



**City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission**

June 25, 2025 at 6:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

[Click to Join Zoom Meeting Online](#)
Or call in by phone: +1 312 626 6799
Meeting ID: 929 1849 5024
Passcode: 792467

1. Declaration of Quorum/Voting Members
 - 1.a Welcome New BCC Appointee Chris Veazie
2. Adjustment(s) to Agenda
3. Secretary Report
 - 3.a Approval of Meeting Minutes for April 23, 2025 & May 28, 2025
4. Updates/Discussions
 - 4.a Review/Update Following 6/16 Special Meeting Comp Plan/Mark Ward Consultant Report/Bedard Subdivision/"Pre-approved Land Swap Subdivisions" The (missing) map?
 - 4.b BCC Website
 - 4.c Recap: SVLT Grassland Birds/Habitat Event & Future Event Discussions
 - [Case Study](#)
 - 4.d 2025/26 Budget/'25 Payment Commitments
 - 4.e DEP/VRMP-Water Monitoring Updates
5. New Business
 - 5.a BCC and the Pier Review
 - 5.b Heart of Biddeford Science Discovery on Main Street Initiative
6. Other Business

7. Adjourn-Next Meeting 7-23-25 6:45 PM

City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission
April 23, 2025 at 6:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

Attendees:

Richard Rhames, Erik Heumiller, Denis Rioux, Patrick Conlon, Peter Robbins

Staff:

Adi Iriqat, Assistant Planner

Guest:

Lisa Thompson, Director of Recreation Department

Call to order: 6:08 pm

1.

Adjustment(s) to Agenda

2.

Secretary Report

2.a

Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 17th, 2025

- Motion to approve: P. Robbins, Second: D. Rioux, Vote: Unanimous

3.

Updates

3.a

Clifford Park Matters (Rec. Comm. collaboration, Project Canopy)

- Clifford Park Easement Walk — 4/10
 - E. Heumiller joined Joe Taft, new Easement Manager MCHT
- Clifford Park Working Session
 - E. Heumiller has presented updated maps to BCC and Rec. Comm. to aid in discussions about trail updates
 - BCC can join the Rec. Comm. meeting Monday 4/28 at 6:00 PM
 - Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funds are frozen, but could be available for this in the future
 - Send details from conversation with Jan Santerre to L. Thompson to pick up the conversation (E. Heumiller)

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- 3.b Comp Plan Update
- What is BCC's role?
 - BCC/Rec Comm. will be collaborators on the Clifford Park master plan document
 - Next step is for Adi to share document with department heads
 - Adi is working with state partners to finalize the Comp Plan
 - Finalizing the implementation matrix
 - Future land use map
 - E. Heumiller can support a version of the map that shows overlays for natural resources
 - E. Heumiller to email M. Eon to ask about plans for Parkside spurs to see if they are being pursued
 - City is not interested in revising any of the chapters, because it requires additional public engagement, and that is at odds with the City's timeline
- 3.c Discussion: IFW Map — Rezoning Map — Mark Ward Consulting
- R. Rhames wants to review the mobile home park overlay zones within the vernal pool complex
 - Seek a memo from Mark Ward to argue for the vernal pools in the area
 - Motion to approve up to \$500 for M. Ward by D. Rioux, second by P. Robbins, Vote: Unanimous
 - Vernal pools are likely underrepresented, as the initial site survey was not comprehensive
 - Derek Yorks can also provide a written memo in support of the habitat
- 3.d Swan Pond Lot - Conservation Easement (Map-1, Lot-19)
- E. Heumiller sent the approved document to the City Council and Mayor Grohman to encourage the transfer of the parcel at Map-1, Lot-19 to a title-in-fee conservation structure
- 3.e BCC Website
- Confirmed the web update process
 - Need to finalize image/document organization and deliver to Danica
 - R. Rhames to secure videos (tapes) from older conservation programs that we can add to YouTube/website
- 3.f Water Quality Sampling (Updates)
- E. Heumiller is coordinating training with new volunteers & DEP team
 - TBD date in May
 - 11 volunteers total

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4.
New Business

- 4.a SVLT “Walk & Talk” Event — Date change to Sunday, 4/27
 - Featuring: Oliver Markewicz, District Forester, MFS
 - Time: 1:00 PM
 - Location: 10 West Loop Rd, Biddeford, ME 04005

- 4.b Earth Daze and the Crying “Indian”
 - R. Rhames shared the [CounterPunch article](#)
 - R. Rhames shared [Wikipedia: Earth Day](#)

- 4.6 Budget Proposals
 - BCC needs to develop a budget for 2026
 - Historically the BCC budget amount was \$3500
 - Briefly bumped up to \$5000, then cut back to \$3000
 - Need to consider: equipment, consultants, communications, events?

5.
Other Business

- 5.a Landowner Mailer: 30+ Acre Parcels
 - E. Heumiller has compiled the list and draft mailer
 - 66 individual parcel owners
 - 93 parcels
 - 6300+ acres
 - Mailer to include information on:
 - NRCS Programs
 - Family Forest Carbon Program
 - Current Land Use Programs
 - Tree Growth tax law is available at 10 acres
 - Local Land Trusts (optional)
 - Asking people to share their email with us for future correspondence
 - Can inform the Comp Plan updates for “working landscapes”

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5.b Vernal Pool Signage

- E. Heumiller requesting \$55 to print four (4) yard signs to spread awareness of vernal pools inside Clifford Park
- Signs to be placed near vernal pools along trails to prevent people from letting dogs into the water
- Motion to approve: E. Heumiller, Second: P. Conlon, Vote: Unanimous
- Send graphic to Rec. Dept. to share on social media

5.c Saco River Dams

- A section of stone blocks at the Old York Dam (Cataract West) on the Biddeford side of the river has started to collapse — located at the base of the current dam.
 - Who is responsible - City or Mill Owner?
 - E. Heumiller to email images to Adi
- Does the City have plans to comment on Brookfield's Study Plan for Cataract relicensing?
 - Who from City Staff would do this?
- E. Heumiller to email B. Phinney to see if he's involved or actively commenting on the dam relicensing

6.
Adjourn

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Motion to Adjourn: P. Robbins, Second: P. Conlon, Vote: Unanimous

City of Biddeford
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May 28, 2025 at 6:30 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

Attendees:

Richard Rhames, Erik Heumiller, Denis Rioux, Patrick Conlon, Peter Robbins

Staff:

Adi Iriqat, Assistant Planner

Guest:

n/a

Call to order: 6:41 pm

1.

