



## **Waitsfield Conservation Commission Meeting**

Minutes

February 18, 2026

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

**Members Absent:**

**Others Present:**

The meeting was called to order by Curt at 6:35 pm. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

### **1. Welcome, Agenda Review**

No changes were made to the agenda.

### **2. Public Input**

No members of the public were present.

### **3. Review/Approve January minutes**

The minutes of December 15, 2025 were approved.

### **4. Wu/Fairgrounds Consultant RFP**

Chris noted that the RFP specifies that questions are to be submitted by February 6, 2026. Curt reported that Ky Koitzsch had requested information following that date, and that Drew Pierson has requested an opportunity to speak with the CC before finalizing his proposal. Chris also noted that Alan Thompson would not be submitting a proposal, but had feedback to provide. Marcus Bradley of Redstart had expressed interest, but has not followed up. It was discussed that there is still some time before the due date of February 27, but that the CC is not obligated to provide any response to questions at this point. Chris indicated that he believes some proposals will be submitted.

### **5. Lake Champlain Basin Program Grant Award**

Curt reviewed that a 2-year, \$140K had been received, which will include the involvement of Harwood Science classes/teachers and allowance for goats to be grazed on increased territory. The wider range will make the need for supplemental feeding less likely. Gail reported that the typical cost for this type of project is about \$1000 to \$1200 per goat per season.

Curt explained that the grant will also include recommendations for invasive treatments and restoration strategies from a Field Naturalist student's Masters project; along with ongoing development of the GIS system and website updates. Interviews with potential interns will begin soon.

Phil pointed out that it would be useful to have the Field Naturalist's work include some comparison with past inventory work.

## **6. Tri-Town Meeting Highlights Follow-up**

Bruno made note of the wildlife corridor work undertaken by Warren, indicating that Waitsfield might benefit from completing a related study. He also spoke of the conversation that had taken place regarding strategies for educating new owners of Northfield range lands regarding local and state conservation efforts.

Phil explained that wildlife corridor mapping had been included as a high priority project by the first phase of CRV work, and suggested looking into coordination of Tri-Town and CRV efforts, noting that there may still be CRV funds available. Curt offered to follow up with Andrea of Fayston on this, as the Fayston CC may be working with Arrowwood to have some mapping work completed.

Collaboration efforts and furthering land conservation were also discussed at the larger group meeting; Curt indicated that correspondence had been sent to local board, commissions, organizations, and individuals, outlining plans for a broad effort to address conservation. He noted that among the several topics being discussed is the potential for establishment of a local land trust. Other matters which might be addressed are the formation of a conservation district and the establishment of a related grant administrator position.

Bruno and Gail offered to compose minutes for the Tri-Town meeting.

## **7. Commission Membership**

Mention was made of some potential new CC members.

## **8. Emerald Ash Borer Plan Development**

Leo confirmed that he had offered to be the lead on developing a plan for addressing the emerald ash borer. He indicated that the Selectboard needs to determine if any trees will be left in place, and if so, whether or not they will be treated. Charlie Goodman has agreed to monitor for signs of infestation over the summer months. The plan will be focused on safety, and will primarily address roadside trees.

It was noted that landowner educational materials will be developed, and that Joanne Garten and Caitlin Cusack have offered to provide assistance.

## **9. Financial Matters and Selectboard Budget Presentation**

Bruno and Curt reported that they had presented the CC's budget request to the Selectboard, and that what was requested is included in the proposed Town budget.

Bruno pointed out that there is a balance of \$4675 in the CC's general fund for the current fiscal year, which should be spent by the end of June, after which it will no longer be available. James suggested ordering a supply of trail markers. Bruno reviewed the various CC fund balances with the group.

Curt explained that in the previous LCBP grant, \$1500 had been included for completion of required reports; he had included that funding in order to compensate a technical writer, but then realized that it made more sense logistically for him to complete the reports himself. A payment of \$140 has been made for associated mapping; Curt requested that the remaining \$1360 be paid to him for completing the reporting. Bruno noted that an invoice would be required, and Phil noted that it should be confirmed that such a payment is not in conflict with Town policy.

**MOTION:** *James moved that a payment of \$1360 for reporting services, using LCBP grant funds, be paid to Curt upon receipt of an invoice, and upon confirmation that no Town policy prohibits disbursement of compensation to Commission members. The motion was seconded by Bruno, and passed unanimously.*

## **10. Other business:**

- Next meeting: The next meeting will be held on March 18, 2026.
- Mad River Path meeting highlights – It was agreed to invite Misha Golfman to the next CC meeting in order to discuss two financial requests made by the Mad River Path.

## **10. Executive Session**

**MOTION:** *A motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:03 pm and returned to open session at 8:11 pm.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary