

BOLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 1, at 7:00 PM

Virtual Only

Members Present Via Zoom: Rod Parlee (Chair), Alan Bicknell, Matt Rivers, Brenda Cataldo, Chris Vandenburg

Not in Attendance: Peter Van Dine, Katelynn King

1.0 Call Meeting to Order – The Chair called the meeting to order after a Roll Call 7:04 p.m.

2.0 Minutes Review of May 4, 2026, Regular Meeting- A motion was made by Alan Bicknell, seconded by Matt Rivers and approved unanimously to accept minutes with the following amendments:

5.4 Shenipsit (correct spelling)

6.2 Scour hole (correct spelling)

3.0 Public Comment - None

4.0 Financial Report

4.1 Tidbit Stream Temp. Monitors vs. Hobo- Rod Parlee discussed which item would be more important to purchase, a Tidbit Stream Temperature Monitor or a Hobo. Chris Vandenburg stated that it makes more sense to purchase a Tidbit instead of the Hobo, as the cost would be less (\$165 plus \$17 for shipping) and that Tidbits are more streamlined. Rod Parlee suggested purchasing one Tidbit and to appropriate up to \$200 to come from the General Supply, Prof Education Training and maybe Conservation Activity Fund. A motion was made by Matt Rivers and seconded by Alan Bicknell to purchase a Tidbit and appropriate up to \$200 from the General Supply, Prof Education Training and maybe Conservation Activity Fund. Motion passed unanimously.

4.2 Munson's Chocolate- Rod Parlee reported that he communicated with Jim Florence and the Finance Dept. regarding the purchase of chocolate prizes for the Kids to Parks Day Recycling Challenge. Now that Commission has tax-exempt status at Munsons, future purchases can be arranged ahead of time with Jim.

4.3 Membership to FBL- Alan Bicknell suggested that this could wait until next fiscal year, and the Commission agreed by consensus.

4.4 Invoice from Sigrun Gadwa- Rod Parlee learned from Jenna in Finance that if the consultant's work is not completed during this fiscal year, she can still submit a remaining balance invoice next fiscal year.

4.5 Calendar Sales- Rod Parlee received a total of \$20.00 for calendar sales from BLWCA members purchasing calendars and was submitted to Finance to be added to the Conservation Activity Fund.

5.0 Continuing Business

5.1 Trails Day at Nathan Hale Greenway- Rod Parlee, Alan Bicknell, Matt Rivers and Chris Vandenburg will attend. The 3-mile R/T hike will be held on June 6, 2026, at 10:00 A.M., with rain date on Sunday June 7, at 10:00 A.M.

5.2 Kids to Parks Day- with Carter Cochardo (Rec. Dir.) – The two events were held on May 17th. At 10 AM the hike in Freja Park was held with two families. Rod Parlee, Matt Rivers and Alan Bicknell led the hike to share the many current and past projects. At Indian Notch Park at 2 PM the BCC tabled, promoting the sale order of Composters and Rain Barrels. The Bolton Lake Regatta was also underway and was a perfect day for sailing. Due to low attendance, Rod Parlee suggested that next year, the BCC may not participate at Indian Notch Park.

5.3 Compost Bins & Rain Barrels Delivery at Herrick Park- Expected delivery time is between 8:30-10:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 14th. On May 14th. Pick up time for orders are from 10-Noon. Alan Bicknell, Katelynn King and Chris Vandenburg will assist Rod with distribution.

5.4 Botany Survey of the Bolton Notch/Valley Falls Watershed- Rod Parlee accompanied Sigrun Gadwa on one of the surveys along Railroad Brook. The fieldwork highlighted significant plant diversity within the riparian corridor. Additional survey sessions will be scheduled, with potential for expanded public engagement such as guided walks or community garden tours.

6.0 Continuing Business

6.1 Results of 25th Annual Photo Contest & Pick up dates for prizes- Prize distribution day will be held on Wednesday June 3 at 4:45 PM, meeting at Rod Parlee's home to pick up plants. Chris Vandenburg will be assisting Rod with distribution.

6.2 Old Manchester Drive-In & Freja Park- Discussion centered on the ecological significance of the Old Manchester Drive-In property. Rod Parlee emphasized the site's exceptionally high ecosystem-service value, noting its very low impervious surface, diverse habitat structure, rare watershed characteristics, and strong assessment ranking. Alan Bicknell sited the unique pitch-pine sand-plane geology. He expressed strong interest in pursuing long-term preservation. Rod Parlee recommended approaching the Bolton Land Trust (BLT) to request that they explore potential acquisition and protection of the property, citing its importance for maintaining watershed integrity and strengthening the surrounding open-space network that abuts Freja park. A motion was made by Alan Bicknell and seconded by Matt Rivers to contact the Bolton Land Trust, making the case that they consider ways to preserve the Old Manchester Drive-in property. Motion passed unanimously.

6.3 Data Collection & Transfer Working Group- Graphs, Tidbits & Batteries- Chris Vandenburg presented improvements to data visualization methods by implementing 7-day rolling averages, making trends easier to interpret. The Commission discussed ongoing coordination with DEEP and maintaining accurate monitoring inventories.

6.4 BSA Troup 73 Projects at Freja Park with Nathan Slater and Lorelei Charney- Eagle Scout candidates presented conservation-focused projects: Lorelei Charney reviewed her project proposal of identification and removal of invasive species in Freja Park. Five invasive species were found, and it was decided that she will focus on removal of three, targeting autumn olive, bittersweet, and multiflora rose. Members provided safety recommendations (reinforced gloves, tool use) and advised defining removal boundaries and disposal plans.

This project will get underway at the end of June and be completed by the beginning of August. One hundred hours of labor is expected.

Nathan Slater reviewed his plans for Bridge Replacement (Shenipsit Trail in Freja Park), approximately half a mile from the Commuter Lot. Proposal included a new bridge design with assistance from Alex Bradley of the CFPA which is for a 16' bridge span, including stairs at both ends. Building this new elevated bridge will help to reduce erosion and flooding impacts. Discussion focused on balancing cost, durability, and environmental considerations. Suggestions included refining span length and confirming material selection.

Both proposals were well received, with encouragement to proceed and maintain communication with the Commission.

7.0 Reports: Bike Walk Bolton (CSP), FBL, BLWCA, SRWP & CACIWC-

Bolton Lakes (FBL): Discussion on invasive control methods for Phragmites sparked debate over herbicide use vs. alternative approaches at recent Forum. Residents are concerned with water quality for swimming this summer.

Bolton Lakes Watershed Alliance: Started ranking open space parcels around upper Bolton Lake but now critiquing matrix categories to refine.

Salmon River Watershed Partnership: Updates included staffing, outreach events, and regional conservation initiatives.

CACIWC: New educational initiatives and regulatory discussions underway.

8.0 Correspondence- Rod Parlee reported kiosk vandalism (Freja Park).

Damage reported; likely requires replacement of Lexan panel. Estimated material cost approximately \$89. Town expected to assist with cleanup, which also includes repainting of benches due to graffiti.

9.0 Adjournment- A motion was made to adjourn by Matt Rivers and seconded by Brenda Cataldo and passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:07 P.M. Next meeting will be held July 6, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall and through Zoom

Please note that this meeting experienced a Zoom-bombing incident, which disrupted proceedings, prolonged certain discussions, and may have affected the clarity and accuracy of portions of the dialogue.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda V. Cataldo

Brenda V. Cataldo, BCC Member

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

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