



**City of Biddeford
Conservation Commission**

October 22, 2025 at 6:45 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Zoom

<https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/91096926677?pwd=0HBxAmdddyCs65gEht50GwXC>
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Or call in by phone: +1 312 626 6799
Meeting ID: 910 9692 6677
Passcode:158156

1. Declaration of Quorum/Voting Members
2. Adjustment(s) to Agenda
3. Secretary Report
 - 3.a Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 24, 2025.
4. Presentations
 - 4.a Addie Halligan MDEP: Thatcher Brook/Watershed
 - 4.b Greg LeClair, Municipal Planning Biologist, IF&W
5. Updates/Discussions
 - 5.a Proposed Zoning Updates for Vernal Pool Complex Conservation (Overlay?)
 - 5.b Review BCC/BPB workshop (10-15-25)
 - 5.c Swan Pond Brook TAP lot update
 - 5.d BCC Website
6. Other Business
 - 6.a November/December meeting dates
7. Adjourn-Next meeting January 28, 2026?????, 6:4PM

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Attendees:

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

Staff:

Adi Iriqat, Assistant Planner

Guest:

Call to order: 6:56 pm

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1. Declaration of Quorum / Voting Members
 2. Adjustment(s) to Agenda
 3. Secretary Report
 - 3.a Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 27, 2025
 - Motion to Approve: E. Heumiller, Second: P. Conlon, Vote: Unanimous
 4. Presentations
 - 4.a ~~Jeff Demers: Black Roads & Infrastructure for Population Growth~~
RESCHEDULING - October or November
 5. Updates & Discussions
 - 5.a Conservation Zoning Discussion for Vernal Pool Complex
 - Our memo presented to Planning Board at 9/17 meeting
 - Planning Board desires to collaborate on this topic
 - Request for DEP or IFW presentation of statewide habitat and species needs and impacts for Vernal Pools
 - Interest in how other communities are pursuing “conservation overlays” or similar approaches
 - N. Whiten reached out to IFW to gauge availability to participate in a joint CC and PB workshop
 - E. Heumiller to share online resources for the Planning Board to review/learn about the vernal pools ahead of the workshop, and to clarify questions about this being a City-wide need vs. being specific to the Bedard Subdivision
 - Question of clear-cut lot on Pool St. - encroachment on vernal pool?
 - Map 9, Lot 31 - Coastal Oaks LLC

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- 5.b Bedard Subdivision - Site Walk Updates + IFW Rulings
 - Site walk notes:
 - Existing trail system well-documented on the parcel
 - IFW review:
 - Lots in rear of parcel reduced from 7 to 4 at IFW request
 - Still in review by IFW
 - Likely returning to the planning board in November

- 5.c UNE Pier Review - City Council & Planning Board Interactions
 - Citizen initiative to “summon the City Council” to present the citizens’ agenda to the City Council
 - This is a seldom-used provision of Biddeford’s charter

- 5.d Conservation Update - TAP Lot (Map 1, Lot 19)
 - TAP = Tax Acquired Property
 - Recap: Council referred the matter to the City Planner to summarize the process/actions required by their November 2025 meeting
 - BCC desires to simplify the work for the City Planner by sharing a draft recommendation/process outline to expedite the process
 - Quick title search
 - City to relinquish all interest
 - Not an easement
 - Organizational recommendations (SVLT, MCHT)
 - E. Heumiller to email City Manager Truc Dever with the above recommendation.
 - Motion: E. Heumiller, Second: P. Robbins, Vote: Unanimous

- 5.e BCC Website
 - E. Heumiller and R. Rhames to review conservation video archives at Biddeford Public Access in October
 - Video: Rob Baldwin - Vernal Pool Study (significant or other)

- 5.f Water Monitoring Update
 - Water levels continue to be very low due to dry conditions all summer
 - DEP sent out the initial email to close out the season
 - Compiling data to share in November

5.g FB Environmental Proposal - Thatcher Brook Follow Up

- Responses and clarifications from DEP regarding any legal obligations of the City and how that may affect the decision to move forward.
 - DEP does not have any regulatory authority to require an update to the WMP
 - However, Biddeford must abide by our Stormwater Compensation Fund Utilization Plan — which dictates that we refer to the WMP to prioritize how we spend the CFUP funds
 - This indicates a need to keep the plan up to date, to ensure that any funds spent on the Thatcher Brook Watershed reflect the current needs of the watershed
 - Additionally, if the City wants to apply for any new grant funding, we would be required to update the WMP to be eligible, therefore, pursuing the updates now would aid in future applications and reduce timelines for state/federal funds
 - DEP also noted the ability for their team to deploy rock bags in the TB watershed to collect macroinvertebrate data for comparison to the existing WMP's data
- R. Rhames still interested in DEP presentation about Thatcher Brook
 - Could be part of the October meeting

6. New Business

6.a Policy Committee Review of Solar Ordinance

- Recap: Mayor Grohman made changes to the proposed solar ordinance, and this new version is in front of the Policy Committee
- PC did not recommend the ordinance to the City Council at this time
 - Concerned about the economic impact of this ordinance and looking to do more research
 - The City's valuation could be changed, which would affect state funding for education
- Discussion of the Public Advocate's report on net metering and the cost impacts on residents
- Review of soils development % could counter the legislative letter

6.b Comp Plan Status Update

- City received roughly 72 pages of notes from state agencies and citizens
- Citizen Committee set up in 2020, but abolished — may be needed again
- CC to help with the following:
 - Natural Resources
 - Marine & Freshwater Resources (DEP can assist)

- 6.c Greg LeClair - DACF presentation on Comp Plan process
 - Joining us at our October meeting

- 6.d Maine Coast Heritage Trust - Climate Resilience Conservation Fund
<https://www.mltn.org/resources/regrants/crcf-fund/>
 - Goals of the fund are to support land protections that enhance climate resilience and reduce climate impacts on Maine's land, waters, & people
 - Funding round now (due 10/22), but also in Spring of 2026
 - No matching funds are required
 - Municipalities and non-profit land trusts
 - No minimums or maximums (expected range \$50,000-\$250,000)
 - No limit to the number of applications
 - Must show landowner willingness to sell
 - Opportunities for Biddeford include:
 - Review sea-level rise prediction maps to identify potential marsh area expansions
 - Acquiring parcels in the Swan Pond Brook watershed to protect water quality upstream of drinking water intakes
 - Vernal Pool Complex - with specific call-outs for at-risk species and biodiversity protections for an uncertain climate
 - Clifford Park easement application through MCHT
 - E. Heumiller to pursue the identification of private parcels within the Vernal Pool Complex and reach out to landowners to gauge interest in fee-based conservation of the parcel. Any interested parties can be referred to the Saco Valley Land Trust for further discussions

- 7. Other Business
 - 7.a Biddeford Recreation Grant Application - Maine Trails Bond
 - Seeking funds to enhance Clifford Park's trails through professionally designed and built trail systems, improved signage, and wayfinding, and accessibility — including the investment in a forest management plan.
 - E. Heumiller also made note of the Conservation Commission's interested to participate in trail mapping to consider trail rerouting around key habitats, as well as seasonal trail closures, etc.
 - Chris Shorn - MCHT Project Manager for southern Maine
 - Biddeford staff has contacted MCHT about Clifford Park easement

- 8. Adjourn
 - Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2025 - 6:45 PM
 - Motion to Adjourn: E. Heumiller, Second: P. Robbins, Vote: Unanimous