added that real estate tax bills have been sent out with a temporary rate and encouraged everyone to vote at the next referendum.

R. Parlee reported that pending bills include the CACIWC and Bolton Land Trust memberships. He also suggested that expenditures may be needed to replace the temperature monitor at Freja Park, which is missing and was not tethered to anything. R. Parlee asked B. Cataldo to determine if there is enough existing parachute cord or if more needs to be purchased. He added that he has not heard from P. Van Dine regarding Onset data collection but mentioned rain measurement equipment may be purchased in the future.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Election of Officers

R. Parlee noted that officer elections are held annually. He confirmed that Kacie Cannon has been appointed to serve as Secretary and asked if any members are interested in serving as Vice-Chair. A. Bicknell volunteered for the position.

B. Cataldo MOVED to NOMINATE A. Bicknell as Vice-Chair of the Conservation Commission. M. Rivers SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:1 (A. Bicknell Abstained).

M. Rivers MOVED to ELECT A. Bicknell as Vice-Chair of the Conservation Commission. B. Cataldo SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:1 (A. Bicknell Abstained).

R. Parlee asked if any members are interested in serving as Chair. M. Rivers suggested that R. Parlee to continue to serve in the role. R. Parlee noted his 30 years of service as Chair and recounted how he was appointed.

B. Cataldo MOVED to NOMINATE R. Parlee as Chair of the Conservation Commission. M. Rivers SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:1 (R. Parlee Abstained).

A. Bicknell MOVED TO ELECT R. Parlee as Chair of the Conservation Commission. M. Rivers SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 3:1 (R. Parlee Abstained).

R. Parlee reported that P. Van Dine has agreed to serve as an alternate member. Instead of appointing a Treasurer, he suggested the Commission work together to manage the finances. R. Parlee stated that he plans to meet with J. Rupert to discuss streamlining financial processes and will include A. Bicknell and B. Cataldo in the meeting.

5.2 Outreach to Beaver Solutions LLC <https://www.beaversolutions.com/>

R. Parlee thanked B. Cataldo for reaching out to Michael Callahan at Beaver Solutions and other organizations to address the beaver issues that are causing flooding on the trail at Notch Pond. B. Cataldo stated that Beaver Solutions is willing to waive the \$325.00 site assessment fee and will conduct a thorough inspection when the Commission is available. She raised concerns that Mr. Callahan is based in Massachusetts and may not be licensed in Connecticut. R. Parlee noted that DEEP approval may be required. M. Rivers questioned whether the temperature monitor was removed at some point. R. Parlee stated that he will ask P. Van Dine. A. Bicknell noted that he observed signs of beaver damage in the area.

M. Rivers MOVED to contact Beaver Solutions to set up a discussion on conducting an assessment. B. Cataldo SECONDED.

Discussion: The Commission agreed to ask Mr. Callahan about trapping methods, his ability to operate in Connecticut, DEEP requirements, and the optimal timing for an assessment to avoid disturbing the habitat.

MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

5.3 25th Annual Photo Contest and 2026 Calendar Photos

R. Parlee reported that Barbara Amodio has already sent in a photo for the 25th Annual Photo Contest and suggested initiating the contest as soon as possible. He recommended making the contest special to mark the 25-year milestone. A. Bicknell offered to draft new flyer templates and collaborate with B. Cataldo. R. Parlee reminded members that prizes for out-of-town winners cannot be delivered and must be picked up in person. He recommended providing \$100.00 gift certificates as the top prize for each of the four categories this year and asked members to suggest businesses that might be willing to donate \$100.00 gift cards, such as Georgina's Italian Restaurant and W.H. Preuss Sons, Inc.

M. Rivers MOVED to kick off the 25th Annual Bolton Conservation Commission Photo Contest. B. Cataldo SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

5.4 Natural Resource Inventory PPT

M. Rivers requested that this item be added to the Agenda to discuss keeping an inventory of natural resources in Bolton to help guide decisions on future development and ensure the protection of local species and resources.

R. Parlee presented a detailed PowerPoint presentation created by Andover Conservation Commission member Hank Gruner. The presentation outlined numerous considerations and suggestions for initiating and conducting a natural resource inventory. The recommendations included:

- Defining open space, including lakes and bodies of water
- Determining who owns the space and how much belongs to the Town
- Understanding current conservation efforts
- Soliciting landowner input
- Utilizing tools such as ArcGIS, CT ECO, and open space maps to collect and manage data

R. Parlee stated that Mr. Gruner will conduct an analysis once the inventory is complete. He encouraged members to review available state resources such as the State Plan of Conservation and Development, Wildlife Action Plan, and the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) website.

