

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