

46 cost could fluctuate. The Warrant Article will be written for \$240,000, which he will
47 present at the Town Meeting.

48
49 The Commission discussed how much they would be willing to contribute to this project.
50 Ms. Snyder noted the Wason Pond Commission was appreciative of the Conservation
51 Commission's willingness to contribute. Mr. Tranquillo asked if the funds would be
52 jeopardized if the voters do not pass the Warrant Article and the project is delayed for a
53 year. Chair Chouinard will ask if the grant can be deferred.

54
55 Mr. Broadwater expressed concern that as the budget is challenging this year, the Article
56 might not pass. He also said that this is a safety issue. So, he suggested the Commission
57 pay for the entire cost. They discussed outstanding expenses and if the Commission can
58 afford to pay for the entire cost. Due to outstanding offers on real estate, they agreed to
59 continue discussing priorities in a non-public session and determine an amount to
60 contribute.

61 62 **C. Wason Pond Invasive Plant Management**

63
64 Mr. Tranquillo reported that Arianna at the Rockingham County Conservation District
65 (RCCD) compiled a phased management plan for invasive plants. He shared this
66 information with the Commission.

67
68 Mr. Tranquillo said the Commission has made a considerable investment in the initial
69 treatment of these plants and they need to decide if they wish to commit to this project
70 long term.

71
72 Ms. Snyder noted a management plan would need to be approved by the Wason Pond
73 Commission (WPC) and the Board of Selectmen. She noted some of the WPC members
74 are concerned about the use of specific herbicides, but are otherwise supportive of the
75 project.

76
77 Mr. Cejtin asked about sensitive habitats in other locations. Ms. Munson noted the
78 invasives situation will not improve on any of the Town properties without being
79 addressed.

80
81 Chair Chouinard shared that he is discouraged with the results of both the treated and the
82 mowed areas at Wason Pond. Mr. Tranquillo added Moosewood Ecological
83 recommended developing a planting program to replace the invasives with native plants.
84 Ms. Munson noted areas that were replanted in the past were overcome with invasives.
85 The Commission discussed alternative methods for dealing with invasives, including
86 pulling plants with tools and tractors.

87
88 Chairman Chouinard suggested clearing a small test area, then soliciting volunteers from
89 the community to participate in continued removal. Mr. Broadwater suggested hiring
90 individuals, but Chair Chouinard noted they would need to be insured. Mr. Broadwater

91 will consult Recreation Director Reishus regarding this, as she hires college students for
92 the summer program.

93
94 Ms. Munson recommended having an expert oversee the removal process. Ms. Theokas
95 asked if the Commission would be willing to fund part of the salary of Town employees
96 to do this work. Chair Chouinard said they would need to be properly supervised.

97
98 Mr. Tranquillo suggested retreating the treated area, as recommended by RCCD. He
99 would need to obtain a new estimate from RCCD for this.

100
101 *Ms. Broadwater moved to conditionally approve a second round of invasives treatment*
102 *for the area treated during the first round, up to \$6,500. Mr. Tranquillo seconded the*
103 *motion.*

104
105 Ms. Munson suggested asking RCCD if this approach would be detrimental to the entire
106 project. Mr. Cejtin suggested asking RCCD if there are hybrid options to maximize the
107 effectiveness. Mr. Broadwater noted this approach would limit the amount of chemicals
108 being used. Chair Chouinard recommended obtaining an estimate from RCCD and if it is
109 reasonable, the Commission can meet out of cycle to approve the expenditure and present
110 it to the WPC. The Commission agreed.

111
112 The motion was tabled.

113 114 **D. Moosewood Contract Work Updates**

115
116 Mr. Tranquillo shared an update from Moosewood Ecological. The Commission
117 discussed scheduling a public information session/forum to present an overview of the
118 project moving forward. Mr. Tranquillo noted this could be done in conjunction with the
119 Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission. Ms. Snyder said Chester PACT can
120 record and broadcast the event. Mr. Tranquillo suggested sending a postcard to the
121 residents advertising the event.

122
123 Chair Chouinard asked Mr. Tranquillo to obtain more information from Moosewood
124 regarding their expectations for and the format of this event.

125 126 **E. Business Cards / Banner**

127
128 **Business Cards:** The Commission discussed a phrase to put on generic business cards
129 with the seal and the Conservation Commission's email address. The Commission
130 discussed using the term Stewards of, Conserving, and Protecting.

131
132 *Ms. Theokas moved to add the phrase, "Stewards of Chester's open space and natural*
133 *resources since 1986," to the Conservation Commission business cards. Ms. Munson*
134 *seconded the motion. A vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion carried*
135 *unanimously.*

137 **Banner:** The Commission agreed a banner is needed for identification at tabling events.
138 Mr. Tranquillo shared potential designs and the Commission agreed on one, with
139 modifications. Chair Chouinard asked Mr. Tranquillo to bring another sample to the
140 Commission.

141

142 **F. 2024 Warrant Articles**

143

144 Chair Chouinard reviewed the parcels that will be presented in Warrant Articles at the
145 Town Meeting: North Woods lot (7-60), North Pond parcel (5-31), Exeter River parcel
146 (9-80-1), and Candia Road parcel (7-29-1). He recommended putting off the remaining
147 Exeter River parcels until next year. He and Town Administrator Doda will begin
148 drafting the Articles.

149

150 **G. Outreach Event Discussion**

151

152 Ms. Snyder said times are needed for the flyer advertising the Moosewood Ecological
153 nature walks. The time for the walk during the Winter Fest has already been set (12 to 2
154 p.m.). The other walks are scheduled for April 22, Earth Day at Wason Pond; August 3 at
155 Wason Pond; and September 21, Fall Fest at Spring Hill Farm. The Commission agreed
156 on 10 a.m. to noon on April 22; 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. on August 3; and 12 to 2 p.m. on
157 September 21.

158

159 Ms. Snyder said a presentation on Lyme disease is scheduled at the Sandown Public
160 Library on April 13th at 11:00 a.m. She suggested the Commission support this event.

161

162 **H. Easement Language Update**

163

164 Chair Chouinard proposed holding a workshop to update the easement language. Mr.
165 Tranquillo noted that boilerplate needs to be created as well. The workshop was
166 scheduled for March 20th at 6:00 p.m. in the Rangeway.

167

168 **I. Master Plan Kickoff Meeting**

169

170 Chair Chouinard reported the Master Plan Kickoff Meeting will be held on March 4th
171 from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. and invited the members to attend.

172

173 Ms. Theokas noted it would be interesting to consult with conservation commissions in
174 fully built-out communities that are in a maintenance phase to learn how their strategies
175 differ. She believes Chester's Conservation Commission's mission will transition over the
176 next ten years, in terms of maintaining properties and managing natural areas.

177

178 **III. Regular Business**

179

180 **A. Treasurer's Report**

181

182 In Ms. Neff Ragsdale's absence, Chair Chouinard presented the Treasurer's Report for
183 January:
184

185 *Working budget as of 1/31/24:*

186 \$ 1,001.00 starting balance
187 836.85 expenses (miscellaneous and printing)
188 \$ 164.15 balance
189

190 *Savings account:*

191 \$ 80,000.00 debit in
192 14,500.00 book transfer debit
193 14,250.00 current use
194 14,250.00 current use
195 \$ 94,250.00 closing balance
196

197 *Conservation Forestry account:*

198 \$ 1,520.43 starting balance
199 4.12 interest
200 \$ 1,524.55 ending balance
201

202 *Emerson Conservation Easement:*

203 \$ 295.29 starting balance
204 00.80 interest
205 \$ 296.09 ending balance
206

207 *Conservation Forestry CD: (5.35%)*

208 \$ 42,079.86 starting balance
209 155.30 interest
210 24.87 interest
211 \$ 42,260.03 ending balance
212

213 *Emerson Conservation Easement CD: (5.35%)*

214 \$ 10,520.01 starting balance
215 38.83 interest
216 6.17 interest
217 \$ 10,565.01 ending balance
218

219 *Regular Conservation account CD: (5.35%)*

220 \$ 557,287.42 starting balance
221 2,056.77 interest
222 326.74 interest
223 \$ 559,670.93 ending balance
224

225 *Conservation account CD:*

226 \$ 181,770.74 starting balance
227 597.16 interest

228 \$ 182,367.90 ending balance

229

230 *Mr. Broadwater moved to accept the January Treasurer's Report as presented. Mr.*
231 *Tranquillo seconded the motion. A vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion*
232 *passed unanimously.*

233

234 **B. Spring Hill Farm**

235

236 Ms. Snyder said the next meeting will be on Monday, February 19th, at 7:00 p.m. There
237 will be a working meeting for the Winter Fest at 6:00 p.m. Winter Fest will be on
238 February 24th.

239

240 She reported Chair Chouinard and Ms. Munson joined her on a walk at Spring Hill Farm
241 on a trail that has potential as a fitness trail.

242

243 **C. Wason Pond Conservation Area**

244

245 Chair Chouinard noted the tree-cutting project is on hold, as New Hampshire Fish &
246 Game has not given permission. He said any hazardous trees can be removed. Ms.
247 Snyder added the individual responsible for cutting the trees cannot access the area, so
248 all tree removal is on hold.

249

250 **D. Easements, Monitoring, and Stewardship**

251

252 Chair Chouinard said RCCD originally provided a boilerplate estimate to monitor
253 Jenkins Farm, which was inaccurate. The Commission agreed to request a new estimate
254 that includes everything. He suggested visiting the Town-owned strip of land behind the
255 homes to review the situation, i.e. are the bounds marked. Mr. Broadwater believes there
256 are infractions and suggested moving forward with this quickly. Ms. Theokas asked if
257 the residents will be notified of this visit and Chair Chouinard agreed this should be
258 done. They will tentatively visit the property on Saturday, February 17.

259

260 Ms. Theokas said Building Inspector Bunker sent everyone in open-space developments
261 rules regarding the exterior limitations in October. She will provide the Commission
262 with a copy of this.

263

264 **IV. Plan Reviews**

265

266 None

267

268 **V. Miscellaneous Business**

269

270 Chair Chouinard reported the Eversource donation has been received.

271

272 Chair Chouinard suggested creating a calendar or a to-do list to keep track of tasks.

273

274 **VI. Non-Public Session**

275

276 A non-public hearing was scheduled under RSA 91 A:3, II(c), Matters which, if discussed in
277 public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of
278 this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend
279 to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other
280 levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

281

282 *Mr. Broadwater made a motion to go into a non-public session under RSA 91 A:3, II(c),*
283 *Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any*
284 *person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting.*
285 *Ms. Snyder seconded the motion. A vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion passed*
286 *unanimously.*

287

288 The Conservation Commission went into non-public session at 8:22 p.m.

289 The Conservation Commission came out of non-public session.

290

291 **VII. Adjourn**

292

293 *A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken. All were in*
294 *favor. The motion passed unanimously.*

295

296 The meeting was adjourned.

297

298 Respectfully submitted,

299 Beth Hanggeli, Recording Secretary