

WESTFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION DRAFT MINUTES

– MAY 20, 2026 6:00 PM –

WESTFORD TOWN OFFICE

WCC members present: Kirsten Tyler, Joel Fay, Elizabeth Ploof, Elias Rosenblatt

Members of the public: None

6:00 PM:

Meeting called to order

Review and approval of April meeting minutes

- ER moved to approve, JF seconded, unanimous approval

Changes to agenda

- None

6:05 PM:

Public comment - None

6:10 PM:

UVM capstone project report – Kyle Buck (tentative) - Tabled until June meeting

Report back from Maple Shade drainage assessment with WNRCD

JF and ER met with a representative from the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District (WNRCD), a representative from Forest, Recreation, and Parks (FRP), and a consulting forester to see if WCC would be eligible for funding for trails with poor drainage in Maple Shade Town Forest (MSTF). The wet trails are not strong candidates for this funding, not enough of a problem from a phosphorus contribution standpoint. Suggestions for mitigating wet trails include hand cleaning of waterbars, and/or rerouting some trail sections to separate skid trails from hiking trails.

During the visit WCC members and visiting experts flagged black locust seedlings on the entrance of MSTF that are expanding into the field. The consulting forester noticed a few invasive species in the meadow along the MSTF access trail, potentially buckthorn. JF went with consulting forester to look at Japanese Knotweed patches on Riverside North Trail (Misty Meadows/School trails network), and determined that this small patch is manageable with cutting and treatment over a 2-year period. JF and consulting forester also looked at the larger patches near the Pigeon property and the covered bridge. RKT and JF noted that another patch exists behind the Historical Society building. The WCC was in unanimous agreement that Japanese knotweed removal along the Brown's river corridor should be on the town's radar, as mitigation efforts will become increasingly difficult.

Next steps include:

- Wait for quote from consulting forester for knotweed removal (will be sent to WCC)
- RKT to contact Will Dunkley

- Once we have quotes for work, ask for issue to be added to a selectboard agenda for making the selectboard aware of the issue
- ER to invite the county forester to attend the selectboard meeting for public outbreak and to field questions

Watershed grant – progress and next steps

EP reported that some classroom resources and materials exist, as well as appropriate units for use of Watershed Grant funding for educational purposes, but more digging on additional material needs to happen. WCC as a whole that adding an additional focus on invasive species would be particularly appropriate.

Trail conditions and maintenance updates

- WCC will pick a date to clean out water bars – June 19th (June 26th as alternate)
- RKT to reach out to SB about load of gravel

Spring trail maintenance day – tabled.

6:50 PM: - Other business

Newsletter items - ER to make newsletter contributions, and highlight UVM-WES collaboration with student contributions from EP's class. Also include trail aware and tick content.

7:05 - ER moved to adjourn, RKT seconded, unanimous approval.