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## Minutes

General Commission Meeting  
10:15 a.m. Saturday, September 12th, 2026

### **Present**

*Chris Steel, Chair*  
*Emma Palumbo, Clerk*  
*Jane Hoffman(Remote), Treasurer*  
*Erika Karp, Member*  
*JoAnn Hanowski, Member*  
*Peter Watkinson, Member*  
*Betsy Young, Member*

### **Absent**

*Emily Cayer, Advisor*  
*Liza Kiesler, Member*

### **Members of the Public**

*Allison Stegner(Remote)*  
*Anne Stevens*

### 1.) 10:16 am - **Meeting Commences**

Chris proposed covering three additional executive session items: the potential appointment of Allison Stegner as an advisor, the annual election of officers, and the 4-year term reappointment of Peter.

### 2.) 10:20 - Emma Palumbo: **Review & Approve Minutes** of the Meetings on July 11th, 2026 and August 28th, 2026

#### *a.) Progress on Actions from the Meeting on July 11th, 2026*

Jane contacted Skip Lisle regarding low water level concerns at the Craftsbury Rd beaver deceiver site. He advised that raising the water level isn't feasible, a chimney addition wouldn't be effective, and local beavers would need to block the area naturally.

Jane shared she attended an HCA planning meeting for next year's fly fishing festival (next meeting: Oct 10 at HCA). The GCC has been asked to participate by hosting an event and identifying a speaker. Jane will continue as liaison.

Betsy contacted Dr. Robert Geager (UMass Dartmouth) regarding a potential GCC event but has not received a reply. She is exploring alternatives and will connect with Liz Steel for recommendations.

*b.) Progress on Actions from the Meeting on August 28th, 2026*

Jane will update the commission on the letter sent opposing the season extension and the outcome of the board meeting. The next VT Fish & Wildlife meeting is September 16.

Chris moved to approve the minutes of July 11, 2026, and August 28, 2026. Emma seconded; all members present approved.

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

Jane provided an updated treasurers report. Since last meeting there has been a donation of \$80 from the Bats program. The GCC paid a \$100 donation to GUCC for Fellowship Hall use during the Passing Lands Pop-Up. There are two pending invoices: \$300 expected from Liza for plant plugs, and \$500 expected from Highland Lodge to support invasive species management.

4.) Jane Hoffman: **Pollinator Friendly Lighting Update**

Jane provided information to the Selectboard regarding pollinator-friendly lighting options and examples from other towns. She noted the project aligns better with the Energy and Climate Action Committee and will forward all materials to Committee Chair Beth Meacham.

5.) Chris Steel: **Budgeting for the 2027 NRI Update**

Chris provided an update on the NRI progress. Year two fieldwork wraps up this month. A project updating the NRI document with recent fieldwork highlights and revised wetland regulations is slated for next year, and was roughly estimated at \$1,000. Chris requested the commission account for this in future budget planning, alongside partner funding from the Greensboro Land Trust.

6.) Emily Cayer: **NeighborWood watch expansion and wildlife crossings**

Chris provided an update in Emily's absence. Emily recently delivered a presentation at the Library and plans to present local wildlife camera footage in schools. She was invited to present her work at the AVCC annual meeting. Chris noted the program is expanding to focus on four critical wildlife crossings. Chris and Emily have identified the respective landowners of the crossings, and will coordinate camera installations.

7.) Jane Hoffman: **Wildlife Crossing Signage Discussion**

Jane reports that public concern was raised after two foxes were killed on Craftsbury Road, prompting homemade wildlife warning signs. Jane suggested placing official crossing signs town-wide. Members raised concerns over sign efficacy and legal/logistical hurdles to place them around town. Chris recommended prioritizing wildlife cameras at the four critical crossings before considering signage at a later phase.

**Public Comment:** Allison Stegner noted that real-time radar speed feedback signs effectively reduce vehicle speeds and could pair well with wildlife warning signs. Jane offered to share this information with the Selectboard.

