

Draft 1/13/26 Meeting Minutes - Richmond Conservation Commission

Meeting Date: 1/13/26

Meeting Time: 7:00PM

Attendance: RCC Members -Bob Low, Sam Pratt, Jeanette Malone, Trevor Brooks, Kit Emery, Members of the Public: (Jon Kart, Bob Galvin, Chelsye Brooks, Rebecca Butterfield and David Kauck).

Minutes Prepared by: Kit Emery

Outline

Roll Call and Introductions

- Sam Pratt welcomes everyone to the Richmond Conservation Commission meeting on January 13th, 2026. Sam noted it is the first officially recorded RCC meeting in a long time.
- Sam confirms a quorum at RCC meeting and request's introductions from the members of the public: Bob Galvin, Chelsye Brooks, Jon Kart, Rebecca Butterfield and David Kauck.
- Kit Emery agrees to take minutes again.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Sam moves to approve the [December 9](#) meeting minutes, and Bob seconds the motion.
- Unanimous approval of the minutes by Sam, Trevor, Bob, and Jeanette.
- Sam moves on to any additions or changes to the agenda.

Update on RCC Submission for Town Report

- Sam discusses the draft submission for the town report, mentioning Bob's efforts and Jeanette's editorial comments.
- Bob confirms the draft is ready, with minor changes, and suggests sending it by [Monday](#).
- Sam agrees to send the draft without further approval, as comments have been integrated.
- Bob plans to send the draft in the morning, and Sam moves on to the next agenda item.

Proposal for Rodenticide Education Event

- Bob Galvin presents a proposal for a rodenticide education event, seeking \$400 from the CRF.
- Bob explains the event's purpose, including a presentation from the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) and the involvement of VINS ambassador birds.
- The event aims to educate the community about the negative impacts of rodenticides on wildlife and provide practical alternatives.
- Bob outlines the project's significance, budget, and partners, including the Bolton and Huntington Conservation Commissions and the Richmond Library.

Discussion and Approval of Rodenticide Education Event Funding

- Sam opens the floor for comments and questions about the rodenticide education event proposal.
- Bob suggests clarifying the library fee and reducing the request to \$350 if the library waives the fee.
- Sam agrees to state the request as not to exceed \$400 and to update the application to show the full budget.
- Jeanette moves to recommend Select Board approval of \$400 for the rodenticide education event, and Kit seconds the motion.
- Unanimous approval of the motion, and Bob agrees to attend the Select Board meeting to present the case.

Review and Approval of ANR State Wetlands Rules Comment

- Bob shares the final version of the comment on the ANR state wetlands rules, with minor editorial changes.
- Jeanette suggests adding vernal pools back into the document, and Trevor proposes rephrasing a statement.
- The group agrees to the changes and plans to send the comment immediately after the meeting.
- Bob provides the email addresses for submission, and Sam will send the comment on behalf of the committee.

Conservation Reserve Fund Renewal

- Bob discusses the need to prepare for the annual town meeting vote on the Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF).
- Historically, the RCC has been available for public meetings before town meeting to discuss the CRF.
- Bob suggests updating the PowerPoint presentation and the informational packet for the upcoming town meeting.

- Sam will reach out to Josh to confirm the timing and availability of the public meetings.

Butternut Tree Study Proposal

- Josh reached out to the RCC regarding a butternut tree study proposal from Kylie Roth of Wardwell Arboretum.
- The tree study would be conducted on town-owned land at Over Rocker Park.
- Caitlin Littlefield, the tree warden, supports the proposal, and the RCC approves it.
- Sam will inform Josh and Kylie of the RCC's approval.

Watershed Grant Program Opportunity

- Judy sent a press release about the Watershed Grant Program accepting applications.
- Jeanette suggests applying for the grant to tackle Phragmites near Lily Pond, involving the Vermont Master Naturalist program.
- The group discusses the potential project, the grant categories, and the timeline for applications.
- Jeanette will coordinate with Susanna and the Vermont Master Naturalist program to explore the opportunity further.

Rewild Richmond Initiative and Community Engagement

- Jeanette introduces the Rewild Richmond initiative and updates on the Vermont Master Naturalist program.
- Susanna and another team member plan to address Phragmites in Lily Pond, involving community education and management.
- David and Rebecca, two members from the public discuss mapping invasive species on Hill View Road and using their property as a demonstration plot.
- The group emphasizes the importance of community engagement and education in addressing invasive species.

Riparian Habitat and Property Details

- Rebecca discusses the riparian habitat on their 200-acre property, which is on the federal wetlands map.
- The property is unusual due to the sandy soil, with the well drilling through 80 feet of sand before hitting schist.
- The area is part of the inland Delta from the times of the glacial lakes.
- Rebecca and David are interested in understanding the forest community and mapping invasive species on their property.

Neighborhood Collaboration and Invasive Mapping

- Sam mentions Jeanette sharing strategies and initiatives from other areas in Richmond.
- Rebecca notes that the invasive map for the Valley and watershed is unknown and important to figure out.
- Sam heard about a forum where the Waitsfield Conservation Commission discussed mapping invasives with assistance from the UVM ecological planning lab.
- The idea of setting up a Richmond GIS map specifically for invasive species is proposed.

