

Atkinson Conservation Commission Minutes
Wednesday, June 24, 7:00 PM
Atkinson Town Hall

Approved July 22, 2026

Members Present Bill Steele, Chair John Fournier, Vice Chair Suzie Newman, Secretary Jeff Nenart Charlie Pitts Robin Doyle, Alternate Members Absent: Monique Chrétien George Murray Sandy Cannon, Alternate Erika Halaby, Alternate	Others Present David Jordan, Greenman-Pederson Inc. Selectman Paul Wainwright Catie Nenart
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1. Call to Order, and Attendance

Chair Steele called the Wednesday, June 24 2026 meeting of the Atkinson Conservation Commission to order at 7:02 PM. Chair Steele declared that a quorum was present.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes (previously distributed):

May 27, 2026 Meeting

Member Pitts made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2026 Atkinson Conservation Commission Meeting minutes as amended. Seconded by Member Nenart. Vote: 5/0/0.

3. Financial Report — Operating Budget and Donations Account

Secretary Newman said there were expenses for the recording secretary, the Kaya-Arm, and there was a small expense for the tree giveaway. She said there is \$10,929.52 remaining in the account.

4. 3 Pages Lane — Wetland Variance

Mr. Jordan said the owner wants to construct a detached garage on his property. He said the property was purchased earlier this year. He said a wetland scientist has reviewed the wetlands. He said the property survey shows the only location acceptable for the garage is at the end of the driveway which already sits within the 100 ft wetland buffer. He said the area is currently covered in grass.

Alternate Doyle arrived at 7:13 p.m.

Mr. Jordan presented an aerial photo of the area. He said no vegetation will be removed for the project except for a single tree. He said there will be a drip strip under the roof eaves to capture run-off to keep it from the wetland. He said there will be some grading needed in the area. He said he believes the project can be done without adversely affecting the wetlands. Chair Steele asked if there is a garage already on the property. Mr. Jordan said there is, it is attached to the house and this would be a additional garage that is detached from the house. He said an application for a variance has been submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals for approval. Chair Steele asked about the pavement within the buffer. Member Nenart said he believes there are other locations on the property where a garage could be located without the need for a variance. He also said he would be more comfortable if the garage was moved before the end of the pavement line. Chair Steele said he is concerned about the new structure being 35 ft from the wetlands. Secretary Newman asked why it was not located closer to the house and backyard on the side of the property. Mr. Jordan said it is because that is where the well is located. Mr. Jordan also said the garage was not pushed to before the pavement line because it is too close to the other garage and it would make it difficult for vehicles to back out of the garage. Chair Steele said the only option to avoid the need for the variance would be to push it way to the left which is not aesthetically pleasing.

Secretary Newman asked if this was the property that disrupted the stream. Vice Chair Steele said it is. Selectman Wainwright said nothing happened with that. Chair Steele said the Commission seems to believe the owner has more options for locations. Selectman Wainwright asked what this wetland connects to. Mr. Jordan said he is not sure what it connects to.

Chair Steele said the Commission would write a letter to the Zoning Board about its concerns. Mr. Jordan said he will bring these concerns to the owner. Chair Steele said the concerns are the proximity to the wetland and there are other location options that do not encroach on the buffer as much or require a variance. He said he will write the letter and share with the Commission for review.

5. Catie Nenart — Gold Award Project — Sponsorship

Miss Nenart said she is pursuing her Girl Scouts Gold Award project and is seeking sponsorship opportunities. She said the project was approved by the Girl Scout Council and she is able to move forward. She said she found a funding opportunity from UNH Taking Action for Wildlife for Conservation organizations. She said her project includes installing wildlife signs at the trails. She said she wants to install signs

at Sawyer and Slade trailheads and possibly Carolyn Orr or Saw Mill. She said these will be nice signs talking about the habitats along the trail as well as the native species and plants in these habitats. Chair Steele said this is useful because there are native species to these areas that are unique. He asked how the Commission can help with this sponsorship opportunity. Member Nenart said the Commission needs to fill out the form and there would be a meeting with the grantors. Member Nenart said it needs to be done by July 1.

Secretary Newman made a motion to submit an application on behalf of Miss Nenart. Member Pitts seconded the motion. Chair Steele said Alternate Doyle may vote on the motion. Member Nenart said he will abstain. Vote: 5/0/1.

6. Update on Tree Giveaway

Member Nenart said all the trees have been given away.

7. Update on LWCF Inspections

Chair Steele said he received a last-minute warning on this inspection. Selectman Wainwright said the Town was active in spending the LWCF money in the 1980s. He said landowners accepted 50 percent of the appraised value as payment and the other 50 percent would be counted as a donation. He said LWCF paid for the 50 percent cost. He said LWCF properties include Slade, Marshall, Sawyer, Woodlawn, Crown Hill, Stickney and Woodlock. Selectman Wainwright said LWCF usually inspects every five years, but it has been about 10 years since the last inspection.

Vice Chair Fournier said every property is supposed to have a LWCF sign which the Town does not have at every site. He said he now has signs that need to be installed. He said a small one was found at Woodlock. He also said LWCF was concerned about the encroachments at Marshall in the Boulder Cove Road area. He said the inspector was concerned about visible paths from private properties going onto these properties. He said the inspector will put all recommendations in a report. Selectman Wainwright said the inspector also seemed concerned about the brush dump at Woodlock, but he said this was not part of the LWCF money. Member Pitts asked if there was an agreement to get trail approval before being installed. Vice Chair Fournier said LWCF is supposed to be more recreation-driven than Conservation. Chair Steele said the Commission will review the inspector's report when it is completed.

