

Town of Winchester
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
July 7, 2026 - 5:00 PM
Town of Winchester Town Hall
338 Main Street – 2nd Floor – P. Francis Hicks Conference Room
MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Renee Waldron calls the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. In attendance: Renee Waldron, Jen Perga, Addie Mehl, and Tom Carter. Absent: Kevin Burgio, Amanda Hill, and Sally Chesney

2. Public Comment - Renee's grandson, Wesley says, "I want to save the earth."

3. Agenda Review - No changes; motion by Tom, seconded by Jen. Vote: Unanimous.

4. Minutes Approval - No changes to June 2, 2026 minutes; motion by Jen, seconded by Jen. Vote: Unanimous.

5. New Business

A. Tort Museum tent - July 18:

Tort Museum interns are hosting another farmer's market and have invited WCC. Addie can't come, but Jen and Tom can. Tom would like to be there to support the community. All agree. Sally is currently out of town, so Jen texted her. Sally may not be back in time for it, but if she is, she will be able to bring information on invasives. TBD.

B. Plan for Fall Clean Up:

The Fall Clean Up has been scheduled for Oct 3rd from 9:30 - 12. Addie will make flyer. Tom is going to inquire about receiving some of the nipper money from town to support events such as the clean up. Tom suggested the idea of gathering local business sponsorships for these events to garner more community action and support and even hosting it in honor of Carrie. As well, the idea of providing maps with certain areas to clean for attendees such as Torrington does was suggested. Addie and Tom will meet to discuss more logistics of the clean up.

C. Sustainable CT - Community Match Fund

Decided was not applicable at this time.

6. Old Business

A. Banning Rodenticide:

Jen and others were inspired by other towns banning rodenticides in municipal spaces. Considering presenting to town the benefits of banning rodenticides (i.e. not harming other wildlife in the food chain). Should have safe, low-cost, environmentally-friendly alternatives to consider. Suggested to put together a proposal to the town during the winter time when things are not so busy.

B. VoxBox project suggestions:

Tabled for now. VoxBox participants may follow-up on the river smart pledge compliance.

C. River Smart Pledge compliance:

See Above.

D. Multi-town Japanese Knotweed/ Invasive Plant Management

Conservation Commission 05-05-2026 pg. 1

Knotheads continue to meet once a month. Other towns are sending letters to private residents about knotweed on property, coordinating with town officials, etc. WCC hasn't planned to do anything else about knotweed this year since failing to receive a grant for knotweed management. Will pursue having state rd. invasive spraying done, though. Addie and Sally will edit their iNaturalist entries of knotweed that occur on state roads (183, 44, 800, 263), so Tom can put together a map for state spraying. Each stand must then be indicated with pink ribbon. It seems the town has been spraying on town roads- but maybe more than just knotweed. Tom will follow up with Jim to see what has been sprayed and what chemicals are being used.

E. Sue Grossman Ad Hoc Committee:

Updates on pause as the next meeting is scheduled for August.

F. Bar Grant update:

Info will be available in September- tabled for now.

G. Publicizing Conservation Commission Events/ Facebook:

Addie to work on knotweed infographic.

H. Chartered Commission Status:

Tabled

I. RRDD1 table:

Sally and Jen were unable to attend. Tabled

J. Facebook invasive info:

See G. above.

K. Conservation Board Info Sheet:

Addie has made an info sheet for the board to hand out at events explaining what the board does. She will reconfigure it for front and back printing to hand out in postcard form.

7. **Communications:** N/A

- A. It was learned that Joyce from Colebrook sent letters to homeowners with knotweed in Colebrook. Idea for Winchester?
- B. Tom has been in touch with Rachel from Tort Law Museum about the farmer's market. Attendance TBD.
- C. Renee has been in communication with Melissa Bird about VoxBox. Tabled.

8. **Other Business:**

- A. Tom informed the board about a smart energy living mobile exhibit coming to the Tort Law Museum.
- B. Jen talked about visiting the new net zero energy efficient affordable housing homes in Norfolk. Was very impressed!

9. **Adjourn**

Tom moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:56 PM, which was seconded by Jen and unanimously approved by the board.

Respectfully Submitted,
Addie Mehl, Secretary