



---

## **Minutes**

General Commission Meeting  
12:15 p.m. Sunday, July 13th, 2025

### **Present**

JoAnn Hanowski, *Member*  
Emily Cayer, *Advisor*  
Jane Hoffman, *Treasurer*  
Liza Keisler, *Member* (remote)  
Linda Shatney, *Member*  
Peter Watkinson, *Member*  
Will Marlier, *Clerk*

### **Absent**

Chris Steel, *Chair*  
Erika Karp, *Member*

### **Members of the Public**

Nigel Waring  
Alex Connizzo  
Lucy Zendzian  
Emma Palumbo

#### **1.) 12:15 - Meeting Commences**

Will Marlier recommended that they amend the agenda to begin with Nigel Waring's presentation and the AVCC discussion prior to the typical beginning of minute approval, action review, and treasurer's report. This was agreed to by present commission members, and Nigel was invited to begin.

#### **2.) Nigel Waring (USDA Wildlife Services): Keeping Bears Safe**

Nigel shared that USDA Wildlife Services have been assisting the VT Fish & Wildlife Department in responding to human/bear conflicts in the state. Although he provided the disclaimer that any extreme cases (such as home entry) were handled solely by state government officials, such as local Game Wardens.

His presentation covered the many leading causes of human/bear conflict, citing the top four (in order) as garbage, chickens, birdfeeders, and compost. He then described the many ways to secure potential attractants and discourage curious bears from becoming habituated to human areas. Fencing, sheds, modified garbage bins, and “critter gitter” alarms all play a role in the non-lethal control of keeping bears away from human homes. Many of these tools are available on loan through USDA Wildlife Services.

A map depicting the quantity of human/bear conflict reports showed that Greensboro was a hotspot in the Northeast Kingdom. When Peter Watkinson asked why that might be, Nigel and other members of the audience hypothesized that it had to do with the large summer population boom, with summer homes being more poorly secured against potential bear visits.

### 3.) Alex Connizzo: **AVCC Regional Summit**

Alex shared with the commission that the desire to hold a regional conservation commission summit in this part of the state was largely inspired by the excellent work of the Greensboro Conservation Commission and its collaboration with other active conservation commissions in Hardwick and Craftsbury.

He reported that the AVCC was currently hoping to hold the summit in the Hardwick Memorial Building on October 11th. There was some feedback that Greensboro has excellent locations that could host the event as well, including Fellowship Hall and the Highland Center for the Arts. Alex responded that Hardwick was being considered due to its proximity to the majority of invitees, but that should it not work out, Greensboro might be considered.

Alex also shared that the AVCC was aware of the limited capacity and volunteer nature of our local CC’s and would be willing to take on the organizational and administrative burdens of putting together such an event. He hopes that there will be lots of positive networking opportunities for attendees.

GCC members shared a general sense of optimism and that they would like to move forward with participating in this summit. Lucy Zendzian, the co-chair of the Hardwick Conservation Commission, stated that the HCC was feeling very energized and positive about participating in the summit.

GCC members, and Lucy Zendzian, confirmed that a Saturday (like the 11th) would be preferable to weekday evenings or Sundays.

Peter Watkinson and Will Marlier suggested that a speaker with expertise on volunteer organizing and grassroots conservation might be helpful considering the small population in the NEK.

4.) Will Marlier: **Review & Approve Minutes** of the Meeting on May 17th, 2025

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by the members, and Will Marlier quickly ran through any action items that would not be covered later in the meeting. They were largely clerical, and had been addressed.

5.) Jane Hoffman: **Treasurer's Report & Future Expenses**

Jane reported that the GCC had received its \$3,000 appropriation from the town on July 1st, and that unlike previous years, there was little carry over to speak of between fiscal years. She ran through the rest of the recent expenses and expected expenses, and provided a hard-copy hand out to attendees.

6.) Emily Cayer: **Neighborwood Watch Report**

Emily reported that the program was now being referred to as "Neighborwood Watch" and not the "Wildlife Crossings Program". She shared that she had sent a notice to participants to send in any footage they have prior to August 15th so that she can incorporate it into a video she's putting together for the Moose Program.

JoAnn Hanowski shared that she had recently purchased a wildlife camera that didn't require batteries and ran on solar power instead. It only cost her a little over \$50. JoAnn will follow up with a link to that camera so that those that are interested can purchase one for themselves.

Peter Watkinson indicated that he would be buying some of those cameras and enrolling in the program.

