



TOWN OF HUDSON

Conservation Commission



Carl Murphy, Vice Chairman

Dave Morin, Selectmen Liaison

12 School Street • Hudson, New Hampshire 03051 • Tel: 603-886-6008 • Fax: 603-816-1291

DATE: October 20, 2025

MEETING MINUTES: Below is a listing of minutes for the Hudson Conservation Commission. Minutes are not a verbatim record of each meeting, but rather represent a summary of the discussion and actions taken at the meeting. All Conservation Commission meetings are televised live and repeated during the following week on HCTV, cable television channel 22. Official copies of the minutes are available to read and copy at the Town Engineer's Office during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.).

Should you have any questions concerning these minutes or wish to see the original recording, please contact the Town Engineer's Office at 603-886-6008.

In attendance = X Alternates Seated = S Partial Attendance = P Excused Absence = E

Carl Murphy
Chairman X

Ken Dickinson
Vice-Chair X

Christopher Cameron
Clerk X

John Walter
Member X

Kathy Griswold
Member X

Linda Krisciunas
Alternate E

David Morin
Selectman Liaison X

Don Kirkland
Engineer X

CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIRPERSON AT

07:03 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Walter

ROLL CALL

Mr. Cameron

SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

None

PUBLIC INPUT RELATED TO NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

None_

It was noted that Mr. Don Kirkland, Civil Engineer for the town of Hudson, is taking over the responsibilities from Mr. Dhima, Town Engineer, as liaison to the Conservation Commission going forward.

I. New Business

a. Senior Capstone Project

Zoe Burt, a senior at Alvirne High School, proposed organizing a trash pickup event, to be held at 11am on Saturday, November 8, 2025 as part of her senior capstone project. Members were very receptive to the idea, there was discussion on where the event should take place, and it was indicated that the Sustainability Committee is responsible for organizing road-side clean-up events. Discussion moved to hosting it on one of the conservation properties in town and it was decided that Robinson Pond Recreation Area, including beach, boat launch area, parking areas, and trails, would be the preferred location for such an event due to the amount of trash typically observed there. Ms. Burt plans to promote the event through social media and will request for volunteers to bring gloves, trash bags, and any other supplies that may be needed.

b. Hudson Trail Challenge – Patch Design Contest

Bob Macaraeg, local resident and former scout leader, expressed continued interest in the hiking challenge, having personally completed it recently, and suggested including the local elementary schools and scout troops in the contest to create the design for the hiker achievement patch. Mr. Macaraeg offered to assist with creating flyers to advertise the contest and a certificate for the contest winner. He suggested offering some type of recognition and/or prize for the winner. Ms. Griswold expressed willingness to help with promoting the contest. The contest will likely begin this fall – more details to follow.

c. Land Acquisitions

Deferred – no properties to discuss at this time.

II. Old Business

a. Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (ZORC) Meetings

The first ZORC meeting took place on 9/29, followed by two (2) workshops by the Conservation Commission on 10/2 and 10/8. Draft proposals were sent to the committee but it was determined that they required further refinement and comparison with existing regulations, therefore the discussion was deferred to the next ZORC meeting on 11/3.

One of the ideas being proposed is a capital reserve fund for the Conservation Commission, which would serve as a steady inflow of funds to the Conservation Fund to be used primarily for the purchase of land (or easements) for conservation. This is important because the only current source of these funds currently is from land use change tax, which can be unpredictable, unreliable, and only occurs when a property is taken out of current use for development. The value of properties that would be candidates for potential conservation, many of which should likely be prioritized based on the natural resource inventory (chapter 3 of the town master plan), significantly exceeds the amount in the conservation fund, including anticipated future amounts from any further development. Any amount requested for such a fund would be carefully determined so as to avoid creating a significant increase in property tax. It was indicated that this issue needs to be discussed with the Select board and not with the ZORC.

There was discussion with Selectman Morin and Mr. Kirkland about the existing conservation overlay districts and other protections currently offered for the referenced natural resources: wetlands (including vernal pools), aquifers, slopes, floodplains, and shorelands. It was indicated that an aquifer protection overlay district was established by petition warrant article, is based on an outdated aquifer map from the 1980s, the only significant aquifer is in a highly developed area of town, and the overlay has little relevance today. There was some confusion about whether the aquifer overlay had passed town ballot and actually been implemented, along with some discussion on the added protections from underground fuel storage adjacent to aquifers.

It was pointed out that there are already existing protections for slopes and floodplains within the town regulations and shorelands within NH Department of Environmental Services. Mr. Cameron expressed that it appeared the intent of the overlay districts was not fully understood. While there may already be some protections in place for some of these resources, conservation overlay districts would potentially allow the Conservation Commission to play a greater role in protecting these resources by receiving notification of significant development activities that could affect these resources and by having a more formalized method for providing advisory comments to the regulatory agencies responsible (local and/or state).

