

# **Town of Randolph Conservation Commission**

Minutes of the 10/16/2025 meeting

Members Present: Gary Newfield, Nate Peters, Phil Guiser

Members Absent: Walter Graff, Jennifer Scarinza, Brandy Capozello,

Public: Brad Meiklejohn

Chair, Gary Newfield, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. With 3 of the 5 members present, there is a quorum.

Nate moved, Phil seconded, to approve the minutes of the 4/24/25 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Gary reported that at their 10/13/25 meeting the Town Selectmen reappointed Nate and Phil to 3-year terms on the Conservation Commission.

Brad gave the Board an update on the proposed 40' long x 15' high wildlife crossing to go underneath Rt. 2 near the Farrar property of the Town Forest. He explained that this would serve as a link connecting the Town Forest and the White Mtn. National Forest and is a project that has been planned for over 30 years. NH DOT, on behalf of a number of local and state organizations, had applied for \$4 million of funding through the national Wildlife Highway Crossing Program to go along with \$1 million in private funding that has been raised.

In Nov., 2024 NH DOT got word that the Randolph Project was not selected for funding. Our project scored very well but other factors besides merit seemed to come into play. Feedback from the feds. indicated that one item not working in our favor was the lack of fencing to funnel wildlife into the crossing. The Town Forest Commission is against the fencing. It's not likely but if there is another round of funding, we will reapply. The possibility of doing the project entirely with private funds is being explored but it would be extremely difficult to raise the necessary funds.

Gary suggested to the Board that we write a letter to Josh Sjoström of the Androscoggin Ranger District Station of the White Mtn. National Forest to express the Commission's support for designating a corridor along Snyder Brook just north of Rt. 2 to be included in the Old Growth Forest Network. Nate pointed out that this area, 32.5 acres, ½ mile long, is already designated as a scenic area which protects it from timber management/harvesting. Gary said that the Old Growth designation will result in greater public awareness and appreciation of the grove of ancient trees in this area. Phil moved, Nate seconded, that Gary write a letter to Josh Sjoström expressing the Board's support of the Snyder Brook area becoming part of the Old Growth Network. Motion passed unanimously. Phil stated that he wondered if the Town Forest has identified any old growth areas and given them special consideration. We will ask Walter to follow up.

Gary said that he had a conversation with June Hammond, Planning Board Chair, and she mentioned that she had been asked by Peter Gagnon, Gorham Town Manager, to write a

letter supporting Gorham's quest to obtain funding for an engineering study to reduce flooding and erosion along the Moose River in Gorham. Gary suggested that the Conservation Commission also write such a letter. Nate moved, Phil seconded, that Gary write this letter. Motion passed unanimously.

Gary reported that the Commission has been asked to accept for the Town a small piece of land (maybe 1/8 acre) at the west end of Boothman Lane. And, if in agreement, pay for it being surveyed and for the legal fees involved in the title transfer. The land is owned by Gaye and David Ruble. This property provides the only access to Boothman Lane for Ruble's land to the west of Boothman as well as Hartman's to the north and Mather's to the south. There is a drainage problem during heavy water runoff which will require enlarging and reconfiguring the present drainage pipe system. Phil moved, Nate seconded, that the Conservation Commission accept this land contingent upon the Town's approval at the 2026 Town meeting and that the Commission pay for its survey and the legal fees. Motion passed unanimously.

Gary reported that the Town has asked the Commission to pay for a licensed contractor to treat with herbicide areas of aggressively invasive Japanese knotweed along Durand Road. After discussion it was decided that Gary will ask the Town about the projected cost and the possibility of sharing the expense.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

(Minutes by Phil)