



Waitsfield Conservation Commission Meeting

Minutes

December 15, 2025

Members Present: James Donaldson, Bruno Grimaldi, Phil Huffman, Ted Joslin, Leo Laferriere, Chris Loomis, Gail O'Keefe

Members Absent: Curt Lindberg

Others Present: Brian Voigt (on behalf of CVRPC)

The meeting was called to order by Leo Laferriere, acting chair, at 6:37 pm. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

1. Welcome, Agenda Review

No adjustments were made to the agenda.

2. Public Input

Nobody requested time to speak.

3. Review/Approve June minutes

The minutes of October 2025 were approved unanimously.

4. Floodplain Reconnection Study Update

Brian Voigt, from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, reported on the proposed floodplain restoration project. He reviewed the sites explored, and described in more detail the lower Fairgrounds site, which is likely to be the site chosen. The project was described in detail, with excavation, soil disposal, and likely effectiveness of phosphorous reduction and floodplain discussed. The funding of \$1.1 million will likely be fully covered by grant funds. Brian sought the commission's support to proceed to the 30% design phase.

Motion – by Huffman, seconded by Joslin – That the WCC express support to the Selectboard for moving forward with the 30% design phase on the project presented by the CVRP. Motion passes unanimously, and Brian will now go to the Selectboard with the proposal.

5. Wu/Fairgrounds Consultant RFP

Having received no acceptable proposals on the RFP for the update of the Wu Ledges Management Plan to incorporate the majority of the Fairgrounds Parcel, Chris requested authorization to revise the RFP for a longer time frame of 9-12 months, in hope of getting better responses. The WCC agreed and Loomis has an ACTION ITEM to revise the RFP with the extended delivery date and circulate among the Chair and O'Keefe for final language and then distribute the RFP to potentially interested contractors.

6. An update from the Tri-Town meeting was tabled. A discussion of Arrowwood doing a wildlife corridor mapping will be put on the agenda for the January meeting.

7. Commission Membership

O'Keefe reported approaching a potential member for the committee, but though the candidate was enthusiastic, he declined due to a heavy travel schedule.

8. Financial Matters

The board received an update that Dave Gavett had paid \$7,637 for this year's sugaring lease, to be posted to the Scrag Mt. Forest Reserve Fund, reflecting an increase of 673 taps, totaling 5,455.

Grimaldi provided financial updates, including a report showing \$5,000 in the general fund with \$262.50 spent so far, and discussed the need to spend remaining funds before fiscal year-end.

2026/27 Budget requests: The board discussed funding requests for fiscal year 2025, agreeing to maintain current levels due to expected 12% property tax increases. They approved level funding of \$5,000 for general operating expenses, \$20,000 for the Conservation Reserve Fund, and \$10,000 for the invasive species fund, with \$2,500 allocated for emerald ash borer and \$7,500 for other invasive species.

9. Executive Session

MOTION: *A motion to enter Executive Session passed unanimously.*

Motion – by Loomis seconded by Huffman to go into executive session to discuss a real estate matter. Motion approved. WCC goes into executive session at 7:53.

Motion - by Joslin, seconded by Donaldson to come out of executive session. Motion approved. WCC came out of executive session at 8:15 with no action taken.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

There were technical difficulties with sound quality and recording. The minutes were prepared collaboratively from member notes and a Zoom automatic transcription.

Respectfully submitted:

Chris Loomis, Gail O'Keefe