



TOWN OF
NEWMARKET
NEW HAMPSHIRE

Conservation Commission

March 9, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Town Hall Auditorium

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Approved April 13, 2023

Members Present: Ellen Snyder (Chair), Cris Blackstone, Jeffrey Goldknopf (Planning Board Rep.), Tom Jones (Alternate), Sam Kenney, Colin Lawson (Alternate), and Julianna Tyson

Members Absent: Melissa Sharples (Vice-Chair), David Bell, and Colin White (Town Council Rep- *ex officio*)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

[time on DCAT 2:42]

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

The Chair appointed alternates **Tom Jones** and **Colin Lawson** to serve as voting members this evening.

3. Public Comment

No members of the public were present this evening to speak.

[time on DCAT 3:45 - 54:20]

4. Guest Speaker: Dr. Stephen Jones, UNH "Tracking Sources of Fecal Contamination in the Lamprey River Watershed: 2021-2023"

The Chair introduced Dr. Stephen Jones, Research Associate Professor of Natural Resources and the Environment at UNH. His main focuses of research are: 1) ribotyping *Escherichia coli* to identify sources of fecal contamination in surface waters; 2) microbial cycling of mercury in estuarine and marine environments; 3) monitoring for toxic chemicals in the marine environment; and 4) stormwater-related pollution of estuarine waters. He detailed the work he was hired to undertake for the Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC). He presented his report to LRAC in December 2022 and you may view it at : [2022 bacterial tracking FINAL report.pdf \(lampreyriver.org\)](https://www.lampreyriver.org/2022-bacterial-tracking-FINAL-report.pdf) His

research focused on fecal contamination in the Lamprey River watershed in specific areas of interest to LRAC where recreation is the focus. Notable fecal/sewage borne pathogenic microorganisms include bacteria, viruses, and protozoa. The main goal of this project is to initiate monitoring at several key sites in the Lamprey River Watershed (LRW) to provide essential data for assessing water quality, public health risks and contamination. NH and ME currently use 'Fecal Indicator Bacteria' including *E. Coli* (for fresh water), enterococci (for marine water), and fecal coliforms (for shellfish growing waters) to help assess and monitor water quality. After a three year study at multiple sites from 1993-1996, stormwater runoff was found to be a significant source of bacteria in the estuary. Microbial Source Tracking (MST) describes a suite of methods developed over the last 30 years to clean up impaired water. He described the scientific method his lab uses to amplify a specific piece of DNA to identify the source (bird, human, animal, etc.). They selected sites in consultation with LRAC. They send out teams eight times per year between May and November for collection. They prefer to do the sampling at low tide. Moonlight Brook (at the mouth - site #1) exceeded the State standards in 2022 on 7 of 8 testing days. LRAC has requested that the findings be reported to NHDES as they are compiling their two year report on water quality. Dr. Jones will be chairing a session and presenting his findings at the 115th National Shellfish Association Meeting in Baltimore, MD from March 26 - 30, 2023 <https://www.shellfish.org/>. His research group hopes to spend more time in 2023 on Moonlight Brook to identify where the human contaminants are originating. He has spoken with Sean Grieg, Town Environmental Service Director, about the contamination. Both **Jeff** and **Sam** have helpful ideas about how to access Moonlight Brook and will keep in touch with Dr. Jones to help with this process.

5. Acceptance of Minutes
February 9, 2023

[time on DCAT 55:48]

Action

Motion: Sam Kenney moved to approve the draft minutes of February 9, 2023
Second: Colin Lawson
Discussion: none
Vote: Approved 5-0-2 (Cris Blackstone and Julianna Tyson abstained)

6. Finance Report

[time on DCAT 56:57]

The Chair gave the finance report on the Conservation Fund. The balance is \$126,453.30 with \$4,764.46 in the Richard Schanda Fund for a total of \$131,217.76. A small amount of interest was accrued. LCHIP will be depositing \$600 for the annual easement monitoring of the Piscassic-River Loiselle and the Smith Sisters Audubon properties. The General Fund currently has a balance of \$1,769.97. The budget put forward for 2023 is \$4,520 (up from 2022 - \$4,185.00). The Town budget voting will be held on March 14 and will take effect on July 1, 2023 (if approved).

7. NH Waste Management Council – Cris Blackstone

[time on DCAT 59:06]

The Chair announced that **Cris Blackstone** has been appointed by the Governor for a three year term on the NH Waste Management Council and asked **Cris** to report on the Council activities. <https://www.nhec.nh.gov/waste-management-council> Congratulations Cris! RSA 21-O:9 establishes a Waste Management Council composed of 13 members representing business and industry, municipalities, public health, academia and conservation commissions. There are four different councils: 1) Air Resources, 2) Waste Management, 3) Water and 4) Wetlands. The Waste Management Council typically meets on the third Thursday of the month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Conference Rooms 112 and 113 at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord. These meetings are open to the public and the Waste Management Council welcomes public attendance. **Cris** has attended three meetings so far. They have speakers at each meeting. The meetings have included current waste management issues like the appropriate way to dispose of mattresses and box springs. They have also discussed PFAS which are found in water, air, fish, and soil at locations across the State. Scientific studies have shown that exposure to some PFAS in the environment may be linked to harmful health effects in humans and animals. They have also discussed the siting of landfill locations and the closing and capping of these locations. She also mentioned that they hear official appeals of decisions. **Cris** suggested that perhaps we could invite Casella Waste Systems back to give us another opportunity to highlight recycling efforts in Newmarket. Where does our 'stuff' go? The Chair suggested inviting them for a meeting in the summer.

8. Committee/Board Reports

[time on DCAT 1:11:28]

Planning Board: Jeff had nothing to report from the last meeting. They will meet again on March 21.

Riverfront Advisory Committee/Schanda Park: Sam reported that the next meeting will be on Monday the 13th at 4:00 PM if anyone is interested in attending. Last month Kyle Pimental from the Strafford Regional Planning Commission and Lisa Wise who is the Lead Extension Program Manager at UNH and is also part of the NH Coastal Adaptation Workgroup attended the meeting. They focused on their willingness to help Newmarket lay the groundwork for the funding of the Riverfront projects. We would like to thank them in advance for helping the Town. The committee is still working on laying the groundwork for a charrette (most likely to occur in the fall) to help the Town define the future vision for the riverfront area. The Coastal Resiliency Grant deadline has just been announced and a letter of support may be of benefit for the application when submitted. [NH Online Forms System - 2023 Coastal Resilience Grant Application. Version 2.1](#) The Chair has agreed to write a letter in support of the grant from the ConCom by the end of March.

Action

Motion: Sam Kenney moved that the Chair write a letter supporting the application for the Coastal Resiliency Grant for the Town of Newmarket on behalf of the Conservation Commission.

Second: Tom Jones

Discussion: None

Vote: **Approved Unanimously 7-0-0**

Town Council: There was no report this evening.

Energy and Environment Advisory Committee: Julianna reported on the recent EEAC meetings and projects. The EEAC is finishing the draft of the Energy Plan update which will be submitted to the Planning Board for possible inclusion in the updated Master Plan. The Town has said that they hope to be energy independent by 2030 and entirely fossil fuel independent by 2050. The EEAC has been working with the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH) [Home | Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire \(cpcnh.org\)](https://www.cpcnh.org) . The EEAC is working on the plans for the different energy sources i.e. wind, solar, and hydropower. This is one of the benefits of having CPCNH being our primary supplier for Newmarket...we can choose the mix. The Public Notice has been posted:

Wednesday March 29, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Newmarket Town Hall auditorium, the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee will hold a public hearing on the Newmarket Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan. Under NH RSA 53-E, New Hampshire municipalities may develop "Community Power" plans and programs to become the default electricity providers for their residents and businesses. Newmarket Community Power will create opportunities to lower electricity rates while expanding clean energy options for Newmarket residents. Newmarket is a founding member of Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire, a nonprofit power agency created and governed by New Hampshire cities and towns to operate Community Power programs. This public hearing is the first of two public hearings that will be held on the Newmarket Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan before it is considered for adoption by the Newmarket Town Council.

No second date has been announced as yet. **Julianna** was asked about any future plans for a solar farm in Newmarket. She said that the Town may need to join with Durham on such a project.

Newmarket 300th Steering Committee: The Chair reported that the Town has put together a 300th Anniversary Steering Committee. **Melissa Sharples** has agreed to serve as the ConCom representative and will let the members know when events are being planned. **Melissa** and Michael Provost, Board Member of the New Market Historical Society, have been emailing about the committee. The celebration will be in 2027.

