



**City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission**

August 27, 2025 at 6:45 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

[Click to Join Zoom Meeting Online](#)

Or call in by phone: +1 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 966 6295 4756

Passcode: 762101

1. Declaration of Quorum/Voting Members
2. Adjustment(s) to Agenda
3. Secretary Report
 - 3.a Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 23, 2025
4. Presentations
 - 4.a Thacher Brook WMP proposal-FB Environment
5. Updates/Discussions
 - 5.a Bedard Subdivision Update
 - 5.b Pier Review
 - 5.c Swan Pond Brook TAP Lot Update
 - 5.d BCC Website
 - 5.e Water Quality Sampling Update
6. New Business
 - 6.a BCC Collaboration with the Planning Board-1960's vintage zoning regime/Vernal Pool Complex
7. Other Business
8. Adjourn-Next Meeting September 24, 2025 6:45 PM

City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission
July 23, 2025 at 6:45 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

Attendees:

Richard Rhames, Peter Robbins, Denis Rioux, Erik Heumiller, Chris Veazie

Staff:

Adi Iriqat, Assistant Planner

Guest:

n/a

Call to order: 6:47 pm

1. Adjustment(s) to Agenda
2. Secretary Report
 - 2.a Approval of Meeting Minutes for June 25, 2025
 - Motion to Approve: P. Robbins, Second: E. Heumiller, Vote: Unanimous
3. ~~Black Roads: Presentation by BPW Director Jeff Demers~~
 - 3.a ~~Conversation about the City's de-icing procedures~~
 - Need to reschedule
4. Updates & Discussions
 - 4.a Comp Plan Implementation Matrix - Update/Status
 - A completed draft has been developed, but it has not been submitted yet
 - Acting City Manager feedback has been submitted internally
 - 4.b Mark Ward Report - Payment Status
 - E. Heumiller to confirm w/ Nan on 7/28
 - 4.c Bedard Subdivision Update
 - Previously reported that the development was facing roadblocks via IFW
 - Stated that IFW's concerns have been addressed
 - Adi to inquire about what IFW's concerns were and how they have been addressed by the applicant
 - E. Heumiller to draft a letter to the applicant, to be reviewed by the CC before sending
 - To be sent before Wednesday 7/30 at 2pm to be included in the agenda packet
 - Include the PB when sending the email
 - Sketch plan going before the Planning Board on 8/6
 - Members of the CC planning to attend

- 4.d Pre-Approved Land Swap Subdivisions
 - CC still looking to access to existing maps/documents from Clifford Park Land Swap.
 -
 - R. Rhames has sat with the City Planner to search for the land swap agreement, but no document could be found on City Servers.

- 4.e FY25/26 Budget
 - New budget is \$3,000
 - Maine Association of Conservation Commissions - membership status?

- 4.f DEP/VRMP Water Monitoring Updates
 - Sampling began 6/25 and will continue through October
 - Conversations with DEP team reveal plans to increase studies on Swan Pond Brook: macroinvertebrates and bacteria sampling this summer
 - Thatcher Brook Watershed Management Plan (WMP) needs to be updated by May 2026
 - FB Environmental recommended grant opportunities through the New England Environmental Finance Center (NEEFC)
 - Funding is meant to lead into future projects
 - Proposed information
 - Can pursue NEEFC grant opportunities for data logger equipment through proposals w/ FB Environmental
 - Motion: E. Heumiller, Second: D. Rioux, Vote: Unanimous

- 4.g UNE Pier Review - BCC Perspectives
 - P. Robbins attended the last Planning Board meeting
 - They took up the Pier Review discussion after previously tabling it

- 5. New Business
 - 5.a City Parcel (Map1, Lot19) - Tax Acquired Property
 - Looking to get a confirmation about this item on the City Council's agenda
 - Can email Robin (City Clerk) or Council President and/or Mayor
 - E. Heumiller to send an email to request this item be added to an upcoming City Council Meeting

- 5.b Funding Sources for Water Protection Initiatives
 - Opportunities to seek grant funding the develop a plan to study impacts on Swan Pond Brook
 - Saco Watershed Collaborative and others interested in Swan Pond Brook as a priority watershed for study/restoration/protection
 - 604b Planning Grant
 - 319 Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Control Grant
 - NEECF funds would also be available for Swan Pond Brook as a means of funding data collection that leads to other projects
 - The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) would also be an option for this
 - SPB could be effected by homes with overboard discharge agreements
 - A 250-foot setback is in place on SPB because of this
- 5.c August Book Sale/Swap - Public Engagement Opportunity
- 5.d Solar Ordinance Updates
 - Mayor Grohman asked for specific changes
 - Brad made updates and the document may be going before the Policy Committee on Monday 7/28
 - Confirmed by Policy Chair that this is not the case
- 6. Conservation Commission Website
 - E. Heumiller and R. Rhames to meet w/ Steve Poulus
- 7. [Maine.gov](#) - Open Farm Day
 - <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/events/open-farm-day.shtml>
 - A cautionary tale:
<https://www.commercialsearch.com/commercial-property/us/me/gray/282-acres-in-gray-new-gloucester/>
 - Dairy operation was shuttered a few years ago
- 8. Other Business
 - 8.a Science on Main Street Initiative
 - E. Heumiller to email Miranda to inquire about any specific proposals that may be in development
- 9. Adjourn
 - Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, August 27, 2025 - 6:45 PM
 - Motion to Adjourn: E. Heumiller, Second: D. Rioux, Vote: Unanimous

THATCHER BROOK PROPOSAL



TO: Conservation Commission, City of Biddeford
FROM: Grace Little, FB Environmental Associates (FBE)
SUBJECT: **Thatcher Brook WMP Update and Community Engagement Proposal**
DATE: July 31st 2025
CC:

This proposal seeks funding through the New England Environmental Finance Center (NEEFC), with no financial responsibility required from the City of Biddeford. NEEFC helps states, tribes, local governments, nonprofits, community-based organizations, and private sector partners identify, secure, and manage funding for environmental and infrastructure projects--like water infrastructure upgrades, stormwater and nutrient management, and climate resilience initiatives. NEEFC is largely funded through EPA grants as part of the Environmental Finance Center Network, enabling to offer assistance to local governments.

We propose to submit a 2026 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) to support an update to the Thatcher Brook Watershed Management Plan, submitted to the Maine DEP. In addition to updating the plan, the proposal includes a strong community engagement component that involves local businesses and residents in Biddeford through the creation of a Water-Wise Business Certification Program. This effort directly fulfills key action items outlined in the existing Watershed Management Plan and promotes long-term watershed stewardship. The full cost of the proposal would be covered by the New England Environmental Finance Center, requiring no financial contribution from the City of Biddeford.

SCOPE OF WORK

Task 1. Program Management & Client Communications

Task 1 will focus on ongoing client communication and project coordination to ensure that all aspects of the initiative align with stakeholder expectations and community needs. This task includes regular check-ins with the City of Biddeford and other key partners to provide updates, gather feedback, and collaboratively refine deliverables. Clear and consistent communication will be critical to maintaining momentum, addressing questions as they arise, and ensuring transparency throughout each phase of the project. This task will also include scheduling meetings, sharing draft materials for review, and documenting key decisions to support an efficient and responsive planning process.

Deliverables: Partner communication updates, meeting scheduling

Task 2. Maine 2026 CWSRF Application for Watershed Management Plan Update

Task 2 involves preparing and submitting a Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) application to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (Maine DEP) to support an update of the Thatcher Brook Watershed Management Plan, originally completed in 2015. A plan update is a critical step in ensuring that the

strategies, goals, and implementation measures outlined in the original plan remain effective and aligned with current watershed conditions. In 2025, Maine CWSRF offered up to \$50,000 of principal forgiveness loans for WMP updates. These applications require a 100% match, which can be in-kind. If the 2026 CWSRF application was approved, this is something to note for the City of Biddeford.

Since the original plan was developed, land use patterns, stormwater infrastructure, and development pressures within the Thatcher Brook watershed may have changed. In addition, new water quality data, improved modeling tools, and updated regulatory guidance (including EPA's Nine Elements for watershed-based plans) provide an opportunity to refine priorities and expand on successful restoration efforts. Updating the plan will also ensure continued eligibility for future Section 319 funding and other implementation grants.

Deliverables: Review the 2015 Watershed Management Plan Action Plan to identify completed and outstanding tasks, prepare an updated summary, complete the CWSRF application, conduct 1–2 review rounds with the City, and submit the final application.

Task 3. Community Engagement and Education

Task 3 centers on implementing a community engagement strategy that builds on the Thatcher Brook Watershed Management Plan by promoting long-term stewardship and public involvement. This task will focus on non-structural BMP approaches, such as education, behavior change, and community engagement. By raising awareness and encouraging voluntary practices, this task will help support water quality improvements. See table below for more details on the 2015 WMP recommendations and the alignment of this task. As part of this task, we will partner with the Saco Watershed Collaborative (SWC) to develop a Water-Wise Business Certification Program. This program will encourage businesses to adopt water-friendly practices such as reducing water use, minimizing runoff, using native or low-maintenance landscaping, and sharing educational materials with customers. One business will be selected as a pilot participant to showcase these practices and help refine the program.

To further engage the broader community, a public workshop will be hosted to introduce practical, non-structural water-friendly strategies such as planting native species, installing rain gardens, and redirecting runoff. The workshop will be designed to be accessible and action-oriented, empowering residents and businesses to take simple steps that contribute to the health of the watershed. All outreach and certification materials developed under this task, including templates, guidance, and branding, will be made freely available for others to adopt, ensuring the longevity and replicability of the effort. This task directly supports the Thatcher Brook Plan's recommendations to expand public education and outreach, promote non-structural BMPs, and increase participation in watershed stewardship across the Biddeford community.

Finally, this task will include a digital engagement component in collaboration with a local production partner. Videos and digital public engagement play a key role in promoting water conservation by making information more accessible, relatable, and actionable. The goal will be to create visual content that clearly demonstrates practical strategies, such as redirecting runoff or using native plants, while reaching a broad audience through social media and websites. By featuring local examples and success stories, the videos will build community support, inspire individual action, and foster a shared commitment to protecting water resources.

Deliverables: Partnership with SWC, certification criteria and checklist, pilot business case study, creative public

workshop (i.e. native plant giveaway at pilot business), water-friendly tipsheets and signage, social media engagement, replication package, and video assets.

Thatcher Brook WMP Recommendation	Citation (Section & Page #)	Addressed in task 3?
Develop an outreach and education program for residents and businesses	1.4, p. 2	Yes, shared public education
Strengthen ties with local schools and the University of New England (UNE)	1.4, p. 2	Yes, UNE
Partner with schools and local institutions for outreach	8.3.6, p. 67	Yes, SWC
Host presentations	8.3.6, p. 67	Yes, encourages local events
Distribute brochures and signage to promote stewardship	8.3.6, p. 67	Yes, promotes printed and digital materials
Use social media/website for updates and information	8.3.6, p. 67	Yes, uses digital engagement
Promote non-structural BMPs such as education and behavior change	Implied throughout Section 8.3.6, p. 67	Yes, behavior change focus