

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting

January 22, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Alice Ingerson, chairing, David Backer, Barbara Bates, Peter Barrer, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Kim Devore, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Chris Hepburn, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Susan Lyon, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Jon Regosin, Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Alice welcomed the participants at 7:05 pm.
2. **Land and People Statement.** Barbara gave her land and people statement: What does it mean to acknowledge the land on which we meet?
For me, personally, it means to salute the ways the open spaces and nature in Newton sustain me and to acknowledge my responsibilities to that land. Yes, land provides the basics of life: shelter, food, and much of the oxygen we breathe, but it also sustains my spirit with beauty and wonder as it teaches me resilience, and so much more. I joined the Board of Newton Conservators because I love nature and I believe that if people love something, they work willingly to protect it.
So - I acknowledge the tiny creatures that steward plain dirt into soil, the not so tiny creatures who build ecosystems in a wondrous web of interdependent life, and the Massachusetts people who understood and still understand how to live reciprocally with this land.
I also acknowledge others who currently steward the land we meet upon in different ways: members of our Board, past & present, who work tirelessly to protect Newton open spaces legally, who designed and built websites to promote the open spaces and educate people on all things nature, who create & deliver educational webinars, workshops, and newsletters, who lead walks introducing people to nature and our open spaces, who marshal volunteers to fight the invasive plants threatening to overrun our native ecosystems, and who serve as our Presidents, VPs, Treasurers, and Secretaries who manage in the background to support all these other efforts.
For the land and for all of you, I am grateful.
3. **Calendar Review.** Alice reviewed the event calendar and encouraged people to enter their events on it. She also asked directors to contact Susan about scheduling walks.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Alice asked if anyone wanted to move items to the discussion agenda. Katherine wanted to discuss the Almanac after her Treasurer's report. Alice then moved approval of the Consent Agenda, which passed unanimously. (See Attachment B.)
5. **Potential New Directors.** Alice solicited suggestions for new directors. None were forthcoming.
6. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine had previously requested comments on the 2025 Budget. She presented the 2024 year-end report, which was also previously distributed. The balance sheet was \$71,000 favorable for 2024, which was partly due to unrealized profit from our equity holdings and two \$5000 donations and several \$1000 gifts. She reported on all the large transactions. We have \$330,000 in a stock market indexed fund. The budget for 2025 is similar to that of 2024. The program budget holds \$1000 for webinar speakers. Barbara complimented the helpful formatting of the report, which included explanations by line. Katherine's suggested budget for reprinting the Almanac is an estimate, assuming a 50% increase from the 2009 printing. There is a 50% increase in the budget for the Almanac. Barbara also suggested that Katherine might meet with the new board members to go over the intricacies of the budget. Barbara moved to approve the report and the budget, which passed unanimously with the final version included in the minutes.
7. **Annual Almanac.** Katherine remarked the almanac does not sell well, which may be because book buyers do not understand what an almanac is. A change to the title was suggested with an indication that it is a Companion Guide to Walking Trails in Newton. Katherine requested volunteers who might want to work on the almanac with her. Henry volunteered to help with

photography. Pat Robinson, Barbara, Ken and Beth will also help with the formatting. Katherine found that the owner of Signal Graphics still has the printing files used for the last edition.

8. **Spring Walks.** Susan said that she had five walks and two bioblitzes lined up for the spring, which she will forward to Ken for the Newsletter. Alice asked when the Cold Spring Park bioblitz was scheduled. Jon said that most bioblitzes were flexible as to date. Barbara requested the times of the bioblitzes as she might be able to assist on some. Katherine volunteered to lead the walk on May 10. Jon said he might focus a bioblitz on pollinating insects during the year.
9. **2025 Annual Meeting.** Earlier in the meeting Chris mentioned that the Wampanoag Nation Singers and Dancers might be considered for the program of a future annual meeting. Alice has updated the list of awards for the meeting and requested nominees for Environmentalist of the Year. She suggested that someone who has bridged the gap between the environment and housing might be a good choice. Greg Maslowe's talk about "Community Farms, Open Space and a Very Old Debate" may include an overview of ways land can be used for other ways than passive recreation, such as farming. Chris suggested that Jon's introduction of Greg could provide an overview of how the Conservators contributed to the founding of the Newton Community Farm.
10. **Policy on Accepting Donated Land and Conservation Restrictions.** Chris discussed the previously circulated criteria for accepting donations of land and conservation restrictions. Accepting a Conservation Restriction or property should be in accord with goals in the Newton Open Space Plan. There was considerable discussion of the two alternatives (1A and 1B) offered in the proposal. Chris summarized Alternative 1B as allowing the Conservators to accept small pieces of land without a CR if there is an endowment and the land meets our other criteria. Alice and Barbara emphasized that the only way to permanently preserve land is a perpetual CR approved by the State. Barbara also stated that we should not accept full ownership of land, as would be allowed under Alternative 1B. Alice said that we should not promote the tax benefits of land or CR donations, just as we've agreed not to offer legal advice. Revised wordings were suggested, and it was agreed that a compromise between 1A and 1B would be submitted at the next meeting. Items 2, 3 and 4 were unanimously approved as is.
11. **Edmands Park Off-Leash Proposal.** Ken shared a copy of the Edmands Park Master Plan onscreen. Considerable concern was expressed about what would happen to all of Edmands Park if off-leash access were allowed, even if it was only allowed in the meadow area. Only three of the group thought that off-leash dogs should be considered at all. Some noted the lack of enforcement of on-leash protocols as there are already many off-leash dogs in many parks, including Edmands. Ted said the Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG) will meet again on February 7 to consolidate the information received and begin formulating a recommendation that, after other meetings with the stakeholders, would be submitted to the Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC). Barbara led discussion of the letter she, Peter Barrer and Pete Gilmore had drafted for Board discussion. Alice suggested the letter be shortened and focus clearly on our reasons for opposing the use of Edmunds Park in its entirety by off-leash dogs. Several members also wanted to oppose the alternative of a conventional, smaller off-leash area in Edmunds Park. In response to Alice, Ted confirmed that this has not been proposed, and the Board agreed not to raise it at this time. After further discussion, Barbara proposed that the authors of the draft letter send Alice a shorter version, Alice would solicit and incorporate any final Board edits, then send a final version signed by Alice and Nyssa to Nicole Banks and Ahron Lerman, asking them to forward it to OLAWG before February 7. All present were in favor except for Ted, who voted nay.
12. **Mail Chimp.** The work on incorporating the 1300 names available into appropriate mailing lists is progressing. As the meeting was running long, detailed discussion was deferred to February.

13. Adjournment. Alice declared adjournment at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: January Consent Agenda,

Newton Conservators consent agenda for January 2025 Executive Committee & Board meetings		as of 9 am, 20 Jan 2025 (2 pages + attachments)
SUBMISSION DEADLINES	5 pm Sun Jan 12 for Wed. Jan 15 Executive Committee 5 pm Sun. Jan 19 for Wed. Jan 22 full Board	
<u>Conservators programs, projects</u>		
Minutes (Mike C.)		
See attachment B1.		
Treasurer's Report (Katherine)		
The 2024 financials and 2025 budget will be presented at the meeting. Almanac reprinting topic will be mentioned at the meeting.		
1099s, due by Jan 31, have been issued using IRS's new online portal for entering informational forms. This will be a big improvement as the previous paper forms were subject to data entry error by the IRS.		
Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)		
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)		
All the CR's are in now! Thanks to all. Formal letters are now in progress to the City and Fietes.		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)		
Grants (Jon, Nyssa)		
Invasives (Katherine)		
I and a few volunteers will get going shortly with winter work on bittersweet and woody shrubs.		
Media & Publicity incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media (Ted, Beth, others?)		
Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine)		
Mailchimp implementation is proceeding. The synching/ integration between LGL and Mailchimp is working. Next steps are to (1) add more tags and (2) use Mailchimp for our next ebulletin.		
Newsletter (Ken)		
Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)		
Newton Public Schools curriculum unit(s) (Ted, Nyssa)		
Trail Guide (Dan B.)		
Walks (Susan) & Other Events (Ted, Alice)		
See Walks Coordinator Susan Lyon's tentative list of spring walks as separate attachment in this packet. Full walks info. for spring newsletter due in January for listing in spring newsletter.		
Jr. Girl Scout troop that meets at Auburndale Library has requested a visit from us on Sunday May 18, 4:30-6 pm. Request that began as "talk to the girls about your role in Newton" now includes requesting suggestions for hands-on activities for 9-yr-olds, such "building a small bird house ... planting cosmos and milkweed seeds if the library management agrees ... " See emails to date as attachment B2. (Alice)		
Webinars (Beth)		
Barbara's webinar on Animals Looking for Love will take place on Thursday, February 14. The Spring webinar series is all set, too. Julie Zickefoose, the author of wonderful books <i>Saving Jemima</i> and <i>Baby Birds</i> , will present a webinar on "Uncommon Bonds with Common Birds" on March 27 (for a fee of \$300). We'll publicize it heavily, and it should be a		

