

Norwich Conservation Commission DRAFT January 2026 Minutes
January 20, 2026
7:00 PM Norwich Historical Society

Attending: Lynnwood Andrews, Alex Gottlieb, Peg Merrens, Craig Layne, Lindsay Putnam, Chris Rimmer, Andy Torkelson, Cody Williams.

Agenda Discussion:

1. Topics not on posted agenda:
 - a. We will need a replacement for Michael Loots who will be resigning in March. Selectboard will hear from applicants sometime in March. We should watch for that on the agenda.
 - b. Craig reports that we need to pay annual dues to Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions. \$50. Being a member gives us opportunity to apply for mini-grants. Also, they have a listserv which we can join and stay abreast of State-wide topics. Craig moved to pay dues for 2026, Lynnwood seconded the motion. Motion passed.
 - c. Trout Unlimited sent information about possible grants for small projects in riparian areas, which we should give some thought to.
2. Listserv posts and public outreach:
 - a. Lindsay will make a post office display about spotted lantern fly. The fly particularly likes Tree of Heaven, which is an invasive species as well as host to the fly. Must do a cut stump treatment to eliminate the tree as they heavily stump sprout.
 - b. Lynnwood attended winter road maintenance webinar and has interesting information about this important topic.
3. Road Salt Reduction Efforts:
 - a. VT has 2 bills about reduction: brining (which prevents ice from sticking to the road), different spreading and applying techniques. Excess salt results in poisoning of wells, wetlands, riparian vegetation, frogs and other wetland species. Calcium chloride brine is applied to gravel roads in summer to keep dust down. This is also a problem. Should NCC try to influence town policies about this locally? Or wait for the State to make a statewide decision? Lynnwood suggests we have a listserv post to educate people about the environmental concerns. The post would mention that if people are interested in the topic, they should write their legislator. Peg mentions that Hanover spreads brine before storms and that we might investigate what they are doing. Andy will write something about the bills in the House and Senate for us to post on the listserv. Alex suggests we should advise the SB about this topic with factual details. Lynnwood suggests writing up something for the SB based on the facts she has learned.
4. Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions is having a potluck in Thetford on Feb 19. Thetford CC and other organizations will attend. We are encouraged to attend and to

give ideas about topics we would like addressed as regional conservation commissions. Goal is for people to meet, share ideas and knowledge, promote future collaboration. Peg, Lynnwood, Andy, Craig are interested.

5. Milt Frye Nature Area: Lynnwood will move forward on installing shelving in the Rec Dept shed. We had earlier approved \$160.
6. Trails: Cody reports that during recent ice storms, Doug, Bob and Jim worked on removing debris. All previously mentioned work projects are still on the table and in the cue.
7. Emerald Ash Borer Subcommittee:
 - a. Doug Hardy is making a list of landowners with trees evaluated by EABMS members. These people will need to receive and need to return the form for permission to cut ash on the portion of their property which is in the Town ROW.
 - b. We aim to get an RFP out to contractors by end of February. Tree cutting will hopefully start in April.
 - c. Warrant article asking for voters to approve funds (\$60,000) for additional cutting of roadside ash trees in FY 2027 will be on the ballot at March Town Meeting.
 - d. Question of where to put logs and chips: We have two promising options, both on private properties along Union Village Road.
 - e. Prior to town meeting last year, the EABMS requested funding for ash removals only within the road ROWs – a 25' strip owned by landowners but controlled by the Town. However, we have evaluated a small number of trees just outside the ROW which are leaning far over the road, and thus very dangerous; with a public safety mandate, EABMS is seeking to resolve this.
 - f. The letter to landowners points out that private removal of hazardous ash trees identified on their parcel will "stretch" Town monies toward additional removals that we likely cannot otherwise afford in this first round of removals.
8. December minutes
 - a. The December minutes were moved for approval; Lynnwood seconded the motion.
 - b. December minutes approved unanimously.