8. Encroachment updates

Selectman Wainwright said he would like to discuss the McPherson encroachments in nonpublic session. Member Pitts said he would be going out tomorrow with the Department of Public Works Director to double-check the drill holes at Boulder Cove Road for the Conservation posts to be installed. Selectman Wainwright said the posts with the emblems are available at his home. Chair Steele said he will review the progress on the Lakeside Drive encroachments.

9. Maps status

Chair Steele said Alternate Halaby wrote a letter with some questions. Selectman Wainwright thought there was an abundance of maps and brought receipts of what was purchased last year. He said he spoke with the person who had previously been refilling the maps at the trails and they said they are all gone. Selectman Wainwright listed some options for printers but said they need to be on special paper.

Recording Secretary Gretchen Grosky said the Essex County Sheriff's Department offers printing services and the only cost is the paper. Chair Steele asked her to find out if there is limit on types of papers and whether they can be folded.

Chair Steele said the Commission should make a motion to spend up to a certain amount for printing. He asked how much was spent last year. Selectman Wainwright said the cost was about \$1,200. Secretary Newman said there is already a budget line for printing which has \$952.

Member Nenart made a motion to spend up to \$952 to print new trail maps. Seconded by Member Pitts. Vote: 6/0/0.

Chair Steele requested Selectman Wainwright research the type of paper.

Chair Steele said one of the questions Alternate Halaby had was whether there are separate maps for North and South Sawmill. Selectman Wainwright said it is an area where a new map is probably needed. Chair Steele said the trail is not really used and asked the Commission to table the issue.

Chair Steele also said Alternate Halaby asked for confirmation on the locations of the maps. Secretary Newman suggested created a checklist for the trails to ensure action items have been completed. Member Pitts said he would create the checklist with Alternate Cannon.

10. Update of status of Kayak Launch.

Chair Steele said the Kaya-Arm has been installed. He said he did try it and said it was easy to use and helpful. He said the arm can be adjusted for ease of use. He said he printed and laminated instructions on how to use it and posted it at the dock and the kiosk. Secretary Newman said she can also post instructions on the Commission's Facebook page. Selectman Wainwright asked if it needs to be removed in the winter. Chair Steele said the platform may need to be removed but it could remain.

11. Wildlife-Friendly Culvert Update

Selectman Wainwright said there was a progress report earlier in the day and things are moving along. He said the documentation is being drawn up for the two neighbors who agreed to provide easements. He said the next step is permitting with NHDES. He said he expects that to start in early July. He said the Commission will need to

approve the permit applications at its August meeting. He said a survey will be required of each side of the culvert for Conservation covenants.

12. Slade All-Persons Trail Update

Vice Chair Fournier said he still needs to complete the kiosk and is coming up with designs. He said it is donated by the Atkinson Women's Club. He said another priority is signage for no bicycles or e-bikes at locations other than the parking lot. He said the trail cams are showing some violators who are coming in from other locations including Pope Road and the HOA. He said he would like to install signs at the gate and Route 121. He said benches are needed and there needs to be some trail maintenance. Member Pitts asked about the benches. Vice Chair Fournier said they need to be ADA compliant. He said the Commission approved two, but he will be requesting two more.

13. Other Trails Issues?

Chair Steele said Alternate Cannon provided a list of fallen trees on trails. He said he will try and get to them this weekend. He said a tree fell on Knightland on Conservation land. He said it will be the Town's responsibility to take care of and has referred to the officials to determine what course of action to take. Selectman Wainwright said he believes it will take a crane to remove it. He also said it is not the Board of Selectmen's responsibility, and any costs would come out of the Conservation Commission's budget. He said it comes down to the liability insurance and whether it is more costly to remove the tree or pay for damage if it fell.

Selectman Wainwright said he has been perambulating the Chadwick Town Forest. He said the Commission's property monuments with Sawmill Ridge were never set. He said he has also been mapping stone walls.

Member Pitts asked about the new portion of Conservation land approved by voters and whether the yellow signs on the property should be taken down. Chair Steele said the Commission decided to leave the property as is.

14. Any Troop 9 News

Member Pitts said the Troop 9 has been busy. He said the pollinator event was successful. Chair Steele said there are service hours that are available. Member Pitts said the Scouts will be available over the summer.

15. Other Business

Secretary Newman said the Planning Board has requested the Conservation Commission come before the Board to discuss Master Plan Conservation items. She said the dates that were offered were August 5 and August 19. She said two Commission members need to attend. Chair Steele said he is available August 19. Secretary Newman and Vice Chair Fournier said they are also available.

16. Nonpublic Session

Vice Chair Fournier made a motion to go into nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3, II(e). Vote: 6/0/0. Roll Call vote. Voting Yes: Chair Steele, Vice Chair Fournier, Secretary Newman, Member Pitts, Member Nenart, and Alternate Doyle.

Secretary Newman made a motion to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session until July 2028. Seconded by Member Nenart. Vote: 6/0/0.

17. Next regular meetings: July 22 and August 26, 2026.

18. Hold the date:

- Atkinson Day: September 12, 2026.
- NHACC Annual Conference: Saturday, November 7, 2026

19. Adjournment

Chair Steele adjourned the meeting at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Grosky, Recording Clerk

Attachments: