

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 16, 2026

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Noel Dodge, Adrian Schmidt, Justin Hennard
Absent: Dean Locke, Peter Hammond

The March minutes were approved.

There were two additions to the agenda: Blueberry Festival and an update from Mike Green.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Noel did his customary great job on the bird talk, with new people attending. The suggestion was made that he could do an annual talk. He didn't say no.

In the future presentation, we may hear from Adrian, who is studying mushroom horticulture.

PUBLIC FISHING AT VERMONT STATE

Eric Nuse requests our support for a new initiative. He proposes to clean and stock the pond at NVU, so it might be used for family fishing and teaching. We all agreed to support the project.

GOMO TOWN FOREST

Green Mountain Club's Molly Flanagan sent the promised surveys, which we had seen before. She'll send a draft of her plan when she returns from vacation. John Sutherland is ready to add it to the selectboard's agenda.

Mike Green contacted Lois with the news that he has a potential logger for Gomo, Fred and Doug Sherlaw, of Shattuck Logging. The financial breakdown will be roughly 35% to the logger, 20% to Mike Green, with the remainder going to the town. Mike reports that they may not need to build a road, as they're using a truck, rather than a skidder. JCCers were skeptical about that. Shattuck will look at the job on April 21.

POLLINATOR GARDENS

On April 21 at 4:00, we'll install the new pollinator signs at the gardens. Sue and Lois will meet with Noel, who has the Tree Board's flagged stakes, to mark their positions. Justin will dig the holes and someone with a truck will pick up the lumber and signs at Sue's house. How's that for a collaboration between boards?

We'll take pictures for the grant report.

JOURNEY'S END

Adrian plans to install the bench anchors soon. He'll also re-blaze the lines and has the appropriate white paint.

Dean has promised to replace the Fairy Forest sign.

RAIL TRAIL/REC COMMITTEE

They'll be adding eleven-foot-high kiosks at Old Mill Park and Legion Field that will carry town maps and point out popular areas of interest to bike riders. A bench, bike racks, and re-painting of the Railroad Street sharrows are planned as well.

McCUIN ISLAND

A visit to the island to see the state of the knotweed and camping toilet there was planned. We will look into funding for spraying the invasives. When the water level drops, we'll plan to canoe to the island, reconnoiter, and have a wienie-bratwurst-anything else you like picnic.

CONSERVATION RESERVE FUND

Sue and Lois have collected a pile of donated items for another fund-raising sale. This time they think a big, well-advertised tag sale on a good weekend would be easier to manage than the flea market, and have suggested having it on the lawn at the Hogback Storage Facility. It's owned by Chris Stearns. Noel will call him for permission to use the space, perhaps in late May. Everybody offered to help out.

BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL

It's on August 1 and the committee is looking for the community groups to set up displays that illustrate what they do. It need not be about blueberries. It was suggested that Adrian might talk about growing mushrooms if he's ready.

MEETING TIME CHANGED?

Since Peter is usually busy on Thursdays, we discussed changing the meeting time to every second or third Tuesday or Wednesday. Except for the fact that Lois has a conflict when Tuesday Night Live happens and Sue has a conflict with the third week in August, no one had a preference and all were amenable to change. Lois will ask Peter what works for him.

OBSERVATIONS

- Sue saw what looked like a brilliant white dove flying across her windshield. Noel says yup, they can be white.
- Sadly, Justin had a red-shouldered hawk eat one of his chickens.
- Noel reports a flock of 29 juncos.
- Adrian heard barred owls conversing.

MISC

- Scott Meyer reports that FEMA will require a permit to put anything at all on bought-out land.

Adjourned at 8:30.

Next meeting will be determined when a new date is decided; stay tuned.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary.