

Draft
North Hampton Conservation Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2022

Administrative: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. via Channel 22 from the Town Hall. The agenda was posted in Compliance with RSA 91-A requirements.

Roll Call: Members present: Lisa Wilson, (Chair), Kathy Grant, (Vice Chair), Lauri Etela, Audrey Prior, Phil Thayer. ***A motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Audrey Prior, to allow Andrew Vorkink to participate via phone from a remote location.*** A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried. **Members of the public** included Peter Steckler, Principal, Northeast Conservation Services, Geoff Wilson, Northeast Wetland Restoration, Mike Parsort, Northeast Wetland Restoration, and residents Tony Berondini, Shelly Berondini and Patricia Meyers.

Approval of May 10, 2022 Draft Minutes: After review of the May 10, 2022 minutes, ***a motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Phil Thayer, to accept the minutes as written with one correction (the spelling of Rob Pruyne's last name).*** The motion carried via a roll call vote.

New Business:

Proposed Plans for Phase II & III at Philbrick Pond: Pete Steckler and Geoff Wilson discussed the Philbrick Pond Phase II Restoration Objectives and what happened to salt marshes from a historical perspective from precolonial times to the present. The following is a list of the Phase II restoration objectives discussed during the presentation:

- Improve drainage of standing water areas where vegetation had been lost.
- Demonstrate restoration success through the pilot project, enabling restoration throughout the system longer-term.
- Inform landowners of salt marsh resilience through outreach and education.
- Improve management of invasive species.
- Increase coastal resilience through improved floodwater storage capacity in the marsh system.
- Avoid and minimize impacts to important natural features and species of concern.
- Understand bathymetry of former subtotal areas of Philbrick and restore more natural channel morphology.
- Improve water quality (bacteria) in the Chapel Brook system through improved tidal flushing, possible improved conditions related to adjacent septic systems.
- Demonstrate Four Tier restoration model using renewing and ditch remediation techniques for broader scale salt marsh restoration in NH.

Phase I has already shown promising indicators after 2022 culvert improvements. There are now lower water levels in targeted areas and new plant growth in previously inhospitable areas. Objectives of the Four-Tiered approach are to stabilize the marsh platform, increase marsh resiliency, keep saltmarsh sparrows in the landscape for 60-80 years, and adopt a long-term management plan. Implementation is expected to begin in 2023 and the marsh is expected to react to the improvements relatively quickly. Questions and concerns from the

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Commission and public were raised to include flood mitigation along Route 1A, the existing trolly berm, and how best to control the proliferation of phragmites. Geoff and Peter plan to complete the wetlands permitting process in the coming months.

Town of North Hampton Coastal Hazards & Adaptation Master Plan Chapter: The Rockingham Planning Commission is in the process of forming an advisory group to begin the early stages of implementing the recommendations in the Coastal Hazards & Adaptation Master Plan Chapter. During the past year and a half, Lisa Wilson along other members of the community and town boards served on the North Hampton/LBH Coastal Adaptation Steering Committee. The Commission received a copy of the action plan. ***A motion was made by Kathy Grant, duly seconded by Phil Thayer to appoint Lisa Wilson as a member of the Coastal Hazards & Adaptation Master Plan Chapter Advisory Group.*** The motion carried via a roll call vote.

Old Business:

Conservation Easement Subcommittee Update: Andrew Vorkink reported that Kate Dardinski, professional map maker, was referred to the Commission by Seth Hickey, Director of Recreation in Stratham. Kate is working to create a consistent, standard template for a number of the town's trail maps using GPS mapping to map out the trails. The maps include important features such as parking and the location of the trails. She has completed the preliminary maps and will provide digital files to allow the Commission to reproduce signs and brochures/pamphlets to better inform and educate the public about the specific location and natural features of the trails.

Trail Maintenance Update: Lisa Wilson reported that Knowles Tree Service installed the wood chips at the entrance of the Oliver Brook Trail, cut down the two large trees hanging over the bog bridges, and trimmed back the skunk cabbage growing over the bog bridges. The trail was very dry last week with no water flowing through the brook. Phil Thayer reported that Troop 262 approved the Eagle Scout project for Matt Holden to construct a 40' long bridge over Barton Brook on the Dustin-Booker Trail. Lisa Wilson noted that a Trails Notification SPN Wetlands Permit is required by the DES and that the Commission will need to submit the application as soon as possible. Phil Thayer offered to help complete the application. ***A motion was made by Phil Thayer, duly seconded by Kathy Grant to approve a \$25 SPN permit application fee.*** The motion carried via a roll call vote.

Lisa Wilson showed samples of the metal signs created by Sharper Printing for the Oliver Brook Trail to the Little River Conservancy.

Philbrick Pond Saltmarsh Drainage Update: Commissioners and Philbrick Pond abutters and neighbors were invited to attend the July 8, 2022 site walk. Lisa Wilson and Kathy Grant were able to attend. The site walk was organized as outreach to the homeowners around the pond by the owner of the area where the trial will be performed. In an email to the Commission,

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Kathy Grant reported that Phase I of the project replaced the cobble weir and was completed this past winter. It has resulted in an increase of tidal range in the pond. Phase II continues the work to improve marsh health. It is a trial run to partially drain the artificially high ponded areas on a small section of the marsh using a technique called runneling. Runneling has been used in other New England saltmarshes to improve the marsh health by allowing revegetation of those high ponds (called impoundments), while simultaneously reducing habitat available to mosquitoes. Phase III is a plan to extend the draining of the impoundments to other areas in the larger Philbrick Pond system, incorporating the lessons learned from Phase II.

Septic System Inventory Review: Kathy Grant reported that Rob Pruyne is working on completing the revisions to the maps and database.

Other Business: None

There being no further business to discuss, ***a motion was made by Andrew Vorkink, duly seconded by Lauri Etela***, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried via a roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Moore
Recording Secretary

“These minutes were prepared within five (5) business days as required by NH RSA 91-A:2, II. They will not be finalized until approved by the majority vote by the Commission”.