GIS Mapping and Grant Opportunities

- Sam suggests that having a GIS map could help teach people about mapping invasives.
- Bob emphasizes the importance of understanding the scale of the invasive problem.
- Sam mentions a grant category for planning, assessment, inventory, and monitoring, which mapping fits into.
- The timing for organizing and applying for the grant is discussed, with the possibility of getting funding.

Cost and Resources for GIS Mapping

- Sam questions whether the cost of building a GIS map is covered by the grant or if there is a cost associated with it.
- Rebecca suggests that the mapping effort might tie into an Idris system or something that UVM has.
- Sam mentions the Phragmites at Lily Pond and the need to map the bigger watershed around it.
- Jeanette suggests following up with Rebecca and David on the possibility of seeking funds from the grant.

Focusing on Specific Properties for Mapping

- Sam asks if the mapping effort should be limited to Hillview and Rebecca David's property or if it should be a full Richmond-wide effort.
- Jeanette suggests starting small with a pilot study and then expanding.
- David asks what is needed to submit an application, considering the current time of year.
- Jeanette mentions the Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF) as another funding option.

Educational Value and Community Involvement

- Sam discusses the importance of pitching the application in a way that highlights the educational value and public good.
- Bob emphasizes the need for a pilot study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the mapping and management approach.
- Jeanette mentions working with the Vermont Master Naturalist program, which adds a collaborative aspect to the project.
- Jeanette highlights the importance of mapping efforts across watersheds and roadside management.

Professional Help and Mapping Strategies

- Jon suggests starting with volunteer projects and hiring professionals for larger areas.
- Jeanette emphasizes the educational value of the project as a demonstration site for other landowners.
- Sam discusses the need for a boilerplate RFP for invasive removal and the process of filling it out for specific projects.
- Jon recommends consulting with professionals to get recommendations on control methods and disposal.

Developing the RFP and Next Steps

- Sam suggests combining the feedback on the RFP and sending it out to the committee for comments.
- Jeanette offers to help with editing and conceptualizing the RFP.
- Sam plans to take a first pass at the RFP and send it out for comments before the next meeting.
- Jeanette makes a motion to authorize working with Josh to draft the RFP and bring it to the Select Board for review and approval.

Finalizing the RFP and Future Plans

- Sam clarifies that the final RFP will be for specific projects rather than a general boilerplate.
- Jon asks about the generalization of the RFP and the importance of site-specific details.
- Sam explains that the RFP will be filled in with specific details for each project.
- The meeting concludes with a motion to adjourn and a plan to continue working on the RFP for the next meeting.

Action Items

- Update the CRF application budget to show the full program cost (all contributions and total \$677.50) so the Select Board can see the complete funding breakdown
- Attend the Richmond Select Board meeting as the CRF applicant to present and answer questions about the VINs rodenticide education event
- Send the RCC submission for the town report to the town (as discussed, send the finalized text) in the morning following the meeting
- Update the town-meeting PowerPoint slides and the informational packet for the Conservation Reserve Fund renewal and coordinate updates with Brad Elliot
- Email the finalized motion text (as edited in the meeting) to Sam after the meeting so it can be included in the minutes and forwarded to the Select Board
- Contact Susanna to discuss pursuing the watershed grant for Phragmites control at Lily Pond and offer help with the [February 4](#) application or proposal drafting
- Send the Conservation Commission wetlands-rule comment letter to the state rulemaking addresses (wetlandsrulemakingcomment@vermont.gov and misty.sincogly@vermont.gov) immediately after the meeting
- Reach out to Josh to confirm the timing and format of the pre-town-meeting public meeting(s) where the CRF will be presented and note availability to attend
- Contact Waitsfield/UVM/Winooski watershed contacts (e.g., Kurt and Winooski conservation district contact) to learn how Waitsfield set up their invasive-species mapping and whether there are costs or technical steps we should follow
- Draft a first pass of a boilerplate RFP for invasive-plant management that incorporates John Carter's feedback (general scope, pick 1–2 pilot parcels, avoid overly prescriptive methods) and circulate it to the RCC and John for review prior to the next meeting

9:00 Meeting adjourned

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

The RCC meeting on [January 14](#), 2023, covered several key points. The meeting was officially recorded for the first time in a while. The [December 9](#) minutes were unanimously approved. Bob Galvin proposed a \$400 CRF grant for a rodenticide education event, which was approved. The event will feature a VINS presentation and ambassador birds, with additional funding from Bolton and Huntington Conservation Commissions. The group also discussed the ANR state wetlands rules, suggesting minor edits. They reviewed a butternut tree study proposal and considered applying for a watershed grant for Phragmites management. The Rewild Richmond initiative was also discussed, focusing on community engagement and invasive species management. The meeting discussed the management of invasive species on a 200-acre riparian property, highlighting the need for mapping and

community collaboration. The group proposed creating a GIS map for invasive species, inspired by the Waitsfield Conservation Commission's efforts. They considered starting with a pilot project on specific properties like Hillview and Over Rocker, and potentially expanding town-wide. The Conservation Commission will draft a boilerplate RFP for invasive plant control, seeking professional input and potential funding from the Conservation Reserve Fund. The next steps include refining the RFP and consulting with local contractors.