

Town of Randolph

Conservation Commission

Minutes of January 26, 2026

Members Present: Gary Newfield, Nathan Peters, Philip Guiser, and Meica Magnani

Members Excused: Walter Graff

Public: Shelli Fortin, Minutes Taker

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:29 pm by Gary Newfield

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Nathan Peters, seconded by Philip Guiser, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of December 17, 2025, as presented.

Resignation

Gary Newfield advised that Jennifer Scarinza has resigned from the Commission. Newfield also advised that nothing has been heard from Brandy Capozello, after repeated attempts to contact her to see if she would like to continue to serve on the Board, so it is assumed she is also no longer a member.

New Member

Gary Newfield introduced Meica Magnani, who will be joining as a new member of the Commission.

Update on Japanese Knotweed Eradication Process on Durand Road

Gary Newfield advised that he and Phil Guiser had a Zoom call with Paul Eaton, of Keep It Native LLC, in reference to spraying Japanese Knotweed along Durand Road. Phil Guiser noted that Eaton advised the Knotweed can be controlled, but not eradicated, especially with areas over 500 square feet. Eaton stated that they could see an 80% reduction in the first year.

Guiser stated it was recommended that the Commission come up with an estimated budget, identify areas to spray, prioritize the areas, and then review the list with Eaton to see what they can do with the available funds.

Landowners will need to be notified of the plan to spray the Knotweed, and sample letters were provided for Commission members to review. The Town does not need permission from landowners to spray within the right of way, which is 66 feet on Durand Road, 33 feet on either side of the road from the mid-point.

Eaton advised that his business would take care of any permitting required, and this process usually takes about a month. They will have to be careful around wells, especially dug wells.

Eaton advised that it is best to spray between the end of July and September, when the plant is not flowering, to protect pollinators. Eaton can provide a truck sprayer, backpack sprayers, and stem injectors.

It was noted that Japanese Knotweed spreads through the roots and also by cuttings, and the Board discussed how roadside mowing and plowing may add to the problem on Durand Road. The Commission will speak with the Town about roadside mowing in this area.

Gary Newfield noted that there is potential legislation in which sellers would have to disclose to interested buyers the presence of Japanese Knotweed on a property being sold.

Eaton mentioned that he usually works with the Public Works department on a project, and it was suggested that the Road Agent could be notified. Eaton stated that follow-up would be needed in future years.

Guiser noted that native species can come back after the Japanese Knotweed is treated, and the Commission should consider what they would want in its place.

Meica Magnani shared concerns about the use of Roundup. Gary Newfield advised that it has a half-life of 40 days, and they will be careful near water sources. As far as soil health, micro-organisms will come back. Members noted that the major concern with Roundup was that it was being used on food crops before harvesting, and being sprayed without protective equipment being worn. Conservation Commissions across the state are taking on projects to control Japanese Knotweed with this herbicide. Magnani stated that she will do some research on the questions that she has and bring the information to the Commission. Gary Newfield will also check with Mr. Eaton with the same concerns about the use of Roundup. The Commission will wait for the additional information before making any decisions about spraying.

Joel White- Eradication of Invasive Species – Discussion with the Community

Gary Newfield advised that he spoke with Mark Kelley, of the Forest Commission, about having Joel White speak to the community about the eradication of invasive species. Mr. White was hired by the Forest Commission to spray Japanese Knotweed on the Farrar property last summer, and is licensed to spray invasive species. Kelley suggested that Mr. White be the guest speaker for Forest Day this year, and will coordinate this with Walter Graff.

Gary Newfield also suggested that Elise Lawson, from Watershed to Wildlife, be contacted about setting up the iNaturalist program. Newfield suggested that Ms. Lawson could also be involved in Forest Day with Mr. White, to educate the community on how to set up and access the iNaturalist program.

Update on Bowman Critter Crossing

Gary Newfield advised that Walter Graff was able to talk with Pete Steckler, from Northeast Conservation Services, about the Bowman Critter Crossing. They are coordinating with the Audubon Society on the resubmittal of the application. They have decided to back off on the proposal of fencing, and are hoping to receive the funding without it.

Newfield advised that the crossing is proposed in the area of the Farrar property, which abuts the Randolph Town Forest, Kilkenny, and the White Mountain National Forest. This area is deep enough to allow for a 15-foot-tall box culvert, to allow animals as large as moose to use it. NHDOT would be responsible for maintenance, and the Forest Commission would keep the area clear of brush. The project would be funded with Federal money, and there is tremendous competition for the funding.

Other

Gary Newfield advised they currently have approximately \$63,000 in the Conservation Commission fund. The Conservation Commission receives half of the taxed amount when a property is taken out of current use, and the Town receives the other half.

Adjournment

On a motion from Meica Magnani, seconded by Nathan Peters, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shellie Fortin
January 27, 2026