

**Orford Conservation Commission (OCC)**  
**Meeting Minutes: August 17, 2023**  
**Meeting held in person at the Niles Room in the Town Offices**  
**(Zoom available for part of the time)**

**Present in person:** Commission Members: Ted Cooley (Chair), Bob Hedges (Vice Chair), Craig Putnam; Alternates: John Miller, Emily Bryant.

Meeting called to order 7:05pm. Alternates Emily and John were seated for the meeting.

**1. Minutes.** *Motion (John/Bob):* to accept the minutes of 6/15/23 with grammar correction to item #8. The motion passed.

**2. Invoices:**

- Mowing: (from Alan Dyke): mowing at the Orford Conservation Land on 6/11, 6/22, 7/5, 7/23 (\$40 each). Total: \$160.

- Water Testing:

Date of Sample	Amount	Tested by
6/19/23	\$120	Eastern Analytics
6/26/23	\$120	Eastern Analytics
7/3/23	\$320	Eastern Analytics
7/10/23	\$120	Eastern Analytics
7/17/23	\$120	Eastern Analytics
7/24/23	\$120	Eastern Analytics
7/31/23	\$105	Eastern Analytics
8/4/23	\$25	Endyne
8/7/23	\$280	Eastern Analytics
8/14/23	\$105	Eastern Analytics

Total for water testing: \$1315

*Motion((Bob/John):* to approve the above invoices for mowing and water testing. The motion passed. See separate document for copies of invoices.

**3. Reports.**

A. *Water testing:* The test results at Indian Pond were high on 7/31, so another test was ordered from Endyne for quick turnaround, since the swimming program was going to take place the following week and they are close enough to drive the samples down. Results of that test came back Ok for swimming. Ted asked whether there is an email address for Parks and Playgrounds, so water test results could be sent to them. John suggested adding Michele Condon (NH DES) to the test results distribution list, so the test results could go on the state's Healthy Swimming Mapper website.

*Motion (John/Craig):* That the Conservation Commission resume responsibility for posting water test results at the 3 beaches (Indian Pond, Upper Baker Pond, Lower Baker Pond) when the E. coli results are above the recommended amount for swimming.

There was discussion of options for who could do the posting (Highway Department, Parks and Playgrounds), but the consensus was that the OCC should take this on.

*Physical posting of signs at beaches:* Ted can do Indian Pond; Harry has said in the past that he can post Upper and Lower Baker Ponds.

*Listserv:* Ted will do this for now. Need to get the OCC email account fixed, then should post from that.

*Web Page:* Need to check with Esther about how to get this done.

*Possible public sign at Town Offices:* Bob suggested looking into having a sign perhaps outside the Town Offices giving the status of the beaches. This is something to look into.

**B. Foreign invasives:**

- Knotweed control: There have been three passes this summer over the knotweed areas by Tillotson Falls Rd and Route 25A by Jacobs Brook. John mentioned that there are still some knotweed sprouts coming up along Tillotson Falls Rd except in the area where it was smothered. Disposal of the knotweed that has been pulled is an issue. John mentioned that he got a key to the sandpit from Roger Hadlock so the pulled knotweed can be put on the burn pile there. We still need to move some pulled knotweed from behind the highway garage over to the pit. The last time the knotweed was pulled along Route 25A, we

experimented with leaving the cut stalks there to see whether they dry out and become inert, or sprout and stay viable.

- Roadside mowing: knotweed along town roads has been flagged so the mowers can skip it. For budget reasons, the Highway Department may skip mowing Tillotson Falls Rd this year. Along Archertown Road, they will cut and leave the knotweed areas (not mow).

- John reported that Chris Turgeon of NH DOT said that the plan to have OCC trim the vegetation along Route 25A near Jacobs Brook that is more than 15 feet away from the highway is “approvable”. We have started implementing this plan.

*C. Orfordville Road /Clough Brook culvert:* Esther sent an email saying that the culvert project will happen this year, but won't be until late in September (the contractor is waiting for the water to get lower, it's been a wet year).

*D. Trail Work at the Orford Conservation Land:* The trail has not yet been trimmed up again, but it is past bird nesting season, so it can be done.

*E. Dump Inspection:* Ted said that the dump inspection workshop he was planning to go to has been postponed to September or October. He will plan to go then.

**4. Events and Activities:** The Stargazing event at Mountain View Farm (co-sponsored by Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) and OCC) took place last week and there were about 50 people there. We even saw the StarLink satellites going over. Birdwatching: Ted will ask Anne Duncan Cooley about possibilities for a bird watching event.

**5. Membership:** Currently there are two vacancies for Commissioners (plus one who may step down), and one vacancy for an Alternate. The terms of two Commissioners and two Alternates expire in March, 2024. Craig mentioned three possible recruits -- he will talk with them about joining OCC.

**6. Conservation possibilities:** Ted mentioned that the Mount Cube Farm (600 acres) is for sale. OCC may have a part if conservation of the land is pursued. He contacted UVLT in case they would have any interest in conservation possibilities on this land. They are aware of this.

*Motion* (John/Craig): to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04

Minutes taken by Emily Bryant

**See invoices in separate document.**