great draw. On April 3, Mass DAR environmental biologist Jenn Forman-Orth and state entomologist Doug Bidlack will jointly present a webinar on mosquitos. In May, Max Rome of CRWA will talk about the stormwater changes coming to Cheesecake Brook. According to Luis, “The city has a contract with CRWA on community engagement around the improvements to the Cheesecake Brook.” (At some point, it would be good to hear about the stormwater system improvements planned throughout Newton.)

City & state programs , projects, issues

Conservation Commission (Dan G.)

Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth, Ted)

On January 21, the CRWA will do a hybrid presentation on “Stormwater Solutions Coming to Cheesecake Brook” about the project that they will do in conjunction with the City: “an infiltration system for Albemarle Field and bank re-planting and stormwater best management practices for a section of the brook.” The P&R Commission did not meet in December and will meet next on 1/27.

CRs – pending or to be requested (Alice)

Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)

Bees on Newton public land (Jon)

Tree ordinance (Alice, Beth, Katherine, Bill)

Friends Groups updates

Native Fish Council people continue their interest in Cold Spring Park with another site visit on 1/20/25 to map out original streams. They will also be collaborating with CRWA on plans for Cheesecake Brook.

other City updates

See Beth’s notes under “webinars” above: According to Luis, “The city has a contract with CRWA on community engagement around the improvements to the Cheesecake Brook.” At some point, it would be good to hear about the stormwater system improvements planned throughout Newton.

Other items

State legislation

Other responsibilities are perpetual, including maintenance (such as ongoing removal of invasive species), monitoring (required annually) and, when necessary, legal action for enforcement.

- As a small, all-volunteer organization, Newton Conservators cannot cover these costs. Expenses for land or restrictions to be held by a public agency may be covered by combining public funds, such as those provided by the Community Preservation Act, with private donations. Donors who choose not to, or cannot, access public funding must cover one-time costs directly and provide an endowment to cover perpetual costs.

2. Accepting CRs on City or State-owned properties

(This policy would need to be spelled out and added to Alt. #A. It is already included in Alt. #B.)

The subcommittee recommends no changes in the Conservators current policy of accepting and holding CRs on City or State properties, as long as they come with an appropriate endowment for monitoring and potential legal enforcement expenses.

3. Accepting donations of CRs on private properties

(This policy would need to be added to Alt. #A. Most of its points are already included in Alt. #B.)

The Conservators acceptance of CRs on non-City held parcels should be a very rare exception. Normally such CRs should be held by the City, DCR or other public agency. As with donations of land (described above), non-City CRs accepted by the Conservators need to meet both Conservators priorities and policies and state requirements. For example, they must be for the public good with the property important for conservation or open space and open to public access. The donor of the CR needs to fund and carry out all legal work required to place a CR on the property. In other words, the Conservators will only accept the CR once it has been completed and approved by the state. In addition, the donor should provide an endowment for future monitoring and potential legal enforcement work.

4. Conservators offer to help people obtain a CR on the website

(This policy must be added to either Alt. #A or Alt. #B.)

Because the CR granting process has become very rigorous and the Conservators lack the necessary legal expertise in this area, we should remove much of the current language on our website offering to help land owners obtain CRs on their properties. Instead, we should urge landowners to obtain their own legal advice from conservation or land attorneys.

However, we can provide on our website a list of reputable organizations' websites that offer information on obtaining CRs and that provide lists of qualified attorneys who may help landowners with CRs. Such organizations include: Mass Land Trust Coalition, Mass Audubon, Sudbury Valley Trustees, Lincoln Land Trust, Association of Mass Conservation Commissions, etc.

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting

February 26, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Alice Ingerson, chairing, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Chris Hepburn, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Susan Lyon, Ted Kuklinski, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Jon Regosin, Larry Smith, and Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Alice welcomed the participants at 7:02 pm.
2. **Land and People Statement.** There was no Land and People Statement due to the discussion of this topic later in these minutes.
3. **Calendar Review.** Alice remarked that the spring schedule was especially busy with tabling events. Jon asked whether it was possible to put items on the online calendar directly. Alice said that either she, Nyssa or Alicia would have to post it.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Alice asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment B) to the discussion agenda. Barbara queried as to whether the land and stewardship statement would need links to references. The consent agenda was approved unanimously. Alice added a discussion of a remembrance of Eric Reenstierna to “revisiting the consent agenda” at the end of the meeting.
5. **Potential New Directors.** Alice solicited suggestions for new directors and noted the need for additional people. None were forthcoming.
6. **2025 Annual Meeting.** Katherine thought that those who led birding walks should be given special recognition. These include Pete Gilmore, Haynes Miller, Alison Leary, and Liane Harnett. Ted Kuklinski will contact them for the Charles Maynard Johnson Award and introduce them at the meeting. Katherine suggested honoring the Newton Community Farm (NCF) Board and Staff in their 20th year for the Environmentalist of the Year Award. Peter Barrer, a previous NCF Board President, will be asked to contact the awardees and introduce them at the meeting. Jon will coordinate with the speaker, Greg Maslowe, and introduce him, perhaps including a brief history of the NCF and the Conservators' contribution to NCF's founding.

Policy on Accepting Donated Land and Conservation Restrictions. Barbara requested two changes be made by inserting “very” before “rare cases” and insert that we abide by “the state of Massachusetts requirements” in place of “our own criteria”. Chris responded that the State of Massachusetts requirements appear to favor large plots and not the smaller ones, such as those we maintain. Katherine said that in order to become an accredited land trust we would need to have our own criteria for accepting donated land and CRs. Alice moved approval of the attached document with the insertion of the word “very” before “rare cases” and removal of the phrase “both the Conservators and priorities and policies last updated in 2004” (statement as adopted is Attachment D). Barbara seconded. The motion passed unanimously except for Susan who abstained.

In going forward: Chris Hepburn will draft a revised, shorter version of the [Conservators' land acquisition priorities and policies](#) (last updated 2004) for Board discussion. Katherine will investigate and report to the Board whether not having our own, separate land acquisition policies would make it impossible for us to meet the Land Trust Alliance's requirements for accreditation as a land trust. We are not currently accredited by LTA.

In light of what Katherine discovers, the Board will vote on revised wording of Conservators' criteria and on whether to: Replace current criteria with revised ones on the website. Add a reference to the revised criteria back to paragraph 3, as an alternative to meeting the state's criteria for conservation restrictions.