7.) Chris Steel: **Wiley Beach Park next steps**

Chris summarized the plan for Wiley Beach Park from the prior meeting. To address damaged trail liability, he suggested installing warning signage rather than immediately removing existing pallets. He received a quote of \$176 for two signs from Great Big Graphics. Peter moved to appropriate \$176 for two trail caution signs. JoAnn seconded; all members present approved. Chris will follow up to place the order and install the signs on the trail. To address a long-term solution, Chris connected with Northwoods Stewardship Center and was quoted ~\$6,000 for a new boardwalk with earliest installation of Summer 2027. Peter and Chris suggested targeting an early Summer 2027 project using GCC budget funds supplemented by a grant application from the Greensboro Association. Chris moved a motion to approve the estimate as a conservation commission expense on the understanding Chris will seek a grant from the GA to partially fund it to the amount of \$3000. Emma seconded; all members present approved.

*\*Subsequent to the meeting, Brett Stanciu (Zoning Administrator), advised the GCC that the current boardwalk structures were not approved by the DRB and additional approvals will be required before any work on a new boardwalk can take place. The GCC will discuss this at the next meeting.*

8.) Emma Palumbo: **Volunteer Organizing**

Emma assumed volunteer coordination duties from Will and established a host account on the Bee App to post GCC events and opportunities. She will begin to post events as they come up. Integration with Jed Feffer's volunteer list is still pending.

Chris offered to take over drafting the annual Town Report in Will's absence.

#### 9.) JoAnn Hanowski/ Peter Watkinson: **Adopt-a-Culvert update**

Peter and JoAnn shared their plans to expand Adopt-a-Culvert coverage. There are about 86 adopted culverts across 16 volunteers, out of ~570 total town culverts (with 50 pending). Their goal is to expand coverage by 100 culverts annually through word-of-mouth and public outreach. Members suggested utilizing the Bee App, Front Porch Forum (FPF), and the *Hardwick Gazette* as good outreach channels. JoAnn offered to write another article for the *Gazette* and periodically post on FPF. Betsy suggested hosting a fall "Ditch Day" community event for collective culvert clearing.

#### 10.) JoAnn Hanowski: **Town Plan Progress**

JoAnn shared that the planning commission is expected to release the updated Town Plan within a couple of weeks. The draft will include recommendations from the GCC regarding natural resources. Chris expressed concern regarding the balance between conservation objectives and supporting property owners' goals.

#### 11.) **Upcoming & Past Event Review**

Emma shared a recap of the Butterfly Event with VCE. She noted opportunities exist for ongoing summer participation alongside VCE scientists in the future.

Jane provided a recap on the HCA Bat Program, citing it was highly successful with 70+ attendees. She noted the consistent FPF postings in advance of the event were key to strong turnout.

JoAnn shared the Passing Lands Pop-Up was well attended and successful.

Betsy will connect with Liz Steel regarding potential GCC coordination with someone who wants to put on a Garden Tour event.

Jane will continue to act as a liaison for the fly fishing festival and clarify GCC responsibilities with Dave Kelley. Chris suggested Emily Cayer could be a good speaker to present on fish species (Arctic Grayling). Chris also noted an HCA art project planned for next summer on the topic of local watersheds. The GCC will explore contribution opportunities.

## 12.) **Schedule Next Meeting & Other Business**

The next meeting is scheduled for **November 14th at 10:15am** at the *Greensboro Free Library*.

## 13.) **Executive Session**

Chris moved a motion to enter into executive session. JoAnn seconded; all members present approved.

After leaving the executive session, Allison Stegner was voted in as an advisory member to the GCC, and Peter was re-appointed for another 4-year term. Chris Steel will update the Selectboard on Peter and Allison's appointments and Will's resignation. Annual election of officers will be moved to the November 14th meeting due to lack of a voting quorum.

## 14.) 12:56 - **Adjourn**