



Minutes

General Commission Meeting
10:15 a.m. Saturday, September 20th, 2025

Present

Emily Cayer, *Advisor* (remote)
JoAnn Hanowski, *Member*
Jane Hoffman, *Treasurer* (remote)
Erika Karp, *Member*
Will Marlier, *Clerk*
Chris Steel, *Chair*
Peter Watkinson, *Member*

Absent

Liza Keisler, *Member*
Emma Palumbo, *Member*

Members of the Public

N/A

1.) 10:15 - Meeting Commences

Chris Steel started the meeting by announcing the formalized addition of Emma Palumbo to the Greensboro Conservation Commission, as well as the departure of long-time member, Linda Shatney.

2.) Will Marlier: Review & Approve Minutes of the Meeting on July 13th, 2025

a.) Progress on Actions

Will requested a vote on the previous minutes, which were then approved unanimously, and then moved forward to reports on July action items.

JoAnn shared that she had distributed the link for \$50 solar-powered wildlife cameras to interested parties since the last meeting, and agreed to distribute it further to other interested members.

Peter shared that he and his wife had not yet signed up to participate in the Neighborwood Watch program, but would do so now.

Chris shared that he and Liza had both continued to monitor and maintain the Bend pollinator garden.

Will reported that he had reached out to contractors regarding herbicide application at the Highland Lodge and Smith Store, and would share more under the Invasives Program agenda item.

Erika shared that she had reached out to Dr. Alan Eastmen regarding a possible educational workshop on herbicide use and safety, but had not heard back. She also reached out to a local farmer who was somewhat knowledgeable on the subject. Erika will continue to pursue educational opportunities for the Greensboro community on the efficacy and safety of glyphosate herbicide use.

Peter relayed that he had not yet had an opportunity to discuss the possibility of Charlie Reinertson's programming at the HCA with Liza, but would reach out and do so going forward.

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

Jane then offered a quick report on the GCC's current financial position. As of 8/20/26 our net assets were at \$2,744.16. She indicated that there had since been income of \$100 due to donations at the Moose Program, and an expense of \$50 for the Commission's dues to the AVCC.

JoAnn provided the correction that the \$100 expense for the adopt-a-culvert software was provided by the Greensboro Association this year, and wouldn't be needed from the GCC until the next fiscal year.

Chris then requested that Jane distribute the financial reports electronically prior to future meetings, so that members have the opportunity to review them ahead of time. Jane agreed.

The commission membership generally agreed that there would be no additional expenses/contributions (beyond the \$1,000 committed earlier this year) made to the Greensboro NRI in the near future. All present agreed that the GCC benefits greatly from the institution of the Greensboro Land Trust.

Chris asked that all presenters during this meeting provide a ballpark estimate of how many expenses their program might incur over the next year.

4.) Election of Officers

Chris Steel shared that he and Jane Hoffman had agreed to continue in their respective roles of Chair and Treasurer, although Will Marlier had requested to step down from his position as Clerk. Emma Palumbo had agreed to fill the role of Clerk in his absence.

Chris asked if any other members would be interested to stand for any of the three officer roles, to which none indicated as such. With that, the following slate was elected unanimously...

Chris Steel - *Chair*

Jane Hoffman - *Treasurer*

Emma Palumbo - *Clerk*

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

Emily indicated that she had been working with several landowners to join the program, and still needed to make a few property visits to help with camera set up. She intends to reapply for the AVCC Tiny Grant next year, requesting \$700 to provide 12 camera kits for members of the program. That would leave **\$300 in anticipated expenses** for the GCC to cover from its funds.

Peter shared that he had appreciated Eve Frankel's (of the Nature Conservancy) presentation on the importance of conserving the Appalachian Range (in large part due to the vital wildlife corridor). **Peter will distribute that presentation to the GCC members.**

6.) ~~Liza Keisler~~ Chris Steel: **Pollinator Pathway Report**

Chris reported on the status of the Bend pollinator garden in Liza's absence. He indicated that some re-seeding and additional plugs would likely be required next spring, as well as some supplemental compost. He estimated that would be **~\$750 in expenses for the GCC** to anticipate.

Erika indicated that she was excited for the eventual addition of a seed library on site, and Chris acknowledged that this would require flowers going to seed first.

There was then some discussion of the differences between bee hives and bee houses, of which the former introduces non-native bees to an area that can displace local populations while the latter provides housing for local pollinators (including wasps).

7.) 11:00 - Will Marlier: **Invasives Program Report**

Will started by pitching his idea for a more formalized list of standing volunteers to help with a variety of future GCC projects, including invasive management, garden maintenance, and more (entitled *GCC's Worker Bees*). Members provided feedback encouraging him to utilize existing groups and lists, and granted him permission to take the next steps...

- Will will reach out to Jed Feffer and request that he ask his tree planting volunteers to “opt out” before being shared with the GCC for potential collaboration on future projects.
- Will will develop language and a survey for distribution and allow any member of the community to “opt in” to this list, to be used in the future.
- Will will reach out to the Craftsbury CC, Craftsbury Outdoor Center, and local 4-H group to seek possible collaboration in building this list.

