

Minutes of the Forest and Trails Committee

Town of Conway

February 25, 2026

6:30 pm Town Offices

Present:

Members: Priscilla Lynch, Deb Donaldson, Jen Heilig, Courtney Gilligan, Jill Craig

Meeting called to order, 6:30 pm.

The minutes of the 1/25/26 meeting were approved.

Discussion regarding the Cultural Council Grant, the trail camera and work with the grammar school. Jill will place one camera back in place and will notify the PTO and others at the school regarding the placement. Deb reported that the committee has purchased a camera of its own. Deb will place this camera out by the ice pond. Signage will be put out not to remove the cameras. Veronique told Deb that someone in town offered a camera. Deb accepted, but has not heard anything further.

Courtney reported that she is looking into the deed for the Town Farm Forest. She will also research the deed for the Fournier Forest.

Deb reported that she attended a meeting this week regarding the state's contracts with towns regarding ADA accessibility. Conway is a part of this program. The Fournier trail was discussed as a possibility. The state has contracted with the Institute for Human Centered Design. They will come out and assess the trail and provide feedback. There is monetary support for these projects.

Elaine Peteroy and Liam Cregan from Franklin Land Trust (FLT) provided information on their work with towns and forests. FLT has helped towns to conserve through Article 97 or through conservation restrictions (CR). There are costs involved and there are grants available to assist organizations in helping towns to pursue these avenues.

Pursuing Article 97 protection would be recommended. This would require a warrant for town meeting designating the management of the town forests to the Conservation Commission. The Forest and Trails Committee could be designated a consultant in the management. This is recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

With regard to CRs: There are grants for costs, deeds, surveys etc. There are also CPA grants. Town counsel will need to be involved.

The FLT asks for a \$5,000 stewardship gift. This goes into a defense fund, staff support etc. If a CR is chosen the FLT will do a site visit. They will discuss the project internally with the Board of Directors and will draft a CR. Towns can hold their CR with the FLT.

Elaine Peteroy will share FLT's literature with the committee and will send samples of arrangements they have facilitated.

Next meeting: 3/18, 2026

Meeting adjourned: 7:55 pm