



# TOWN OF STRATHAM

Incorporated 1716

10 Bunker Hill Avenue · Stratham, NH 03885

Town Clerk/Tax Collector 603-772-4741

Select Board's Office/ Administration/ Assessing 603-772-7391

Code Enforcement/Building Inspections/Planning 603-772-7391

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## **Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes March 25, 2026, 7:00 p.m.**

*Members present:* Chris West, Bob Keating, Brad Jones, Bruce Cote, Ryan Olsen

*Members absent:* Allison Knab, Dan McAuliffe, Tim Copeland (alternate)

*Non-members present:* Vanessa Price, Director of Planning and Building

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

### ***Minutes***

- Previous meeting minutes were reviewed.
- 7:05pm Mr. Jones motioned to accept minutes as written without amendment, Ms. West seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### ***2026 Conservation Commission Goals***

- Mr. Cote opened a discussion regarding setting key goals for the Conservation Commission to focus on through the rest of 2026. Mr. Cote reiterated the mission statement of “preserve local natural resources through land acquisition, stewardship and education” and asked the commission members to consider projects and programs that focus on those three actions.
- Mr. Olsen proposed an effort to bring all town owned woodlots under conservation easements. This would encompass all qualifying town-owned properties that are in their natural state and not currently used otherwise, to be conserved. This project would ensure that these natural areas could not be developed in the future, add conservation land protections, as well as regular monitoring of these lots for unregulated use. The goal is to preserve additional space in Stratham from potential development, or use, that would further decrease the natural open space in the town while still keeping them available to the public for unrestricted outdoor activities.
  - The other commission members agreed and set out the initial steps of gathering the required information to start this process, which would include: identifying the woodlots and properties to consider, and reviewing requirements for enacting conservation easements.
- Mr. Cote stated that education was another area for the commission to focus on and that more work could be done to inform town residents about the areas that are currently in conservation and the unique features of each. Increasing education and engagement with conservation land could also include:
  - Setting up unique events such as bird watching or nature walks on select parcels to encourage residents to enjoy the natural areas that are in conservation.
  - Improving educational resources - providing an updated map of the conservation areas in Stratham so residents could more easily identify which lands (public and private) are currently in conservation and adding that to the town website. The conservation commission will work with Ms. Price to gather the full list of conservation lands and begin working on a map and visual aids for residents to easily access.
  - Increasing social media interaction through the conservation commission social media accounts, including providing more regular highlights and education on conservation land

and links to educational resources provided by Regional and State conservation groups such as SELT, Coastal Conservation Commission and UNH Extension Offices.

- Attending the Town Farm Day (previously Stratham Fair) and setting up a display booth to discuss conservation efforts, showcase Stratham conserved lands, and engaging the general public.

### ***Stratham Town Clean-up Day***

- Discussions were held to finalize planning for the Town Clean-up Day
- Final date of Saturday April 25th from 8am – 12pm was set, with a starting point of Stratham Hill Park for the initial meet-up point
- Roles of each Conservation Commission member were discussed and assigned as well as confirmation that necessary supplies (gloves, vests, bags) were to be provided by applicable town departments
- A flyer will be designed and made available for distribution during the 1st week of April and additional public outreach through local schools and social media will be executed

### ***Town and Other Business***

- Mr. Cote reviewed highlights from his attendance of the Coastal Conservation Commission Roundtable and the commission discussed inviting key members of the Coastal Conservation Commission to attend and upcoming meeting to further inform the Conservation Commission members of on-going local activities and generate ideas and topics of concern that can be addressed in Stratham to further regional efforts

### ***Adjourn***

7:59pm Ms. West motioned to adjourn meeting. Mr. Olsen seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted by Ryan Olsen*