Adjustment(s) to Agenda

2.

Secretary Report

2.a Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 23rd, 2025 to take place in June

3.

Updates & Discussions

3.a Clifford Park Matters (Rec. Comm. collaboration, Project Canopy)

- Clifford Park Working Session
 - BCC attended the Rec. Commission meeting on 4/28
 - City staff Erika Dube took notes
 - Many funding sources on hold due to Federal cuts
 - Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funds are frozen, but could be available for this in the future
 - L. Thompson has picked up the conversation with Jan Santere at Project Canopy

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- 3.b Comp Plan Update
 - BCC to have two weeks (along with other department heads) to review and identify areas we want to contribute to within the Comp Plan
 - BCC to schedule a workshop to review once it is delivered
 - Adi anticipates sharing it with the BCC the week of June 2-5

- 3.c Discussion: IFW Map — Rezoning Map — Mark Ward Consulting
 - M. Ward shared a memo with the BCC
 - Identifies the need to protect turtle habitat in this parcel/region
 - Declares that turtle habitat protections have “umbrella benefits” for a broader set of wildlife and plants
 - M. Ward to review the revised plan from late April
 - Adi to send to R. Rhames
 - Revise the memo as needed
 - The Bedard Subdivision should trigger a site law review (32 acres)
 - The BCC feels that the Planning Board should consider the IFW habitat map and the need to avoid developments that fragment access to this habitat

- 3.d Swan Pond Lot - Conservation Easement (Map-1, Lot-19)
 - No updates to report

- 3.e BCC Website
 - Issues uploading the assets — working with City staff to remedy
 - R. Rhames to secure videos (tapes) from older conservation programs that we can add to YouTube/website
 - Steve Poulis/True Green - has a video of the walking tour of the Claire property
 - Motion to reimburse full costs w/ shipping: P. Robbins, Second: P. Conlon, Vote: Unanimous

- 3.f Invasive Species Walk & Talk Event - Debrief
 - The walk took place on April 26, 2025 at 10 West Loop Rd, Biddeford, ME

- 3.g Clifford Park Signage — Updates
 - Signs were purchased and deployed in the park
 - Planning to collect the signs in the coming weeks
 - E. Heumiller needs to process a reimbursement for the signs

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- 3.h Water Quality Sampling — Updates
 - In-Person training scheduled for two upcoming dates
 - Sat. 5/31 at 10:00 AM — Clifford Park
 - Thu. 6/12 at 3:00 PM — Clifford Park

- 3.i BCC Budget for Y25-26
 - BCC still looking for clarification on what our budget will be and if we need to, or have a chance to, request funds

4.
New Business

- 4.a SVLT “Grassland Birds/Habitat” Event
 - Featuring: Joy Roy, Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
 - Date: Sunday, June 1, 2025
 - Time: 1:00 PM
 - Location: Hutchins Donation, Oak Ridge Rd.
 - [News Center Maine story](#) (R. Rhames)
 - Noting that it is unclear if this “protection” is any permanent type of conservation protection, or an “at will” endeavor for Poland Spring

- 4.b Climate Analysis
 - [The Guardian article](#) (R. Rhames)

- 4.c Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program (MNRCP)
 - Provides funds for the restoration and protection of wetlands, streams, and wildlife habitat
 - It is a compensatory mitigation program
 - Has several considerations that need to be met
 - Details in the [Request for Letters of Intent](#)
 - Applications for funding open as of May 22, 2025
 - Deadline for LOI is June 26, 2025
 - Potential projects could be:
 - Snow dump along Thatcher Brook
 - Vernal pool complex (restoration or land acquisition)
 - Swan Pond Brook area

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5.
Other Business

5.a Student Inquiry — Saco River Water Quality

- A Biddeford student interested in water quality concerns on the Saco River has reached out to inquire about opportunities to improve the water quality.
 - Concerned about the health and safety of fish consumption
 - Heard of multiple sections of the river being closed for bacteria
 - Suggests replanting trees in recent areas of construction along Mechanics Park
 - We could identify issues and challenges to water quality to help inform students and the community
 - Forest Green Apartments are on hold due to sewage capacity concerns along the river
 - Development within the flood plain creates contamination risks
 - BCC recommendations and next steps:
 - BCC could pursue partnerships with local organizations to fund a native plant/tree restoration effort along the river corridor
 - BCC could inquire with Maine Water about current test results
 - BCC could reach out to IFW for any updates about fishery closures due to bacteria
 - Reach out to the Saco River Corridor Commission to provide additional information to the student

5.b Public Works - Snow Dump & Road Salt

- R. Rhames to reach out to the Public Works Director to have him join a BCC meeting to discuss the City's road salt usage

5.c Public Access Video

- Conversation about the importance of live broadcast and public access
- <https://www.biddefordmaine.org/2184/Public-Access-Television>

6.
Adjourn

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Motion to Adjourn: P. Robbins, Second: P. Conlon, Vote: Unanimous