

**Conservation Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes: December 19, 2024**  
**Meeting held in person at the Niles Room in the Town Offices**

**Present-in-person:** Commission Members: Ted Cooley, Bob Hedges, and Harry Pease. Alternates:, Emily Bryant, Fran Plaisted and John Miller. Also attending was Kevin Follensbee representing the Selectboard

Chris Gothberg attended the meeting.

Meeting called to order 7:02 PM.

Fran Plaisted, Emily Bryant and John Miller were seated.

1. **Approval of the minutes from the two November meetings:** Fran moved that we approve the minutes from the 11/21/2024. Ted second. Minutes approved.

Ted moved we approve the minutes from the 11/26/2024 meeting. Harry seconded. Motion carried.

2. **Feedback on UVLT/Orford Conservation Commission-sponsored movie event:** Harry updated the Commission on the showing of the documentary “The Last Ice” (about Lake Hitchcock in the Upper Valley) on Wednesday 12/4/2024 in conjunction with the UVLT. Approximately 50 attendees and good support, good questions. Successful event

3. **Plan for 2025 Hike Orford! outings:** Reviewed the proposed schedule for hikes and events.

A. Winter hikes:

1/12/2024 Full Moon Snowshoe Hike co-sponsored with the UVLT. Event will start at approximately 4:30/5pm

1/18 or 10/19 Ten Mile Trail Hike

2/22 and 2/23 Stonehouse Mountain Hike

3/22 and 3/23 Orford Heritage Trail

B. Winter Speaker Series:

January 23 --- “Winter on Mt. Washington” with Paul Goundrey, co-sponsored w/Orford Social Library

Early February --- “Orford and the Connecticut River” (current ecological state) with Adair Mulligan

Mid-February --- History of Hiking in Western Whites/Upper Valley with Becky Fullerton, Appalachian Mountain Club Historian

Mid-March --- Upper Valley Wildlife Corridor Study with UVLT's Jeanie McIntyre and Jason Berard

Early April --- Hiking Opportunities in the Upper Valley (UVTA's Trail Finder tool) Russell Hirschler, UVTA

Plan to contact the school (Bruce Taylor) to reserve rooms.

C. Spring to Fall hikes:

Early May Birding on Richmond Property; Fran will reach out to Jeff Macqueen and Ted will reach out to his birding friends

May 17-18 Sunday Mountain- coordinated with Rivendell Trail Association

First Weekend June, National Trails Weekend- Proposed doing an event with Rivendell Trail Association

June 21-22 Lupine Hike Thompson Property – Harry will reach out to Tom Thompson

Late June Trail work on Rivendell Trail Association

July 12-13 Hike Mount Cube

July 26-27 Trail work on Rivendell Trail

August 8-9 Nichols Hill Trail

August 23 Stargazing in partnership with UVLT at Mountain View Farm

September 6-7 Mount Cube to the River (or Rivendell School). Will need to work on sponsors and coordinating logistics

October 18-19 Cottonstone Mountain

4. **Planned trail work on the Orford Heritage Trail:** Hiked the trail with UVTA staff and reviewed what we needed to do to put a bridge over the severe washout. Plans being developed for spring project work. Will require some investment (\$5000). Volunteer(s) with excavator equipment still needed to do erosion repair. Have a committed volunteer. Need to confirm timing for spring work.
5. **Opportunities for community science/ research project** Several good opportunities exist: (a) Weather Spotter program where you earn weather certification, (b) NASA program to earn has certification for "Dark Skies" designation, and (c) Snowfall measurement program. Will reach out to Gail Keefer for recommendations for Rivendell science teacher contacts.

Need to identify science teacher partner.

**6. Non-public session:** Fran moved that we go into a non-public session. John seconded. Fran-yes, Bob- yes, John-yes, Emily-yes, Ted-yes, Harry-yes. Entered closed section (RSA 91) at 7:49 PM. Kevin Follensbee was present.

John moved that we leave the non-public session at 8:11 PM. Harry seconded. Fran-yes, Bob-yes, Emily-yes, Ted-yes, Harry-yes, John-yes.

John moved to seal the minutes from the closed session. Bob seconded. Fran-yes, Emily-yes, Ted-yes, Harry-yes, John-yes, Bob-yes.

Fran moved to end the public meeting. John seconded. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Minutes taken by Fran Plaisted.

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