



Bennington Conservation Commission

Caring for the Land and Cultivating Community since 1989

November 21, 2024 6:30PM

Minutes

Call to order: 6:30PM

Attendance - Zach Allen, Jane Butler, Joe MacGregor, Jon Manley, Mike Munhall, Steve Willette

Guests - Logan Reed and Mr. Reed, Kent Pritchard and Mr. Pritchard, Val Germain

Minutes: Of October 17, approved

Finances: *As of October 1* Balance of budget:

Operating	\$513
Capital	<u>\$277</u>
Total	\$790

2025 Budget submitted to Town

Mail: None

Pierce School 4th Grade Group - Mrs. Germain's 4th Grade was eloquently represented by Logan Reed and Kent Pritchard to make a request that the BCC support their mammal study by purchasing a game cam for the Edes Forest to record what animals pass through the forest that the students can study in class. Five cams are under consideration: 3 from the class and 2 from the BCC. A decision about the cam will be made within the next few weeks and purchased. It was mentioned that we will need to purchase a subscription for wireless connection. In addition a solar panel needs to be purchased to keep the cam(s) charged. On a motion by Jon Manley and seconded by Zach Allen it was approved that the BCC will spend up to \$350 for cam and wireless for the Pierce School 4th Grade. It was mentioned that signage should be put up indicating that a cam is in operation. Joe mentioned, and the boys agreed, that they would make a report back in the spring to the BCC about what they find and study with the use of the cam(s).

Reports

- NHACC - Annual Meeting November 7 - Joe MacGregor attended the conference at Pembroke Academy. All the talks will be online at the NHACC website for others to see (at least the slide presentations can be seen).
<https://www.nhacc.org/annualmeeting/workshops> He attended the "Fundamentals" talk

from which he had it reinforced that the Commission needs to attend the meetings of other boards and commissions in town to make others aware of what the BCC is doing and how it might help other groups in town. It is important that the commission minutes are posted ASAP. We should also look at the founding documents for the Edes Forest to ascertain how the Mill donated the land for the Forest...was it in perpetuity?

He also attended the talk **Keeping Your Commission Alive, Well & Relevant and Conservation, Climate and Health** which talked about the health concerns with longer warm periods.

- River Committee - Jon spoke about the recent River Committee meeting that discussed the remarkable low levels of water in the river and reservoirs in the area. It was mentioned that Eversource is laying mats down when installing poles to minimize the damage to plants. Also that Eversource is making an effort to protect nesting ospreys by installing poles with platforms for them to build nests rather than on power poles.
- Town Hall - Tom James -

Old Business

- Climate talk review November 7 - The students from Franklin Pierce University did a nice job presenting to a limited audience. It was their first presentation and they were grateful for the opportunity to get some practice.
- Forest Work Day November 16 review - Jane, Joe, Mike, Zach, and Jon were able to come and got a good bit done. Joe came back the next day to finish some trails that didn't get done. The dryness of the land made blowing the leaves easier than it might have been with rain.

New Business

- Sausage Supper - Tom signed Dave Blanchard's Group up for music. Purchasing sausage before the end of the year was agreed to. And not making pretzels again was also agreed.
- Bennington Trail - Recently the Bennington Girl Scouts did some "blazing," pruning, and trimming of "widowmakers" on the trail.
- Mike mentioned that he had seen that Antrim Conservation Commission had done some contests this year that we might try: who owns the largest tree in town and a photo contest of wild flowers in the spring.
- Steve suggested that the theme for next year might be "Keep Bennington Wild." This would lend itself to the poster contest and public talks about various wildlife topics related to the

town: “wildlife corridors,” a presentation by the 4th grade on what they find and study in the forest...”

- Joe motioned that the December meeting be canceled due to being close to Christmas. Seconded and unanimous.

Goals for 2025 voted unanimously. Adopted October 2024

1. Continue the property conservation easement educational program to help residents decide to put their land into conservation or common use. Look into providing financial assistance to those wishing to do either.
2. Finish perambulating the Deering townline.
3. Continue to monitor water quality and serve in an advisory role to help permanent residents establish lake associations to take the lead in keeping bodies of water clean.
4. Continue to hold educational programming to address issues in town such as land and water preservation as well as informational presentations on animals, history, and climate issues.
5. Continue to improve the Bennington Trail with marking and parking.
6. Increase membership of the Bennington Conservation Commission.

Upcoming Calendar Items to Note

Jon mentioned that the Democrats are having a potluck holiday party at the Depot to which the town will be invited.

Next Meeting - January 16

Adjourned 8:00PM

Recorded by: *Mike Munhall*