

Draft Minutes Nelson Conservation Commission

May 11, 2026 6:00 PM

Lower Level of Library

Present

Call to Order 6:00

Present: Janet Yardley, Chair, Dave Birchenough, Nina Iselin, Margy Iselin arrived 6:17, Kathy Schillemat alternate, Tome Newcombe, Alternate, Brian Hotz guest from Forest Society

Conservation Moments Loon raft floated on Spoonwood under the scrutiny of the loon pair.

Motion to have Kathy Schillemat fill the open slot for tonight's meeting, second Dave Birchenough passed 3/0

Review minutes and vote to approve moved by Kathy Schillemat to accept as written, second Dave Birchenough passed 5/0

Discussion of Nelson Highlands

Status of Harris Center fund raising Janet reported that Harris Center has not yet met their goal. They have received about half and have some pledges that have not yet been fulfilled including one for \$100,000 that has been ghosted. Everyone agrees that a donation by us of \$100,000 will not yield more money than is needed for the project. We have been invited to the Gathering of large donors at Green Gate on 6/13/26

Brian Hotz Executive Director of Forest Society reviewed the history of the project for conservation.

The Forest Society has been pursuing various grants, mostly federal, and most have either not responded or been withdrawn by the Federal Government. They will start more earnest private fundraising for their part of the project soon.

Discussed use restrictions which will be in a use agreement rather than deeded to provide more flexibility in the future. The plan is to have this property stay as wild as possible. No thoughts of developing a trail network, parking or kiosks. Their usual is to not allow snowmobiles except on existing trails of which there are none on the property. Bicycles are allowed on haul roads but not e-bikes.

He is happy to attend and make a presentation at a Public Forum and feels strongly that the support of the Select Board would be very helpful.

Meeting with the Select Board May 27 3:30 PM Janet, Dave and possibly Margy will attend. Nina may write out her thoughts.

#### Black Fly Express Article

Janet will try to meld Kathy's draft and Janet's and send them both out.

#### Public Forum on Nelson Highlands

Discussed matching donor issue and we will not pursue that.

Brian Hotz volunteered to attend the public Forum.

Provide additional information, answer questions

Meet with Select Board at their request about Nelson Highlands scheduled for May 27, 2026 at 3:30.

AMC training on trail maintenance and trail planning. Went well, enormously helpful

Moved to pay invoice of \$750.00 by Janet Yardley, second Kathy Schillemat passed 5/0

NRI proposals Tabled to next meeting

Discuss pros and cons of the proposals, Swanzey, Newport, Claremont

Decide on next steps

Update on Roadside cleanup

Went smoothly.

Thoughts on Old Home Days

Tabled to next meeting

Discussion of meeting times for the summer

tabled to next meeting

Trails committee is interested in opening a small view of Monadnock from the top of Osgood. Initially they thought that it would require a significant number of trees to cut with some trees being difficult and potentially dangerous to cut. Will ask Al Stoops to mark the 10 or so trees for cutting and will discuss again at next meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Janet Yardley second by Margy Iselin passed 5/0

Next Meeting June 1, 2026 6:00

Lower level of library