7. **Land & People/Nature & Community Statement.** The proposed new wording of the Land and People statement (Attachment E) would be used in the trail guide and on the website. Alice felt that this statement should be coordinated with the mission statement and presented at the beginning of our guiding documents and activities. Alice asked if Jon and Beth could develop a shortened version for webinars. Barbara moved to accept the new wording, which was seconded by Nyssa and Ken and passed unanimously. Beth wondered if it would have to be read before webinars. Barbara felt it should, while Beth felt it would be a distraction. Barbara suggested that just the quote and first sentence of the 2nd paragraph be used. Jon and Beth will significantly shorten the statement for oral use, such as before webinars.
8. **Grants.** Nyssa moved that we fund the grant for the Environmental Science Program for \$2500. Barbara, Jon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Nyssa will inform David Backer. Jon presented the Newman House community proposal for a pollinator garden. Newman House is a housing community for graduate students that was spun off from Boston College. The revised proposal is for \$820 to buy pollinator plants for 6' x 12' garden bed across from Newton North High School. Proposed conditions are that the proposal verify Newman House's permission to use the land and that a follow up report be required. Chris felt the cost was high for a 6'x12' plot. Henry noted that it abuts the sidewalk and could be affected by sidewalk salt. Jon felt a small setback would solve this problem and that the cost could be cut by a few hundred dollars. The plants would be perennials and would be maintained by students in later years. The list of plants will have to be approved. Jon and Henry offered to donate plants. Alice noted the need to support multiyear projects. Barbara suggested that the project could donate seeds to the Newton Seed bank. The board unanimously approved funding the grant award at \$620 with a letter outlining the final grant conditions to be placed on the G-drive. Henry and Alice suggested that we consider ways to publicize some of our grant projects and that groups of students such as those funded here could become a resource to help homeowners plant pollinator gardens.
9. **Consent Agenda Revisited.** Katherine is planning the next seasons invasive events for posting on the website. Jon will supply text for the Cheesecake Brook bioblitz for the website. Barbara noted a glitch in Word Press related to registrations that should be fixed. Alice asked for volunteers to compose a remembrance for Eric Reenstierna for the newsletter. Ted and Bill volunteered. Henry and Katherine requested that remembrance be ready for the next newsletter and the annual meeting.
10. **Adjournment.** Alice declared adjournment at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: B) Consent Agenda, D) Proposed Policy on Receiving Land and Conservation Restrictions, and E) Land & People/Nature & Community Statement Statement.

Newton Conservators consent agenda for February 2025 Board meeting		as of 10:30 am Feb. 24, 2025 (2 pages)
SUBMISSION DEADLINES	5 pm Sun Feb 16 for Wed. Feb 19 Executive Committee 5 pm Sun. Feb 23 for Wed. Feb 26 full Board	
<u>Conservators programs, projects</u>		
Minutes (Mike C.)		
Attached as a separate document, Attachment B1.		
Treasurer’s Report (Katherine)		
Form 3ABC has been filed. Form PC and IRS 990 are being worked on.		
LTA (and Trust Alliance) membership has been renewed (\$440). Zoom and Godaddy domain have been renewed for 850 and 56. Katherine reimbursed for those expenses and other misc (\$986).		
Almanac reprinting prep is underway - a small group is reviewing it to confirm needed changes, quotes being obtained. We will meet on 2/28 to move it along.		
The Systems group will meet on 2/28 to review steps for adding webinar and event registration to Mailchimp and other follow up issues.		
COI Conflict of Interest will be started shortly. Please respond quickly (on line only) with your updated disclosure.		
Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)		
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)		
All the CR’s, along with formal letters, have been sent to the City agencies and those interested. Copies are all in the Conservator Monitoring drive folders. Thanks to all who helped monitor the properties this year.		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)		
Grants (Jon, Nyssa)		
Invasives (Katherine)		
Several sessions have been held over the winter, in CSP and along Quinobequin Rd. The Spotted lanternfly has been found in the Upper Falls area. We all need to be on the lookout for it.		
Newton Serves is Sunday May 4. Please let me know of projects you want to do that day. I would like to ask Ouida Young to review our release form, and compare it to the City’s Newton Serves release form, to see if we can make ours less demanding.		
Media & Publicity incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media (Ted, Beth, others?)		
Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine)		
Newsletter (Ken)		
Spring newsletter is at the printer and has been posted online . Former president and longtime director /advisor Eric Reenstierna passed away February 5 -- who can write about Eric for the summer newsletter? See Attachment G for Bill’s emotional response to Eric’s memorial service. (Alice)		
Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)		
Newton Public Schools curriculum unit(s) (Ted, Nyssa)		
Trail Guide (Dan B.)		

