

CITY OF DOVER

DOVER CONSERVATION COMMISSION – MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: City Council Conference Room - 288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: Monday July 13, 2026
Meeting Time: 5:30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert Atwood (Secretary), Russ Warnock, Thomas Fargo, Brianna Group, Kristen Murphy (Alternate), Marc Hiller (Alternate)

Absent (Excused): Abigail Lyon, Steve Fellows (Vice Chair), Bill Hunt (Chair)

Absent (Unexcused):

STAFF PRESENT: Makayla Edgecomb (Conservation Planner)

OTHERS PRESENT:

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was convened at 5:30PM by M. Edgecomb.

T. Fargo moved to approve R. Atwood as acting Chair for the meeting. R. Warnock seconded. Vote: All in favor

2. CITIZENS' FORUM

No one spoke

3. APPROVAL OF THE PRIOR MEETING MINUTES- June 8, 2026

T. Fargo moved to approve the minutes of June 8 as submitted. R. Warnock seconded. Vote: All in favor

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Smith Well Lot Access Update

M. Edgecomb reported the State doesn't have any objections to public access other than there needs to be a 400ft Sanitary Protective area. Staff is finding out from John Storer what our next steps will be. No fencing is required and signage can be left to the City to determine whether necessary.

B. Willand Pond Update

M. Edgecomb noted C&D Underwater has completed their work at the Pond. They believe that around 75% of the milfoil was removed. Georgia Bunnell from NHDES will be out there in a few weeks to assess.

Next steps would be applying for NHDES funds again for whatever method is most appropriate after seeing the results.

M. Edgecomb stated that J. Storer brought up ConCom having a Willand Pond subcommittee, Commission members discussed whether a subcommittee is necessary, or whether a management plan just needs to be in place. Past issues with the pond were described.

R. Warnock noted the results of the NHDES assessment will inform the next steps the Commission will want to take. He expressed concerns that the public will lose confidence in long-term conservation efforts when they perceive spending a lot of money on projects that don't work. Commission agreed to wait on discussing a subcommittee further until results from the State are released.

5. NEW BUSINESS

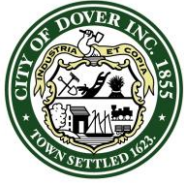
- A. Letter of Support to construct and replace the Bellamy Road Bridge with grant funds from FHWA National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program (Culvert AOP Grant) in collaboration with NHDES. Proposed project will replace the 17 ft wide culvert with a 50 ft wide bridge. This project is designed to restore 5.2 river miles of aquatic connectivity in the Bellamy River for the benefit the anadromous, river herring. The Conservation Commission previously provided a Letter of Support for the first grant for the design in December of 2022.

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The board reviewed the application when the grant was due in 2022. Another letter of support is being requested now that construction is ready to get started. R. Atwood will sign the letter of support as acting chair. Members discussed details of the project and concerns about erosion control. They support sending the letter of support and communicating the concerns to be addressed during construction.

B. Meet the Strafford County Commissioner

K. Murphy gave an update on the request to have him come to a meeting. He will come to a meeting when more members are present.

C. Ash Tree Update: Consideration and Selection of Contractor for Comprehensive Plan

M. Edgecomb reported four bids were received. Recommendations from the Forestry workgroup were presented and discussed by the members.

R. Warnock motioned to choose Coppley Wolff for the Ash Tree Comprehensive Plan. T. Fargo seconded. Discussion ensued to state that this follows the Forestry Workgroup recommended choice.

Vote : U/A

6. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

A. Review of Correspondence Received from NH Department of Environmental Services
Correspondence was included in the meeting packet - (4) items and described by M. Edgecomb.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

M. Edgecomb announced A. Lyons will be away from the Commission for some months and be back around January.

Marc Hiller is the new alternate on the Commission.

R. Warnock had a meeting with Cemetery staff about adding an arboretum, but there are concerns about adding more visitor traffic to the cemetery. They are already dealing with residents not following the rules and walking their dogs in the cemetery as well as vandalism of headstones. Additionally, noting that Field and Grounds are short staffed.

M. Edgecomb noted that her and Russ will be attending the September Cemetery Board Meeting.

R. Warnock also mentions that the “City Arborist” that came to the meeting was from the company the City has a contract with for tree removals. There is a codified City Arborist position for the City, but it is vacant.

Endorsement of appointment of R. Warnock as City Arborist (unpaid position)

Dover needs someone in this position to oversee the best interest of the trees for these projects.

R. Warnock believes it should be a paid position, but for now is offering to accept the position as a volunteer temporarily to at least oversee the Central Business District projects to make sure they are done right.

He asked for support from the Commission for him to be appointed to the position.

R. Atwood noted the Forestry Workgroup is supportive of the request.

Members discussed their questions and concerns and opinions on the matter.

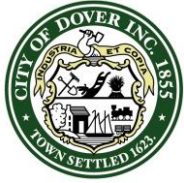
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T. Fargo moved that the Conservation Commission requests that the City reinstate, through appointment or employment, an individual with qualifications to make decisions on tree health to serve as the City Arborist. The City Arborist should not also hold the contract for removal of City trees. In the absence of a City employee, there should be a qualified volunteer appointed as City Arborist until a City employee is hired. B. Group seconded. Mention of R. Warnock on the Conservation Commission being qualified and willing to volunteer.

Vote: All in favor with R. Warnock abstaining

8. ADJOURNMENT

T. Fargo moved to adjourn. R. Warnock seconded. Vote: All in favor
The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.

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