Conway Conservation Commission Minutes
November 11, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Town Hall, General Purpose Room, 5 Academy Hill Road

Present for the Conservation Commission: Tony Somers, Chair; Louise Beckett, Mary Kay Costello

Absent: Jeanne Thomas

Others Present: George Forcier, Jim Elwell, Jonathan Barkan, Janet Chayes

At 6:06 p.m. Tony brought the meeting to order

On a motion from Tony to approve the minutes of October 28, 2025, Mary Kay seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Financial

- Invoice from *Greenfield Recorder* -

10/24/2025 4449781 - RDA -Dusty King, Legal Notice $90.91

On a motion from Tony to approve payment of the invoice, Louise seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Hearings

6:10 p.m. 10 Pine Hill Road, George Forcier - update on plans for new residence on adjoining land.

George had made no further changes to the plan except to note the dimensions - distances to the resource areas. Tony explained how the application form asks for measurements for development, and noted that there is a 30-day appeal process before the permanent driveway can be worked on or the barn removal can begin. On a motion from Tony to approve George's revised plan with an OOC that all work performed will be done under the general conditions outlined in the NOI Mary Kay seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor. The NOI was signed and a copy given to George for his records.

Building Permits/Site Visits

- Permits

Tony advised that he had signed off in Permiteyes on 800 Graves Road for an in-kind deck replacement. N/A as the work is not within jurisdictional resources or buffers.

- Site Visits - none

Inquiries

Jim Elwell is building a house on Hoosac Road and will be crossing a brook to access the property. He asked for advice on how to proceed. Tony said it could be complicated depending on whether the brook is perennial or intermittent. He advised Jim to go to Mass Mapper and the town's GIS to identify the brook, and to hire a professional wetland scientist. Either way he will need to submit an NOI which he can find on the DEP's website. At a minimum he must meet stream crossing standards: open bottom culvert or 1.2 x stream pipe. He needs to be clear that he is making no restriction on the stream.

Janet Chayes has concerns regarding the Pine Hill drainage project. She says the highway department is draining water from Pine Hill down into the South Meadow. Tony thought they might be directing the water coming from Pine Hill to go into a drain and thus under Shelburne Falls Road. Tony offered to talk to Highway Supervisor Ron Sweet.

Jonathan Barkan reported a problem on his property with beavers. He doesn't want to trap and kill the beavers, which he says is what he has been advised to do by various authorities, but rather to co-exist with them. The bridge connecting his property with Williamsburg Road is at risk as a pair of beavers have altered the bridge, its footings, and the culvert. There are two dams involved, such that the field that he used to walk is now flooded when there is heavy rain and is wet throughout the year. The town highway department is not able to be involved until the road floods. His proposed solution is to remove the upstream dam, so that the brook can return to its natural state. He showed images of the site including the flooded field, the bridge, etc. In a major storm, if the bridge goes out he has no access to his house. There are three ponds created by the beavers. Tony will talk to Mark Stinson and see if an RDA with a negative determination stating that the work will not significantly alter or impact the wetland should be filed. As the dam hasn't been there for that long, Jonathan may be able to do the work. But Tony advised Jonathan that he can't dredge or fill; can't build up the area by the bridge as Jonathan had suggested. He can move the beaver material, but can't change the level of the area of concern. Just remove the dam and nothing more.

Other Unannounced Business

On a motion from Tony to approve welcoming Courtney Gilligan as a member of the Conservation Commission, contingent on the Selectboard's appointment, Mary Kay seconded, all said aye, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

On a motion from Tony to sign off on Dusty King's RDA, Mary Kay seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor. The form was signed by all present, and Mary Kay will deliver Dusty's copy to him.

On a motion from Tony to go to one meeting per month on the second Tuesday for the winter months, beginning in November, Louise seconded, all said aye, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Forest Cutting Plans
None

Notifications
None

Next Meeting

December 9, 2025

All interested parties are encouraged to attend. The meeting will be held in person at 6 p.m. in the Town Hall, General Purpose Room, 5 Academy Hill Road.

Adjourn

At 7:30 p.m. on a motion from Tony to adjourn, seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor.