

**Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the  
Walpole Conservation Commission  
August 7, 2023**

**Members Present:** Alicia Flammia, John Peska, Peter Palmiotto, Lewis Shelley,  
Wendy Grossman, Steven Dumont

**Members Absent:** France Menk

**Alternate Present:** Kara Dexter

**Visitors Present:** Peggy Pschirrer (Select Board liaison), Steve Dalessio (Select Board),  
Nicole Adams, Jean Kobeski (Recording Secretary)

**Call to Order:** Alicia called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Kara noted the misspelling of a name. Under Visitors the name should be spelled *Nicole*. John moved to accept the July, 2023 minutes.

Lew seconded and all voted in favor. Minutes accepted.

**Public Business:** Kara asked for the procedure needed to become either a commissioner or alternate. Alicia explained the candidate needs to write a letter of interest to the Select Board. With a letter of recommendation from the Conservation Commission to the Select Board, the candidate would be approved.

**Report from the Chair:** Alicia announced that, as of this evening, she can no longer serve as chair of the WCC. She will serve out the remainder of her term, but not in that capacity.

**Correspondences:** Alicia shared the newsletters from the Monadnock Conservancy and NH Charitable Foundation.

**Treasury:** (As of June 30) Mason Non Expendable Fund: \$19,881.04  
Mason Expendable: \$469,723.74

**New Business**

**Selection of New Chair:** A discussion ensued from Alicia's announcement that she would no longer chair the Commission. Peggy and Steve Dalessio suggested that the reluctance to assume this role might be the result of the Commission's taking on too many projects. Steve asked how much is mandated by statute. He suggested focusing on 1-2 projects/year. They also discussed the possibility of shortening meetings by conducting some business via email. Wendy offered to take the lead on property monitoring. Kara said she would read through the statute book again and create a list of projects to prioritize.

Peter and John agreed to serve as co-chairs. Wendy moved to elect Peter and John as co-chairs of the Commission. Steven Dumont seconded and all voted in favor. Motion carried. Kara led the commissioners in thanking Alicia for her leadership.

**Ray Boas: Tree Replacement on the Common -** Ray attended the meeting to discuss his interest in the trees in town, not just on the common. He presented the idea of assembling a citizens group under the purview of the Conservation Commission, which will study the trees in town and do some fundraising to purchase new trees and maintain them. The volunteers

would report to a liaison from the Commission. Peter Palmiotto stated his support for this project and offered to serve as liaison.

Ray stated he would begin the process by writing an article for the next issue of *The Clarion* describing the project and soliciting volunteers for a tree committee and donations.

### **Old Business**

***Adopting Meeting Norms:*** The Commission reviewed the draft of the Meeting Norms that Peter posted in Google Docs. They postponed formally adopting these norms until the full membership is present to vote on them.

***Walpole Gateway Update:*** Lew reported that the road down to the river washed out but has been repaired. The group discussed where the fence should be installed so rescue vehicles can access the river. They agreed that Peter could go ahead and install the fence. John moved to approve the purchase of 3 sections of split rail fence for the turnaround area of the Gateway from the Gateway account. Steven seconded and all voted in favor. Motion carried. Peter will take care of this.

Kara reported that France had not created signs for the fence because she did not have the wording from the Commission for the sign. Commissioners discussed what they want to see on the signs. Kara thought she might be able to find pre-made signs at Home Depot or online and Commissioners were fine with that. Lew suggested buying two signs to have an extra on hand. Steven moved to spend money on two signs for the fenced area. Lew seconded and all voted in favor. The group also decided to put a handmade sign with additional directions on the kiosk. Steven offered to draft language for the kiosk sign.

Wendy reported that Mike Hubbard would be willing to brush hog the Gateway area but he needs more information about the scope of the job. Wendy will have him contact John to discuss this.

***Commission Liaison to the Hooper:*** It was explained that the workload is not heavy but regular monthly attendance is important. Meetings are held at the Hooper Institute but in the winter they are online because there is no heat in the institute building. Members were asked once again to think about this and they would revisit the topic in September.

### **Other Business**

***Walpole Trails Subcommittee:*** Steven said the maps have been printed but he does not yet have the invoice. Once he does, he will send it to Rich to be paid from the maps and charts budget.

***Mountain Biking:*** Lew met 2-3 weeks ago with Rob Westover and some other mountain bikers at Hooper Forest. The bikers would like to create some hand-built trails, with supervision from the Trails Committee. There would also be a machine-built trail. Lew said he would scope it out and do some marking. There was also discussion about parking. Lew located a small area to start. It may need to be expanded later if more bikers learn of these trails. Lew was asked if the Hooper Board and Monadnock Conservancy know about this. He said he would notify them. John also suggested notifying the Fire Department so they could scope out trails to see how emergencies could be handled.

**Rail Trail Update:** Wendy reported that Lew will be the contractor on the RTP grant project. He plans to get started on a trail site in early October. He's working on getting a Special Use Permit now.

Mike Hubbard plans to do the next brush hogging August 24. Wendy received the invoices and will forward them to Rich. The \$450 will come from trail budget and \$200 from the Gateway budget.

**Property Monitoring:** Lauren will send an email to commissioners later this week to let them know what her status on the property monitoring is. Wendy asked if Lauren still has any Commission files. Alicia will email her to find out the answer.

Peter will call a meeting of the monitoring subcommittee at the end of September. Kara expressed interest in attending the meeting.

**Reservoir and Cranberry Meadow Dam:** On the 25th of July John met with members of the Dam Safety and Inspection Division in order to photograph deficiencies at Reservoir Dam and Cranberry Meadow Dam. At the Reservoir Dam the post that holds the gate closed is rotting and needs to be repaired. John stated the cost of repair is \$40.68. Steven moved to approve \$40.68 from the Dam Repair budget to repair the post. Lew seconded and all voted in favor.

At Cranberry Meadow Dam they could not take photos or do their inspection because the area needs to be brush hogged. In the past the Conservation Commission has been responsible for keeping the area clear. It has not been brush hogged for some years, and John said he feels the Commission will need to do this. As far as repairs to the dam, John does not know what needs to be done. The dam is actually on private property so the Letter of Deficiency will most likely be sent to the landowner. It is unclear at this time who will be responsible for doing whatever repairs are needed. Steve Dalessio said he would have Sarah look into this. John said Bryan Fletcher, who has done brush hogging there in the past, is planning to go down and look at it this week.

John reported that Reservoir Dam repair will start in September, 2024, with an end date of December, 2026. Steve said they are in the engineering phase right now. Core sample will need to be taken and in a few months the work will be put out to bid.

With no further business, Steven Dumont moved to adjourn and Lew seconded. Alicia adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

**The next meeting will be on Monday, September 11, 2023.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jean Kobeski, Recording Secretary

\*\* These minutes are in draft form until approved at the September 11, 2023 meeting.