9. Initiatives

[time on DCAT 1:24:28]

Pollinator Pathways: **Melissa Sharples**

The Chair updated the members on the new program that has been created this year called the 'Pollinator Garden Stepping Stones Seed Kits - Mini Grant Opportunities'. As a partnership community, we will receive five seed kits to distribute which will include native seeds and instructions for converting a 4' x 6' patch of lawn into a native pollinator habitat. New Hampshire Fish & Game has just created a NH butterfly monitoring network. [Butterfly Monitoring | Surveys | New Hampshire Fish and Game](#)

[Department \(state.nh.us\)](http://state.nh.us) They are recruiting citizen scientists and holding training sessions.

'Connect to Protect': Tom Jones

Tom reported that he, **Ellen** and Bart met with the folks from the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and Emma Tutein. They are looking to do more land conservation in the area, in particular, wetland migration corridors. They are interested in trail corridors to connect commuter options. They wanted to know how the Town targets properties for conservation. He, **Ellen** and Bart met on March 2 with Duane Hyde, Land Conservation Director for SELT, to discuss how SELT prioritizes lands for conservation, any tools that they might use, and how to seek grant funding. Duane was extremely helpful to our team. The first step is to target lands and the 'Connect to Protect' group is able to provide GIS services to make maps for us. Collaboration is the key!

Stream and Wildlife Crossing Enhancement Project: Colin Lawson

Colin reported that he has a meeting with his friends at Trout Unlimited tomorrow to look at some of the maps and information available on the NHDES website. Someone has come through Newmarket and assessed almost all of the culverts in Town. It is not a complete survey, but there are pictures on the NHDES site. The 'Connect to Protect' maps could be overlaid on the culvert crossing maps and possibly lead to different funding opportunities. Pete Steckler, professional lead for Northeast Conservation Services, is the GIS specialist working with 'Connect to Protect'. [Home \(northeastconservation.com\)](http://home.northeastconservation.com) The Conservation Commission will collaborate with the DPW and the Town Engineer on all aspects of this project as well. Collaboration is the key again!

10. Conservation Easement Monitoring [time on DCAT 1:37:25]

Jeff received the report from **Melissa** on the monitoring of the Nostrum Farm and is ready to add his pictures and text. The full report will be ready shortly.

The Chair reported that the Hilton Easement monitoring is complete and will wait until spring to look for two missing monuments. The Hilton Easement is an active tree farm and is undergoing a timber harvest right now. Charlie Marino prepared the forestry management plan is currently doing the harvesting. [About Us | Moreno Forestry](#)

11. Land Stewardship [time on DCAT 1:38:49]

Sliding Rock Recreation and Conservation Area – LRAC Grant

Ellen reported that she is working on the kiosk content, but the rest of the work is delayed until the weather permits.

Wiggin Farm – kiosk design; bridge boardwalk; April work day

Sam worked on the budget for the boardwalk materials (\$1,100). The Chair believes that April 22 (Earth Day) might be the best day to set a work day for Wiggin Farm. The members agreed and she will prepare a list and post it on Nature Groupie to get volunteers. [Wiggin Farm Conservation Area Work Day | Nature Groupie](#)

Action

Motion: **Cris Blackstone** moved to expend funds up to \$1,100.00 from the

Conservation Fund for the materials needed for the Wiggin Farm repairs/construction.

Second: Julianna Tyson

Discussion: None

Vote: Approved Unanimously 7-0-0

Ellen mentioned the kiosk condition. She and her husband will take it apart shortly and ask DWP to haul away the heavy pieces.

Dearborn – Driveway ROW easement:

Ellen reported that the Dearborn ROW easement language has been completed and is with the Town Attorney right now. Once he reviews the deed language, it will go back to the abutter and then, if all goes as planned, it will be filed.

10. Other Business

[time on DCAT 1:44:29]

Jeff mentioned a bill currently under consideration in the NH House. HB655-FN is legislation that would do away with the need to be a certified wetland scientist, certified soil scientist, and certified foresters. They are also considering the need for licensed Landscape Architects. You can find your Representatives at : [The New Hampshire House of Representatives \(state.nh.us\)](https://www.nh.gov/government/legislature/) and you are urged to contact them.

9. Adjourn

[time on DCAT 1:51:51]

Action

Motion: Tom Jones moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM.

Second: Colin Lawson

Discussion: None

Vote: Approved Unanimously 7-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Frick, Recording Secretary

DCAT:

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekkdEeRsk0JHQVHAvKJVka7_5VjxKP/videos