

**Town of Warren  
Conservation Commission  
Minutes of Meeting  
September 20, 2011**

**Members Present:** George Schenk, Robin Bennett, Kate Wanner, Jim Edgcomb, Rocky Bleier,  
Damon Reed, Margo Wade

**Others Present:** Liza Walker

**Agenda:**

- 1) 7:00 PM – (Call to Order)
  - 2) Eaton Parcel (1 hour): Discussion of potential town forest/conservation application
  - 3) Tri-Town meeting–(15 minutes): Discuss agenda/date for Tri-Town meeting
  - 4) Corridor Study—(15 minutes): Discuss proposal for wildlife corridor study
  - 5) Updates – (15 minutes)
    - a. Forest, Wildlife, and Communities Project & Welcome Wagon
    - b. Other
  - 6) Other Business – (15 minutes)
    - a. Approve Invoices
    - b. Approve meeting minutes
    - c. Selectboard Check-in
    - d. Items for next meeting
    - e. Caitrin Noel's temporary leave of absence
    - f. the CC rude treatment by a member of the public at the Aug Selectboard meeting
  - 7) Adjourn – 10:00 PM
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**I. Call to Order**

Robin Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm.

**II. Eaton Town Forest Conservation Easement**

Discussed potential easement terms including special treatment areas around vernal pool and other special natural features. If resource calls for it, as determined by site visit from Liz Thompson, there may be a 500 ft primary zone buffer around vernal pool, seeps and wetland, with no tree removal.

Snowmobiling, horseback riding and mountain bikes will be at discretion of town.

1 exclusion zone for affordable housing, potential solar panels or other use as decided by town. Exclusion area could also be parking, septic, solar panels or additional rec field.

We're the only one in the valley that doesn't have an easement on our town forest

VLT will need to field-verify boundaries with GPS.

Town's legal staff could be covered by the Conservation Reserve Fund

Volunteer cons com time will be match

### III. Tri-Town Meeting

Due to flooding, meeting has been rescheduled to Tues Oct 25<sup>th</sup>, at Flatbread, 6:30-8:30. George will provide flatbreads and salad, Margo and Kate will make desert, Damon and Rocky will bring beverages.

Fayston wants to add the following to agenda:

- McCullough barn update
- Bragg Hill Farm
- feedback from other towns on solid plan for conservation
- FWC maps- how do other towns plan to use them

Other agenda items to add

- Flood impact to conserved lands, impact to river
- Discuss Commission's position on flood repair, gravel mining, river restoration

Robin will send out draft agenda and get feedback from other commissions

### IV. Wildlife Corridor Follow-up Study

Discussed Arrowwood's detailed proposal.

Don't spend time on corridors that are adequately protected

Would only do town roads unless there is particular information or interest in a private road and we have landowner's permission.

Arrowwood's proposal includes a 2 day rapid assessment of tracking wildlife crossing town roads. Based on the results, WCC and Arrowwood will identify 4 potential crossings for detailed assessment that will let us understand corridor qualities not just crossing qualities.

2011 Budget included \$2000 for corridor study, which would fund step 1 as outlined in the proposal. This would need to be spent in 2011. Any work planned for 2012 would be funded through 2012 budget. Budgeted money in the annual operating budget does not carry forward so approval would be needed at town meeting.

Rocky suggested asking local hunters for input on habitat and location key crossings.

We need to share the project status with PC and Miron to gain general support for the project and explore if sharing costs is possible.

**MOTION by Damon Reed, seconded by Jim Edgcomb to offer Arrowwood a contract to conduct Step 1 of the project for a cost of \$1730.00. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

### V. Updates

- a.- Forest, Wildlife and Communities Project & Welcome Wagon-
- c. Priorities for Conservation – Liza has produced a new map with parcels identified during the retreat this summer. Next step would be to reach out to landowners, with direct meetings. VLT usually doesn't put easements on properties less than 50 acres, but will consider smaller areas if have a lot of resources
- d. other:

### VI. Other Business

- a. Approve invoices - no invoice to approve
- b. Approve meeting minutes - The August 16 minutes were unanimously approved, signed and posted.
- c. Selectboard Check-in- The check in will focus on the Eaton Town Forest Conservation Easement grant application. See discussion above for details. Margo will confirm with Cindi that we are on the

agenda.

d. Items for next meeting will include: Tri Town CC Meeting (scheduled for 10/25 at Lareau Farm Inn) prep for meeting and finalizing agenda, Eaton Parcel Conservation Easement follow-up, Corridor Study.

e. Caitrin will be taking a temporary leave of absence for personal reasons. Robin will step in as acting chair. There was brief discussion about posting a public notice RE: the ninth seat, which is vacant.

f. The disrespectful verbal treatment at the Aug Selectboard meeting was discussed. All present felt it was inappropriate that the prime individual at the meeting should not have been aloud to carry on as he did. This type of treatment does may deter members of the public from volunteering on town boards and committees. Rocky will take the lead on drafting a letter outlining our concerns and circulating it via email to the CC for review/comment. Once finalized the letter will be submitted to the Selectboard for their next meeting.

**VII. Adjournment:**

**MOTION by Robin Bennett, seconded by Jim Edgcomb to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Kate Wanner and Margo Wade*

**Conservation Commission**

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Robin Bennett (date)

*[Signature]* 10/18/11

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Robin Bleier (date)

*[Signature]* 10/18/11

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Edgcomb (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Caitrin Noel (date)

*[Signature]* 10/18/11

\_\_\_\_\_  
Damon Reed (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
George Schenk (date)

*[Signature]* 10/18/2011

\_\_\_\_\_  
Margo Wade (date)

*[Signature]* 10/18/11

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Kate Wanner (date)

Warren Conservation Commission  
PO Box 337  
Warren, VT 05674

September 26, 2011

To: The Warren Select Board

From: The Warren Conservation Commission

On September 12, 2011, several members of the Conservation Commission were present at the Select Board meeting to present our recommendations to the Select Board and others present. We were not given the respect that one should, or would, expect while attending and participating in a public meeting. Specifically, we endured unrecognized remarks, which included personal attacks and insults from one member in the audience. This harsh treatment went on unchallenged by the chair or any other Select Board member, for well over an hour. The insults continued even after we were finished and were exiting the room.

Good governance should start with the premise of civilized and respectful exchange of thoughts and opinions. Every person in attendance at any public meeting should be accorded this basic respect. On many occasions, this basic premise has been lacking at our town and Select Board meetings. It is our opinion that this is a major deterrent to motivating our fellow townspeople to become more involved in town affairs, and will also hasten some to reconsider their volunteer commitments to various commissions and committees.

We the members of the Conservation Commission, respectfully urge the chair of the Select Board to exercise far more control when running meetings, as to eliminate personal attacks and obscene language. Failure to do so will limit our participation going forward and act as a deterrent to others becoming more involved in the "doings" of our wonderful town.

We appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



Robin Bennett

Co-Chair of Warren Conservation Commission

On behalf of the Warren Conservation Commission