

FINAL

LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
April 9, 2026
6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Riley (Chair), Bruce James (Vice Chair), Susan Almy (Alt.), Andrew Faunce, Barbara Hirai, Chris Johnson, Donald Lacey

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ernst Oidtmann

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator) , Brian Vincent, City Engineer

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- A. Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 6:31PM.

Chair Riley welcomed two future Conservation Commission members, both in attendance at today's meeting, Mr. Erling Heistad and Ms. Pamela Lee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. March 12, 2026

*Vice Chair Bruce James MOVED to approve the minutes as amended
Seconded by Mr. Don Lacey*

**The MOTION was approved (6-0), 1 abstention*

3. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

4. PERMIT REVIEW:

A, New Hampshire Department of Transportation, I-89 Bridge , Lebanon, Right of Way (ROW)

Review and Comment on NHDES Wetland Permit application (major impact) for rehabilitation of the existing bridge. The permit was previously approved but expired in 2024; this permit application is to permit the remaining construction. The improvements result in approximately 3,469 sq. ft. of wetland impact, 2,846 sq. ft. of temporary impact and 623 sq. ft. of permanent impact. CC2026-03 (NHDES number 2026-00517)

ConCom's charge is to review and comment on this Permit Review for the remaining work listed above. There was no one from the DOT at the meeting.

Mr. Lacey asked if the conditions at this site have changed significantly at this site since 2018. Or have any members been at this site and noticed any changes since then. Ms. Hirai has one concern, about whether or not they are following their plan. She said that there have been times when they have seen substantial runoff from their property onto the conservation land, and that the water flows right over the roots of the sycamore tree there. Also, at one point there was fabric cloth (or something) placed over the roots of the tree so that water could run over it faster, which was never a part of the plan nor should it have ever been allowed. She spoke to the construction manager overseeing this project but did not see any changes made. Chair Riley said this will be included in their comments to DES. She said she also wants to know how they are draining the swales and what is going on with these.

Mr. Lacey added that over these past 8 years, there has been extensive scouring there, and this results in changes to the bank there every year, at least to some degree. So, the conditions there are different now than they were when this project was initiated. He thinks this would be worthwhile to look into this.

Mr. Goodwin brought up the NHDES application on the room screen, sharing pictures and that part of the document that states what work they still need to do at this site.

Vice Chair James pointed out that any changes in impacts that may occur now may be related to work they have done previously, such as the concrete piers. These would have had significant impact on the shoreline, on the sediments underneath all of the submerged sediments, etc., and these would impact what ConCom says about impact on this next phase. He thinks ConCom needs more detail.

Mr. Lacey MOVED to approve the following comments to DES:

Regarding these three bulleted impacts yet to be completed:

- *Construction of the stone apron at the drainage pipe outlet on the upstream side of the bridge (permanent impact area F);*
- *Construction of the outlet for the vegetated swale on the downstream side of the bridge (permanent impact area A);*
- *Restoration of the bank impacted by the trestle and bulkheads (temporary impact areas B and D).*

The Lebanon Conservation Commission requests that DES ask the applicant to comment on how conditions might have changed between the 2018 application and now and to determine if there are newer or better BMPs that would be more appropriate today.

Furthermore, the Conservation Commission is concerned that the contractor drained water through the abutting conservation land, past a leaning sycamore tree growing on the water's edge. Fabric and stakes were put down on this property around the base of this tree without consultation with the Commission, and some restoration of this abutting shoreline located just north/upstream of the bridge project might be appropriate. Please have DOT speak to these off-site impacts.

Finally, the Lebanon Conservation Commission hopes that the pedestrian connectivity between the northern and southern parcels of the Two Rivers Conservation Area will be restored and not impeded by these stormwater drainage and treatment measures.

Seconded by Vice Chair James

**The MOTION was approved (7-0)*

5. STUDY ITEMS:

Chair Riley and others spoke about some of the changes to the City of Lebanon website. Focusing on what one sees when you type in City of Lebanon, Conservation Commission, is a list of Commission members and their terms. Included on this same page is Meeting Information, Overview, Information and Categories, including 5 hyperlinks to [meeting materials](#), [the official code](#), [Learn how to apply](#), [Contact the Conservation Commission](#) and [Visit the Conservation Commission in Action page](#). Much of the past history about the Conservation Commission is missing. Govinity is in the background.

Mr. Faunce offered to discuss this with Chair Riley to see how they might productively understand this new site and perhaps impact some changes. Understanding roles and who has responsibility for this site will be useful.

Mr. Goodwin shared that normally when these types of changes occur, it is presented as a Beta, allowing different impacted parties time to provide their input.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Biodiversity Group (Invasives)

B. Stewardship
-Ranger

Mr. Neil Montibello, former City Ranger, will be returning to this role for 5-6 weeks this Spring until his Grad school starts in June. Mr. Goodwin will advertise for this position so that they can get this filled in the future.

-Trail Coordinator

Vice Chair James said that UVMBA reached out to him and they want to do a project trying to stabilize the lakeside trail on the south side since it is always bad this time of year with lots of mud. He, along with Mr. Goodwin, are working with Mr. Elliot Meese, a key representative of this group. They have given the go ahead for UVMBA to proceed. They have equipment, funding, and people to help get this work done. Their work has historically been very good.

Lynn Fisher is about to get her license.

-Monitors and Stewards

There will be a blueberry pruning day at Jackson Conservation area on Saturday, May 2, 2026, 9:00AM to 12 noon. They already have 2 high energy volunteers, including Lynn Fisher, and another person; both will be doing this work. There is a sign up form if anyone else wants to participate.

C. Wild about Lebanon

Chair Riley and Mr. Johnson are working on a Birding Wild About Lebanon event. Mr. Johnson has a person in mind to lead this field birding event.

Chair Riley has also reached out to Jason Berard at the Land Trust about having a Wild About Lebanon event at Martin Brook. They are also talking about having a site walk for employees, City Council, as well as the Conservation Commission so that they can see what work has been done for the avigation easement to see how they are handling obstructions (trees), which can be topped, girdled, or felled and left on site to be deadwood.

D. Amphibian Crossings

There have been some big amphibian crossings this season.

DPW has been very helpful and they have put up static signs (donated by the Lions Club) on Heater Rd. DPW has also installed solar powered digital signs at Old Pine Tree Cemetery Rd. Chair Riley suggested that the sign verbiage be tweaked a bit to focus on alerting drivers that if it is a rainy night that they might want to find an alternative route to their destination. If this is not an option, then “Caution!” would be better than “Slow!” Amphibians typically cross on wet, warm nights.

Ms. Hirai suggested the signs be placed well in advance of the crossings which would allow drivers to turn around and take an alternate route. Currently the signs are too close to the crossings. Mr. Goodwin said this years goal is to get the messaging out via the signs as well as informative details in the Lebanon Newsletters. Keene has been successful in having roads closed, though that effort has not been successful here in Lebanon.

E. LUCT/Current Use

Chair Riley is following up with the Finance Committee to ask for a more itemized statement, on a regular basis (e.g., every 3 months).

F. Other Subcommittees

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. FYIs

The Tree Board is actively recruiting residents that want trees, and there is a form for interested property owners to complete and send into the City. This is a time sensitive offer. Trees need to be visible and near roads, ideally with pedestrian traffic. Their flyer was included in the March 12, 2026 Conservation Commission Minutes.

Saturday, April 11, 2026, at Lebanon High School, from 10-12 noon, people can bring their solid/rigid (non-bendable) Styrofoam (no peanuts) for recycling. Vice Chair James has volunteered to drive these to the recycling compressor. They will be pelletized. All Styrofoam needs to be clean, with any tape removed. Black Styrofoam is being accepted as well. Ms. Hirai will be serving refreshments at this recycling event.

Mr. Johnson reminded ConCom that the River Fest/kayaking event is happening Saturday, April 25, 2026 at Baker’s Crossing. He is working with the Dartmouth students and will also be filming some of this event.

B. Follow Up

Chair Riley spoke recently with Amy Allen, Superintendent of Schools for the Lebanon School District (SAU 88) about the fact that there is an unnamed stream, and it could be a wonderful opportunity for students to study a multi-dimensional topic, that could be interesting in terms of its history, watershed, the science of this stream, whether it has or has ever had a name, etc. Another point of interest could be a drainage area near Mount Lebanon School. Chair Riley has already heard from some teachers who are interested in this project as well.

C. Workshops and Educational Opportunities

Ms. Hirai received information today about the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) and The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire and the Hanover Conservancy, collaborative effort at Mint Brook Nature Preserve on Saturday, April 25, 2026, 7:00 AM – 2:00 PM. This event will include guided walks, nature observation, and biodiversity documentation.

The goal is to document as many wild species as possible (between April 24-27) using the **iNaturalist app**. To participate, one can download this app and then explore your own backyard or go to Mink Brook Nature Preserve on April 25th, the day of the event, *or* visit other nature preserves in the area.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Mr. Faunce suggested that in a future meeting they start a conversation about the needs and concerns of ConCom and the implementation that the Planning Board allows, as well as the City Council, and how they might improve upon the current process.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

*Mr. Johnson MOVED for adjournment
Seconded by Ms. Susan Almy*

**The MOTION was approved (7-0)*

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Cinda Mersel
Recording Secretary