R. Parlee informed the Commission about the new Riparian Corridor legislation passed this year, which requires the creation of a working group with appointees from various areas of expertise such as real estate, homebuilders, engineers, and wetlands commissioners. He also recommended members complete the online wetlands training program.

M. Rivers asked if the Town has a completed inventory on file. If not, he recommended completing an inventory and modifying it on an annual or semi-annual basis. R. Parlee confirmed that there is no inventory on file. M. Rivers suggested using the Plan of Conservation and Development as a starting point. R. Parlee agreed to share the plan with members for review and discussion at the next meeting as well as links to the CRCOG and CT ECO websites. He also recommended reviewing Planning and Zoning Commission meeting minutes for additional insight on regulations and town development.

5.5 Composting in Bolton

M. Rivers provided a quote for composters from Orbis and noted that a pallet of 20 would cost \$1,300.00. He also shared links to free composting resources. R. Parlee suggesting reaching out to nearby towns such as Tolland and Coventry to explore the possibility of sharing an order.

M. Rivers explained that most people interested in composting are likely already doing so; therefore, many of the links are geared toward low-cost, simple methods for beginners to get started. R. Parlee added that interest may increase if the town begins charging for trash pick-up. M. Rivers will send R. Parlee a list of the top composting links. A. Bicknell proposed hosting a composting presentation at the library using the links to educate the public. The Board agreed to schedule a presentation and to reach out to nearby towns on the composter order.

6.0 Continuing Business

6.1 Recycling at Common Gathering Venue

https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_446d.htm#sec_22a-241k

R. Parlee noted that he has decided not to send a letter to the Board of Education and John Butrymovich regarding the recycling issues. He recommended that the matter be handled by the Town Recycling Coordinator instead.

6.2 Workstation and Flash Drive Update

R. Parlee reported that the Commission now has a 1TB flash drive for storing important documents, including contest photos, data, and other important records. He noted that 238k has been used so far to preserve contest photos from 2011 – present, and he will be adding photos from 2001-2010 and resource inventory data before passing the drive to P. Van Dine. R. Parlee also confirmed that there is existing data on the workstation, including helpful maps, that need to be organized.

6.3 Plan Freja Park Workparty & Swap Temperature Monitors

The Freja Park Workparty was scheduled for August 15, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. Members were advised to bring shovels, rakes, saws, and loppers to assist with the clean-up.

6.4 Be Bear Aware

R. Parlee asked B. Cataldo to create a Bear Aware brochure tailored to Bolton using relevant keywords.

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

R. Parlee stated that during the meeting that was held in March, Jeremy Hall had suggested contacting the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to discuss the safety concerns; however, no progress has been made on the issue to date. He asked members for ideas on how to ensure the matter gets addressed. M. Rivers suggested reaching out to Town Administrator Jim Rupert and asking how the Conservation Commission can help. A. Bicknell suggested circulating a petition to bring more awareness and political pressure. R. Parlee noted that he will reach out to J. Rupert.

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

Bike Walk Bolton: R. Parlee reported that the group will begin sharing their meeting minutes with the Commission at the next meeting.

FBL: No report was available.

BLWCA: R. Parlee reported that BLWCA and FBL met to discuss next steps during a luncheon with John Williams. He raised concerns about their lack of water-level data and data collection efforts. However, he noted that Beth Lawrence collected two months of data during a drought, and the data showed consistent water levels, suggesting that Upper Bolton Lake is being ground fed.

SRWP: M. Rivers stated that SRWP does not meet until next week. He shared the SRWP map with the group and commented on how impressive it is. M. Rivers will ask SRWP for permission to post the map to the Commission's website.

CACIWC: R. Parlee noted that he missed the last meeting but asked the status of the Riparian Corridor working group. He stated that members are currently being appointed and they have until the end of the year to develop a plan. He also reported that a draft is forthcoming on the Bolton Lakes Watershed Management Plan and will include a section on vernal pools. The CACIWC Annual Meeting will take place on November 15, 2025, and R. Parlee encouraged members to attend. He will also send the Spring Habitat information to the group.

8.0 Correspondence:

R. Parlee shared a Bolton Land Trust Membership invitation, a brochure from For Imprint for printing services, and the Wetlands brochure. He also shared the photo collage posters B. Cataldo printed.

9.0 Adjournment

M. Rivers MOVED TO ADJOURN the meeting at 9:03 p.m. B. Cataldo SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4:0.

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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