Walks (Susan) & Other Events (Ted, Alice)
Very full schedule for April-June 2025!! Walk leaders & assistants are set, but we'll need lots of help for tabling (Alice).
Webinars (Beth)
Barbara's "Looking for Love" webinar was excellent and very well received by the attendees. The spring webinars will begin on March 27 and are listed on the NC website: Julie Sickefoose on "Uncommon Bonds with Common Birds" on March 27, Jenn Forman-Orth and Doug Bidlack on "Getting Real About Dealing with Mosquitoes" on April 3, and Max Rome on "Rediscovering and Revitalizaing Cheesecake Brook" on May 22.
The first fall webinar also is planned—by Bob Mallard, the executive director of the Native Fish Coalition, who has been working on eDNA identification with the Friends of Cold Spring Park. He would like to work on other lakes and brooks in Newton, with Crystal Lake high on his priority list. He may apply for a grant for some of their eDNA work: it would be good to discuss that sometime soon.
<u>City & state programs , projects, issues</u>
Conservation Commission (Dan G.)
Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth, Ted)
The groundbreaking for the following projects at Albemarle was held on February 13: a new High School Regulation Sized multi-use synthetic turf field (ready in Fall 2025), a renovated Burke Baseball Field, a renovated Cole Softball Field, six new pickleball courts, a new basketball court, lighting for athletic fields and courts, accessible lighted pathways with seating, shade trees, Cheesecake Brook streamside regeneration including landscape restoration, habitat creation, water quality and habitat improvements.
The Friends of Wellington Park will present a revised proposal for a sign at the February P&R Commission meeting, which will be hosted by Marc Welch. Marc also will present an overview of Newton's street trees.
CRs – pending or to be requested (Alice)
Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)
Bees on Newton public land (Jon)
Tree ordinance (Alice, Beth, Katherine, Bill)
Friends Groups updates
The CSP Management Plan is progressing and we expect a first draft for city staff and then public view and comment this spring.
Scout projects in CSP are being proposed now and will likely include some box steps for the steep slope at Plymouth Rd to dog park, fixing of the little bridge next to the old softball field, and permanent sign for the pollinator garden.
other City updates
<u>Other items</u>
State legislation & updates
A few of us attended MLTC's "Climate-Informed Stewardship" webinars in January 2025. See summary and links in Attachment H.