The Commission discussed their concerns with the existing wetland buffer being lower for residential uses, particularly as it applies to residential subdivisions and larger developments. With impacts of subdivisions often being similar to those of commercial and other developments, it might make sense to have the same wetland buffer applicable to both. The wetland buffer for one and two-lot residential properties could remain as is while increasing the buffer for subdivisions to match the buffer for site plans.

There was discussion of the possible need for clearer language regarding how vernal pools are identified and protected. A larger buffer around vernal pools is being discussed for consideration as these are more sensitive to adjacent development than other types of wetlands. A number of other towns already have additional protections for vernal pools.

b. Hudson Trails Challenge

Mr. Murphy provided an update on the digital maps, which have been updated with the correct QR codes, which are useful when the maps are printed and displayed at trailheads, and will direct to the town website where the maps and links to mobile mapping apps are located.

Mr. Murphy indicated he is still coordinating with town staff to get the trail checklist and application uploaded to the town website and hopes to have that completed very soon.

c. Proposed Bridges: Musquash-Gumpus Connector

Following previous discussions, Mr. Murphy met on-site with members of the Pelham Conservation Commission/trails committee on 8/18 to evaluate the proposed route and identify any alternative route(s) for the potential bridge. It was determined that a different location, further to the west, would be preferable due to the presence of a beaver dam in that area, along with less mucky soil. Despite the longer crossing distance (~220 feet versus ~150 feet), the new

location would likely prove easier to construct due to more solid ground.

A brief discussion took place about the need for a wetland permit from NHDES for any in-water work, and the process for applying for that permit, however it was indicated that it should not be a significant hurdle for project completion. There was a brief mention of pursuing a trail easement or conservation easement for an existing trail that passes through adjacent private property which, if feasible, might provide a much simpler connection between the Musquash and Gumpas Pond conservation areas that would not require as much (or potentially not any) bridge work.

III. Other Business

a. Invasive Species Management – Aquatic Plants

A report provided by Aqualogic, the vendor hired for the removal of milfoil and fanwort, two invasive aquatic plant species, was reviewed. The plants were removed from Ottarnic and Robinson ponds by divers to the greatest extent practical. It was indicated that this effort is generally required annually to keep the ponds from being overtaken by these plants.

b. Invasive Species Management – Knotweed

Discussion took place of the recent work that took place to remove invasive Japanese Knotweed plants from the Musquash Conservation Area. It appeared that the effort was largely successful in keeping these plants contained to localized areas. The efforts will likely be ongoing in future years.

c. Trail Work Day – August

The next work day is scheduled for 9 am on Sat 10/25 at the Hinds Lane trailhead for the Gumpas Pond Conservation Area in Pelham. Work will take place on the adjacent Musquash Conservation Area and will include clearing vegetation, cutting downed trees, and blazing on the Gumpas Loop Trail. Work may also include cutting a large downed tree on the Wilkinson View Trail.

d. Tiger Road Conservation Area – Forester Evaluation

A site walk was held with Paul Gagnon, County Forester, to evaluate the health of the forest, identify invasive species, and identify appropriate management strategies for both. The recommendation was to try to eradicate the smaller areas where invasive species are starting to spread while merely trying to contain the larger areas to keep them from spreading further. Once the invasive species are more concentrated, the focus can shift to removing them from those areas as well. There was no recommendation for any timber harvesting from the property.

IV. Financial Status

Discussion on the amounts from fiscal year 2025, ending 6/30/2025, and whether they reflect

typical expenditures. It was indicated that the “professional services” expenditures were likely higher than typical due to the design and permitting fees for the improvements to the Robinson Pond boat launch area. Those improvements are required to allow the town to maintain compliance with the state MS4 environmental permit. There are significant recurring costs for invasive vegetation management, both in-water and on-land. The amounts shown may not be current due to the transition from state fiscal year (FY) 2025 to FY2026 and the need to settle any outstanding invoices – the amounts shown next month will likely be more accurate.

Conservation Fund balance = \$809,729.73 (as of the end of FY2025, 6/30/2025).

V. Correspondence

None

VI. Approval of Minutes

Motion:

Mr. Dickinson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Walter, to accept the August 2025 regular meeting minutes. The motion carried 5/0/0.

VII. Commissioners’ Comments

Ms. Griswold suggested that a first aid kit should be carried by at least one member during trail work outings. Discussion took place about the need to purchase first aid supplies. Mr. Dickinson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Walter, to expend up to \$100 for the purchase of (a) first-aid kit(s). The motion carried 5/0/0.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion:

Ms. Griswold made a motion, seconded by Mr. Walter, to adjourn the meeting at 9:35pm.

The motion carried 5/0/0 and the meeting adjourned.

****Next Regular Meeting: Monday, November 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Cameron", written over a horizontal line.

Christopher Cameron, Clerk