7.) Liza Keisler: **Pollinator Pathway Report**

Liza shared that installation of the garden went really well, although some of the seeds that were scattered have not germinated at a very high rate. Liza will continue to monitor the site, and determine if additional seeding is required. She will then request additional funds from the GCC at the September meeting.

Jane Hoffman and JoAnn Hanowski reported that they'd both been by the pathway recently, and felt that it was looking really good. The plugs in particular looked vibrant to them.

There was some discussion regarding the difficulty of watering at this site, to which Will Marlier suggested installing a rain barrel at the location. Liza indicated that watering would not be necessary long-term, and that it may be better to wait and see how the subsequent seeds took.

#### 8.) Will Marlier: **Invasives Program Report**

Will shared that he and Chris (mostly Chris) continued to manage the two knotweed sites and cut/pull the remaining plants.

Will also reported that Chris had been in touch with the Highland Lodge, and they agreed they would be willing to look into hiring a licensed herbicide applicator to treat the knotweed patch around their dumpster (via injection). Will is going to facilitate providing the Lodge management with a quote.

There has not yet been a response from the road crew or their representatives regarding collaboration on roadside invasive sites.

Erica was not in attendance, but will report on her attempts to reach out to Dr. Alan Eastman to invite him to provide a presentation on the efficacy/safety of herbicide chemicals to the Greensboro public.

#### 9.) Emily Cayer & Jane Hoffman: **Moose Program**

Emily and Jane reiterated that their program is a go for August 23rd at the Highland Center for the Arts, and would feature the biologist Josh Blouin.

Emily also shared that she had been getting a lot of great moose footage of a healthy looking bull moose on her own property recently.

#### 10.) Liza Keisler: **Charlie Reinertson - Northern Peatlands**

Liza shared that she was having difficulty getting connected with Kiesha from the HCA, and that there was nothing new to discuss on this agenda item. After some discussion about Liza's and the HCA's busy schedule, GCC members agreed that it may be better to postpone the event until next calendar year.

Peter and Liza will connect to discuss the future of the program, and Peter will help facilitate communication with the HCA.

11.) Linda Shatney & Jane Hoffman: **Rodenticide Program**

Jane reported that the program continues to move forward. The library is set to host a presentation on rodenticide poison on August 3rd, between 3:00 and 5:00 PM. They plan on raffling off alternative methods of pest-control that do not utilize rodenticides at this event. Jane has drafted a town resolution to make Greensboro a “rodenticide free” community based upon the previous “pollinator friendly” resolution that was passed last year.

Additionally, Jane and Linda shared that the Funky Fourth tabling was well received, and the flyers that Chris Steel had designed were ready and featured a toxic food web.

Lastly, Jane reported that Rep. Larry Satcowitz was continuing to champion the issue by writing legislation.

12.) Peter Watkinson: **Fundraising Ideas**

Peter shared that fundraising is best done with a concise and clear tagline, or on a specific issue/program. He posed the question “Should we consider an annual campaign or a one-time fundraising campaign?” for members to consider.

The discussion then moved into whether or not the GCC should encourage donations at the door to the event we sponsor and host. The general consensus was “yes”, although there were several members who were concerned this could eventually make our events less accessible. There was general agreement that the GCC should begin soliciting donations at the door to events while ensuring that those events remain free to the public.

13.) Will Marlier: **CaspianArts Community Fest**

Will shared that Chris Steel had been in touch with Isa Oehry regarding the CaspianArts Community Fest, and that they were hoping the GCC could man a table at the event. The event is scheduled for Saturday, August 16, 2025 (rain day August 17) 11am-4pm. The GCC agreed that they would like to attend, but no single member was able to volunteer to run the table on our behalf.

14.) JoAnn Hanowski: **Adopt-a-Culvert Expense Request**

JoAnn Hanowski described the Adopt-a-Drain software, which monitors and maps culvert and drainage system maintenance across the county. She has requested that the Greensboro Association fund the original \$1,100 charge for setting up the program locally, and then requested that the Greensboro Conservation Commission fund the \$100 annual subscription fee.

The GCC put it to a vote, and unanimously supported allocating the request.

**15.) Schedule Next Meeting & Other Business**

The next meeting will be held Saturday, September 20th, at 10:15 AM at the Greensboro Free Library.

**16.) Executive Session: Vote on New Member**

The board voted unanimously to recommend Emma Palumbo's appointment to the GCC to the Greensboro Selectboard. Chris Steel will forward her nomination to the selectboard for consideration at their next meeting.

Upon confirmation, Will Marlier will add her to future correspondence and add her to GCC calendar invites.

**17.) 2:00 - Adjourn**