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting

March 26, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Alice Ingerson, chairing, AnnaMaria Abernathy, Barbara Bates, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green Chris Hepburn, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Jon Regosin, Larry Smith, and Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Alice welcomed the participants at 7:02 pm.
2. **Nature and Community.** Beth read the revised Nature and Community statement: Newton Conservators is grateful for the beauty and sustenance that the land provides for humans and the other creatures with whom we share this earth. Our goals to preserve open space and to connect people to nature require challenging the ways in which land conservation has historically excluded some peoples from protected land. Newton Conservators commits to acknowledging this exclusionary history and to building active partnerships with groups who have been hurt by that history, starting but not ending with Indigenous peoples such as the Massachusett. As Aldo Leopold wrote, “When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. Barbara moved to approve the statement for use and Katherine seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Calendar Review.** Susan Lyon requested volunteers to replace her at several walks. Pete volunteered for a birding walk on May 11. Pete also volunteered for the Mother’s Day birding walk on May 11, stepping in for Haynes Miller. Alicia volunteered for May 10. Ken volunteered for June 14. Nyssa requested volunteers to register online for helping with tabling, walks and bioblitzes. Barbara suggested that we reduce the number of tabling events to two per weekend.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Alice asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment B) to the discussion agenda. Pete moved accepting the consent agenda, which passed unanimously.
5. **Potential New Directors.** Alice solicited suggestions for new directors and noted the need for additional people. Andreae Downs, a City Councilor who is leaving the Council next January, was suggested.
6. **2025 Annual Meeting.** Alice raised the possibility of an honorarium/donation of \$500 for Greg Maslowe as the keynote speaker, which was approved by a sense of the meeting. Alice asked who could host and participate in a "mailing party" for announcements on the afternoon of Saturday April 5 to mail on April 7-8. [In the end, this work was done instead by the great volunteers at Jewish Family & Children’s Service in Waltham, as they did last year.] Alice also solicited help to compose and send a short email outreach announcement about the Annual Meeting to media outlets, other groups with e-newsletters, etc. Beth, Ken, Pete and Nyssa volunteered to help. Alice noted that the mayor can attend the annual meeting. The program will be on 8.5 x 11” paper, rather than the booklet format used previously. May 1 is the signup deadline.
7. **MLTC series on land trust work in urban communities,** Alice surveyed the group to determine who could attend the MLCT series on Saturday or Sunday (May 5-6). The registration fee that will cover as many of us as who wish to attend is \$20, which the group agreed could be paid by the Conservators.
8. **Conservation Commission.** The Executive Committee proposes to put ConCom and the PRC back on our "discussion agenda" in alternating months. Dan G. reviewed the most recent Conservation Commission meeting. Considered was 528 Boylston St. also known as “Sam

White’s mulch yard” with flooding in the neighborhood being the main issue before the ConCom votes. The project has a 40B comprehensive permit for housing. Alicia felt that infrastructure planned for this development might improve drainage, as the soil has been compacted by the site’s previous use. The Commission approved additional lighting on Albermarle Field. The housing development planned at 85 Dudley Rd. involves 70 homes in multiple two-story buildings. The site has some steep slopes and wetlands on the portion closest to Brandeis Road. Dan noted that there will be invasives remediation at the Newton Library and complimented Katherine for her prodigious work. He also observed that Boston College will be repaving the parking lot at 300 Hammond Pond Parkway.

9. **Consent Agenda Revisited.** Beth said a few words in remembrance of Penny Caponigro who volunteered valiantly for open space in Newton and received a NC Directors Award. Ken said there would be a submission deadline for the summer newsletter of June 1. The deadline for the fall newsletter is on August 1. Ken, Ted, Katherine, Jon, Beth, and Ted will gather to decide the optimal time for deadlines.

10. **Adjournment.** Alice declared adjournment at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: B) Consent Agenda