Chris will speak with Elinor Osborn of the Craftsbury CC about their volunteer group for knotweed management, and if she thought there would be willingness to help on Greensboro projects as well.

Chris then summarized, for the benefit of members present, the basic benefits and drawbacks of mechanical versus chemical management of invasive species. Essentially, mechanical methods are viable and potentially preferable except for the fact that they require considerably more time, money, and effort. For these reasons, many professional conservation organizations and contractors primarily rely on chemical treatment, as more invasive sites can be addressed in a shorter timeframe and for less money. This was why, he shared, he felt it was important that the GCC explore both options.

The group then put the following motion to a vote, that *the Town of Greensboro (GCC) should work to contract professional services for the stem-injection application of herbicide to two sites of knotweed (at the Highland Lodge and Smith's Grocery) as pilot projects*. This was approved by members with all voting in favor excepting Erika Karp, who cast the sole dissenting vote.

Peter will be in touch with landowners on North Shore Road regarding the mechanical management of a knotweed site there.

Will reported that he had been in touch with Abraham Ames from Ames Ecologies regarding the pilot projects at the Lodge and at Smiths. He shared that Ames did not feel that there would be adequate time to treat the outbreaks this fall if the GCC was the primary point of contact and project manager (due to permitting requirements). Chris confirmed this was the case, and indicated that the GCC would be paying 50% of the Lodge's costs for this, while paying 100% of the costs at Smiths.

Chris will take the action of alerting the landowners that treatment would not be done until next season, and will introduce Will via email as the ongoing point of contact for these projects.

Will will work to get a more exact quote from Ames, and once that is acquired, reach out to the Greensboro Selectboard for permission to pursue this work with the "Town of Greensboro" as the contracting entity. Until then, Will offered **\$1,500 as the best estimate for GCC expenses** moving forward.

8.) Emily Cayer & Jane Hoffman: **Moose Program**

Emily reported that the event was a huge success, and that Josh was an excellent speaker. Jane shared that some videos showed location, or property owner name. The group agreed this was not best practice, and that property owners should be notified to change camera's tags to ones that didn't identify them.

Chris requested that Emily edit the existing video to remove those names, and send it to him to post on the town website. Peter and Jane suggested that this may be advantageous to hunters, trappers, and poachers, and that it may be better to keep the video private. Jane suggested that we discuss this further at our next meeting, which was agreed to.

It was confirmed that Jane and Emily would pursue programming for big cats (lynx, bobcat, catamounts) for next year, and that the **estimated expense would be ~\$500.**

9.) Jane Hoffman: **Rodenticide Program**

Jane reported that the rodenticide workshop at the Greensboro Free Library,

featuring Anna Morris from VINS, was a success. While there were fewer attendees than she had hoped, there was a state legislator and a member of the Bolton Conservation Commission in attendance.

Jane also shared that she had drafted a resolution for consideration at the next Town Meeting, and that it had been reviewed by attorneys. Jane will distribute this resolution to GCC members for consideration before further distributing it to the AVCC list serve to see if other towns would be interested in adopting it.

Chris will distribute it to the Hardwick and Craftsbury CC's for further discussion. He also reminded members that this resolution pertained only to *anticoagulant* rodenticide, and did not expand to *all* forms of rodenticide.

10.) JoAnn Hanowski: **Town Plan - GCC Chapter on Natural Resources**

JoAnn provided some background on the Town Plan process, sharing that Christine Armstrong had previously written the chapter on natural resources. She also shared that the Conservation Commission Handbook (Chapter 6) indicated it was the GCC's responsibility to do so. JoAnn has volunteered to write that chapter on behalf of the GCC, and will request assistance from Emma Palumbo.

Chris wondered if there may be some financial expectations attached to our participation, to which JoAnn responded she did not expect any. She added that the Planning Commission had no town appropriate for it either, and was operating off of grant funding.

Peter spoke of his experience on other nonprofit boards, and expressed that he felt it was important that this Town Plan utilize a model that kept it relevant and prevented it from becoming "shelfware".

11.) 11:35 - **Schedule Next Meeting & Other Business**

Members confirmed that the totalled figure of potential expenses should allow for a standard \$3,000 request from the Town. Chris will pass that request along to Brett Stanciu. Will has volunteered to write and submit the GCC report for inclusion in the Town Report. Members agreed that the Town was receiving an excellent return on investment for their \$3,000 appropriate to the GCC.

Will confirmed that the AVCC regional meeting scheduled for October 11th was still on, and that he would be happy to provide an update on GCC activity in Chris' absence.

Jane shared that the AVCC annual meeting was eventful and included a talk from a VINS staff member as well as 3 separate Conservation Commissions.

Chris indicated that while the Bridget Butler (Bird Diva) slow birding event was well-attended and widely considered a success, it was also quite expensive. He feels that waiting another year before reassessing if another session is warranted would be a good approach to cut down on expenses and increase interest.

The next meeting will be held at 10:15 A.M. at the Greensboro Free Library on Saturday, November 8th.

13.) 12:15 - **Adjourn**