

**Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the  
Walpole Conservation Commission  
September 11, 2023**

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

**Members Absent:** Alicia Flammia, France Menk

**Seating of Alternates:** Kara Dexter

**Visitors Present:** Nicole Adams, Peggy Pschirrer, Select Board Liaison, Jean Kobeski,  
Recording Secretary

**Call to Order:** Peter Palmiotto called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Jean Kobeski said she would correct the August minutes to state that Ray Boas attended the August 7, 2023 meeting. With that correction Steven moved to accept the August minutes; Wendy seconded and all voted in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Business**

**Financial Report:**

Mason	\$20,280.57
Gateway.	\$2,054.07

The \$7500 fee requested by Ann McBride of the Monadnock Conservancy for the Nerrie Easement will be discussed at the October meeting.

**Correspondence:** John reported that NE Power Co. has asked the DES for permission to paint power transmission towers from Bellows Falls to Surry.

**New Business**

**Budget Items:** Wendy asked that brush hogging and trail materials be put into next year's budget. \$1500 should be enough but she will double check. Steven asked for money for maps.

Peggy explained that all departments are asked to level fund for the coming year. The first draft is due now to Rich Kreissle. Between now and December, Select Board members will meet with all department heads to discuss their budgets. John stated that current numbers can be rearranged, not to exceed the level funded budget.

Steven stated the commissioners need to take a deeper dive into some of those numbers. Peter said he would ask Alicia for a copy of this year's budget. Peggy said she would have Rich Kreissle send a copy of the budget to Peter and John. John and Peter will submit the budget by September 22 after first sharing it with the commissioners on Google Drive. Steven suggested that, before the next meeting, commissioners look at the budget and think about where monies can be moved around to better suit their expenditures.

**Condition of Route 12 Rest Areas:** John and Peter reported that there is trash and high grass at the rest areas. John and Peggy said the state is responsible for mowing. The WCC used to hire someone to clean the Fanny Mason rest area, using money from the Fanny Mason Fund. This individual is no longer available. Peter said he would find out how frequently this was done and what the compensation was so the commissioners can make a motion and vote at the October meeting for a replacement.

John reported that Nicole Adams has written a letter of interest to the Select Board in becoming an alternate to the Walpole Conservation Commission. Kara made a motion to recommend supporting the nomination Nicole Adams as an alternate to the WCC. John seconded the motion and all voted in favor. John will write the letter of recommendation to the Select Board.

### **Old Business**

**Tree Replacement:** Jean has sent the names and email addresses of four individuals who have volunteered to serve on the committee to Ray Boas. He will contact them to set up a meeting. Peter has offered to be the WCC liaison to this committee.

**Liaison to the Hooper Board:** Nicole Adams volunteered to be the Conservation Commission's liaison to the Hooper Institute Board. Peggy thanked Nicole, noting how important it is to have WCC representation on that board.

**Gateway Update:** Lew stated that Peter purchased the materials and he and Peter installed the fence at the Gateway turnaround. Peggy reported that the Select Board received a complaint from some community members hoping to take their kayaks down to the river that the gate is still locked. Peter explained the lock is still locked but people can gain access by simply moving the wire and replacing it when finished. Steven suggested replacing the lock with a carabiner; Lew supported that idea and has one to donate. Steven prepared an instruction sheet for gaining access to the Walpole Gateway, which will be laminated and posted on the kiosk and on the post. Steven also offered to write an article about the gate opening for the Walpole Clarion and WCC website.

### **Other Business**

**Reservoir Dam:** John reported the gate has been repaired and Houghton has brush hogged and cleaned up the area, as requested by the state inspector.

Peggy left the meeting at 8:00.

**Cranberry Meadow Bog:** John asked that the Letter of Deficiency for Cranberry Meadow Bog be put on the October agenda.

**Walpole Trails Subcommittee:** Steven reported that the maps have been paid for and he has been reimbursed. He also said some equipment will be needed for Mill Pond repair. Steven said he would take measurements for pressure-treated lumber for the Fanny Mason Bridge replacement and get a price quote from LaValley.

Lew stated the High Blue culvert washed out and was repaired by Larry Britton. He also said Rob Westover is asking permission to begin some new mountain biking trails in the Hooper Forest. He is meeting with Helen Dalbeck to discuss this.

**Rail Trail:** Wendy reported that the Rail Trail and Gateway field were brush hogged on Aug 25-26. Wendy and Will did some further cleaning. There are some trees down on the trail and the Grossman's cleaned up some of the branches.

Lew has the Special Use Permit and has paid the \$1,000 bond for the RTP Grant work. He will start the work in early October. Wendy and Will will mark areas for him to avoid. It is time to write the letter to the Trustees of the Trust Fund to request the \$5,000. Peter said he would contact Alicia to learn the scope of what's necessary to secure that money.

**Property Monitoring:** Wendy has been going through commission files and will start doing some of the monitoring. Peter said he would contact Lauren to make sure she has returned all files that she was using.

Peter will call a meeting of the Property Monitoring Committee for Tuesday, October 3, 6:00, in the commission's office in the basement of Town Hall.

**Adjournment:** Steven made a motion to adjourn the meeting and John seconded. Peter adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

**The next meeting will be on Monday, October 2, 2023 in Town Hall.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jean Kobeski, Recording Secretary

\*\* These minutes are in draft form until approved at the October 2, 2023 meeting.

