Notes for 8/18/25 Monday Craftsbury Conservation Commission Meeting

Meeting started at 7:04

Present: Ken Menard, Diane Morgan, Farley Brown, Nancy Milholland, Elinor Osborn
Absent: Molly Sease
Guest: Alex Connizzo

Farley made a motion to accept the June minutes, Ken seconded this, and June minutes were approved.

Alex Connizzo joined us from the Natural Resources Councill, AVCC (Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions). Alex is the special projects coordinator and one of a few paid staff for AVCC. The goal of AVCC is to support existing conservation commissions throughout the state of Vermont of which there are one hundred.
Alex shared about an upcoming gathering in Hardwick Saturday, October 11, 2025, from 9 am to 2pm. Lunch is provided, and it is free to all conservation commission members. The focus is on exploring ways commissions can be more effective in their respective communities. Location: Hardwick Memorial Building, third floor.
Alex had asked our members to complete a survey ahead of the Oct. 11 event, and Diane agreed to send this to members (having sent it to us previously). Alex also solicited feedback from the group at the meeting.

Elinor Osborn provided an update on the Japanese Knotweed Project (which is sponsored by a watershed grant from Vermont Fish and Wildlife).
Elinor expressed concern regarding an excavator on top of the Cole Road portion and wonders why it is there, questions if they are working on the culvert—specifically she is concerned about the safety of the plantings for the knotweed project.
Farley agreed to contact the road crew via email.
Elinor also expressed concerns about lack of current volunteers for the knotweed work, specifically people from our membership and the community.
Nancy will follow up with the school principal at the HS in Craftsbury regarding students using the knotweed work to fulfill community service hours.
Diane expressed that we have fulfilled our goals with regard to the the original plan for this project—educating the public about how to manage knotweed on their properties and providing a demonstration site.
It was mentioned that Sterling College had three interns who helped with knotweed work and the Outdoor Center members also helped a great deal.

Nancy Milholland and Diane Morgan provided a review of Saturday's educational program—The teaching of iNaturalist by Finn Horak (a Sterling College Student) to a small

group of Craftsbury residents. Four people attended the event. It was noted what a good teacher Finn is and there was agreement about having future iNaturalist programs.

Nancy Milholland updated the group on Facebook. We currently have twenty-two followers and are working to build this up. Nancy mentioned the success of other Facebook pages in the area—specifically the Albany community sharing page, with close to five hundred followers. Nancy will obtain a QR code (with her daughter's help) the commission can share widely. Diane also thinks it would be wise to have Michelle Warren (Town Clerk) advertising our Facebook link on the Town of Craftsbury Facebook Page—Nancy agreed to follow up with Michelle on this. It was noted that there was little information on the Instagram and discussion over eliminating it—consensus was to keep it for the moment but not utilize or advertise it.

Farley reminded members of the upcoming Trees for Streams Tour in Craftsbury, Thursday August 28 3-6 pm showcasing some of the former projects our commission worked on. This is co-hosted with the Genny and the Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District.

Nancy mentioned the importance of coordinating with other organizations in our area for educational programming.

Diane Morgan said we should table the membership discussion for next meeting, but members should think about retention challenges and ways to attract new commission members.

Diane Morgan shared about a recent event through the Memphremagog Watershed Association (MWA) and proposed we ask them if MWA is willing to look at the erosion at the knotweed site. Farley agreed to follow up by email with someone she knows at MWA. Farley is currently on the board of MWA.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday September 15 7pm

Close of meeting at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Milholland

Two pages