



Minutes

General Commission Meeting
10:15 a.m. Saturday, July 11th, 2026

Present

Chris Steel, Chair
Emma Palumbo, Clerk
Jane Hoffman, Treasurer
Will Marlier, Member
Betsy Young, Member
JoAnn Hanowski, Member
Peter Watkinson, Member
Liza Kiesler, Member

Absent

Emily Cayer, Advisor
Erika Karp, Member

Members of the Public

1.) 10:15 - Meeting Commences

Chris Steel called the meeting to order. He announced that this would be Will Marlier's final meeting as a commission member, as Will will not be renewing his term. Chris proposed amending the agenda to move the item regarding the letter to the selectboard below the item discussing a web page alternate, and to enter into executive session to discuss that matter. The amendment was unanimously approved by all members present.

2.) Emma Palumbo: Review & Approve Minutes of the Meeting on June 1st, 2026

- a.) Progress on Actions from the Meeting on May 16th, 2026*
- b.) Progress on Actions from the Meeting on June 1st, 2026*

Members provided progress reports on action items assigned during the May 16, 2026, and June 1, 2026, meetings.

Peter reported that he contacted Keisha to coordinate displaying Charlie Reinhertsen's art at the Highland Center for the Arts (HCA). He is currently awaiting her response regarding potential time slots in either November or January. Jane moved to accept the minutes from the June 1 meeting. JoAnn Hanowski seconded the motion, and passed unanimously.

3.) Jane Hoffman: **Treasurer's Report**

Jane submitted the accounting report for Fiscal Year 2027. She noted that the current budget consists of the new town appropriation alongside funds rolled over from June. To date, the Neighborhood Watch program is the commission's only expense. Liza Kiesler has an invoice for plant plugs from June, estimated at \$300, which she will share with Jane for payment. Jane will update the ledger accordingly. Chris noted he has future expense items to present and suggested exploring strategic ways to make more use of the budget. Liza proposed expanding summer programming, and Chris suggested hosting a bird education program in September. It was noted that the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) offers excellent children's programming; Jane will contact VINS to check their availability for a potential September event.

4.) JoAnn Hanowski: **Town Plan Update**

JoAnn provided an update following her attendance at a recent Planning Commission meeting, which featured a presentation by Jens Hilke. JoAnn emphasized that a primary goal is to maintain land in its current usage, and conserve priority areas. To improve collaboration, Chris suggested that a sub-quorum of the Conservation Commission meet with a sub-quorum of the Planning Commission. JoAnn will contact Kent to propose this joint meeting. Chris noted that Jens will be speaking at the Greensboro Land Trust (GLT) annual member meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 27, at 7:00 PM at the Greensboro United Church of Christ (GUCC). JoAnn will also circulate the promotional announcement for the Coverts "Passing Lands" initiative.

5.) Chris Steel: **Greensboro Town Trails**

Chris shared that all Greensboro town trails have been successfully uploaded to AllTrails. The Wiley Beach Trail boardwalk is in poor condition. Chris proposed removing the boardwalk and replacing it with woodchips as a temporary measure before committing to a larger trail improvement project. The commission also discussed adding caution signage as an interim option. He estimated that 10 yards of woodchips can be sourced for

\$500 and requested funding approval. Chris moved to approve a \$500 expenditure for woodchips. Betsy seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Chris will write to the Selectboard to notify them of the trail issues, and seek approval, before purchasing any materials or proceeding with action.

6.) **Summer Event Calendar**

a.) Reflections on Invasives Panel

Members commended the success of the recent panel and thanked Will for his effective moderation. Betsy suggested expanding community partnerships to combat invasive species. Chris will continue manual management efforts at his current sites and is looking into conducting a Stream Wise assessment at the Highland Lodge to help with funding the restoration of sites previously infested with knotweed.

Liza asked how residents currently identify invasive species on their properties. She suggested advertising a consultation service where members offer up to one hour of property advice. Chris will post on the town website instructing residents to reach out if they want help identifying plants. Will agreed to share a survey list he created a few years ago with Liza to aid this effort. Betsy volunteered to review and update the informational brochure created by Will. Will will send the survey data to Liza and the brochure source file to Betsy. Liza will bring these brochures with her when she visits with property owners. Liza offered to share a useful recorded presentation by Doug Tallamy with the commission.

Emma provided an overview of the upcoming Butterfly Atlas Event on July 18th. On behalf of Emily, Chris reported that additional cameras have been purchased for the Neighborhood Watch program. Emily will also host a joint event with the library in August focused on the program. Chris noted that he and Emily are looking into installing trail cameras at critical wildlife crossing points in Greensboro.

7.) Chris Steel: **Advertising for New Commission Members**

The commission formally thanked Will for his four years of dedicated service. Will expressed his gratitude and noted that he will retain his position on the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) board. Chris will use the previously approved advertisement for the vacant commission seat to post on the website and around town. He encouraged all members to seek out qualified candidates.

8.) Jane Hoffman: **Beaver Flow Device Update**

Jane reported that a new beaver flow device has been successfully installed by Skip Lisle off Craftsbury Road. The Selectboard will handle the invoicing and payment for his services.

Members noted concerns regarding low water levels at the Craftsbury Road site. Chris suggested installing a chimney extension above the device to create enough depth conducive to beaver habitat. Jane will follow up with Skip Lisle to get an estimate for the extension work.

Jane also communicated with the Town Road Crew following the destruction of several beaver lodges, advising them to avoid immediate demolition when lodges are encountered.

Chris shared that David Kelley inquired if the commission would host a fisheries event at the HCA, focusing on native brook trout. Jane will serve as the primary point of contact for this project. Will noted he has a potential speaker in mind and will share with the group. The commission aims to schedule this program for early spring 2027.

9.) Jane Hoffman: **Pollinator Friendly Lights**

Jane shared information regarding Huntington's municipal pollinator-friendly lighting initiatives. Chris will post these educational resources on the website. Jane volunteered to contact the Selectboard to present these options. Chris suggested creating a cost comparison against conventional fixtures, noting that pollinator-friendly lights may be more cost effective.

10.) Will Marlier: **Bee App Update**

Will contacted Saul Costa and other representatives at Bee App to share the commission's event calendar and establish a master account that can be easily transferred to remaining members. Will will finalize the setup.

Will noted he did not receive a reply from Jed Feffer regarding his volunteer list. The commission plans to post volunteer opportunities on the app and encourage members on Jed's list to migrate over. Peter suggested that a mass email communication will be the most effective direct communication method, which the commission agreed with.

Will will compile the volunteer sign-up sheets, create a consolidated Excel email database, and integrate Jed's historical list (if received). Emma volunteered to take over the Bee App management from Will and will create a user tutorial for the team.

11.) Liza Kiesler: **Pollinator Bed Update**

Liza reported that the pollinator bed is filling in healthily. The primary immediate task is to mow the unplanted buffer strip in front of the informational sign. Liza plans to weed the bed every other Monday from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM and will email the group ahead of time. Chris offered to bring a push mower to handle the overgrowth near the sign. Liza will contact Lynette Courtney to ask if her leftover mulch can be used to cover the problem areas. Auriel Gray has volunteered to help the GCC maintain the pollinator beds (including the one planted by Lynette Courtney). Chris will follow up with Auriel to confirm that the next volunteer day is scheduled for Monday, July 20, at 7:00 AM. Liza anticipates adding one to two more trays of plugs in the spring to finalize the bed. Betsy will contact a potential speaker (Dr Robert J Gegear of UMass Dartmouth) to see if he is available for a spring presentation on pollinators, possibly hosted at the library.

12.) JoAnn Hanoski: **Adopt-a-Culvert Update**

Peter has volunteered to assist JoAnn with the Adopt-a-Culvert program. JoAnn proposed organizing a public gravel bike ride this autumn focused on identifying species and inspecting local culverts. Peter and JoAnn to provide an update at the next meeting.

13.) Chris Steel: **Web Page Alternate**

Chris has updated the homepage to make it more informative, adding prominent updates regarding local loon and bear activity alongside other pertinent news. Betsy volunteered to serve as the alternate webpage administrator. Jane volunteered to assume responsibility for drafting the Town Report, taking over the duty from Will. Emma suggested creating a regular newsletter to showcase the commission's ongoing projects and build out a community email list.

14.) Chris Steel: **Discuss Letter to Selectboard about glyphosate dated 6/16/26**

Jane moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss the letter to the Selectboard dated June 16, 2026, regarding glyphosate usage. JoAnn seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Chris moved to exit Executive Session and return to the public meeting. Jane seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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

The next regular meeting is scheduled for **September 12, 2026, at 10:15 AM** at the Greensboro Free Library.

16.) 1:18pm - **Adjourn**