<p>Newton Conservators consent agenda for March 2025 Executive Committee & Board meetings</p>	<p>as of 9:45 am, March 24 (2 pages)</p>
<p align="center"><u>Conservators programs, projects</u></p>	
<p>Minutes (Mike C.)</p>	
<p>See separate attachment B1.</p>	
<p>Treasurer’s Report (Katherine)</p>	
<p>Thank you for your Conflict of Interest responses - we got a 100% response rate! and thanks to Dan Brody for setting up a neat tracking system for responses.</p> <p>State Form PC and IRS Form 990 were distributed to the board - please review in the next week and let me know of any issues.</p>	
<p>Invasives (Katherine)</p>	
<p>The invasives schedule has been distributed; I hope you will register for NewtonSERVES May 4 and join us for one or more sessions on the many other dates. Thanks!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3/13 I visited Cons. Comm., which approved us to work with library gardeners to remove purple loosestrife and knotweed from library swale. • 3/22 We had a great session with a STEM sorority group from Northeastern at CSP. • 4/22 Another corporate group (Santander), forwarded from Nyssa, will do a CSP session. • 4/29 5 pm, Land Stewards walk at Dolan Pond <p>Green Newton collaboration: A program person from Green Newton Michelle Drolsbaugh wanted to start a GN invasives program (or at least a NewtonSERVES event) and Ellen Menounos steered her towards us; hopefully we will join forces.</p> <p>Sawmill Brook dumping: There is a major dumping problem (automotive recycling/trash) at Sawmill Brook and into the adjoining new area - 20-25 tires were strewn there - Conservation dept is happy that they just successfully renewed the Essex contract, and they have asked Essex to remove the debris..</p>	
<p>Membership & Outreach (Nyssa, Katherine)</p>	
<p>March 22: Susan and Alice attended a small but intense discussion with both on- and off-campus environmental and outdoor education groups at Boston College. We made several excellent contacts, including a dissertation in progress on bees and interest in invasives, annual mtg, and Bioblitzes/biodiversity monitoring from students in BC’s Environmental Studies Dept. This dept.’s weekly email is a good way to publicize our events.</p> <p>It’s that time of year again! Please consider signing up for our tabling events. Our first three events are celebrating Earth Day: April 16, April 25, and April 27. Several of our regular tablers are dealing with other life issues and may not be available, so we are very grateful for others who are stepping in.</p> <p>Mailchimp - It’s going OK and thanks to Alice and Nyssa for getting tabling signups and volunteers into Mailchimp. I think we need to start using its social media functionality, such as for publicizing invasives sessions, or for showing fun photos from our sessions.</p>	
<p>Newsletter (Ken)</p>	
<p>To avoid problems with late submissions and corrections, there is a full stop deadline of June 1 for submissions to the summer newsletter. The issue will be in people’s hands by the end of June, so it can only help to publicize summer walks, webinars, and BioBlitzes that are scheduled after June 30. (Note that the June 1 deadline is slightly later than usual because Ken is in Scandinavia May 20 to May 30.)</p>	
<p>Walks (Susan) & Other Events (Ted, Alice)</p>	
<p>The Community Pollinators Group will host a summer solstice garden tour on June 21st. Recommendations for gardens to be included would be very welcomed. Contact Ted Kuklinski at tkuklinski@aol.com for more information.</p>	
<p>Webinars (Beth)</p>	
<p>Ted and Beth have been thorough in using social media and local news sources for publicizing the next two webinars– Julie Zickefoose on March 27 and Mosquito experts on April 3.</p>	

<u>City & state programs , projects, issues</u>
Conservation Commission (Dan G.)
At request of Exec. Comm., Dan will give an oral update as part of the discussion agenda at every other Board mtg.
Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth, Ted)
Alice and Beth met with members of the PR&C staff and the Ward 6 City Councilors to discuss the CRs on the “Crystal Lake parcels” in preparation for staff presentations to the public in preparation for Crystal Lake Park/Left Beach refurbishment project.
At the last P&R Commission meeting, members approved the Wellington Park sign and have started to discuss establishing a committee to consider general sign and naming policies.
Friends Groups updates
Jon Regosin and Zach Shein have produced a wonderful first draft of a Resource Management Plan for CSP. To be shared soon with Luis and Ahron.
<u>Other items</u>
New Green Newton Podcast
Green Newton has a new podcast with two episodes. The second one is an interview with Shara, the owner of Newton’s zero waste refillery, Fulfilled Goods . Shara has been a sponsor of our annual meeting for the past three years. The first episode was an interview with Black Earth Composting (our attempts to contact them about sponsorship have been unsuccessful so far – if you meet them at a event, please introduce yourself & Newton Conservators!).
See separate attachment D for a very relevant MLTC series in June-July about land trust work in urban places . Please sign up if you can! (Alice)

No written updates posted for these headings – any late updates orally under “revisiting consent agenda”?

Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)
Grants (Jon, Nyssa)
Media & Publicity <i>incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media</i> (Ted, Beth, others?)
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Tree ordinance (Alice, Beth, Katherine, Bill)
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<p>Newton Conservators consent agenda for March 2025 Executive Committee & Board meetings</p>	<p>as of 9:45 am, March 24 (2 pages)</p>
<p align="center"><u>Conservators programs, projects</u></p>	
<p>Minutes (Mike C.)</p>	
<p>See separate attachment B1.</p>	
<p>Treasurer’s Report (Katherine)</p>	
<p>Thank you for your Conflict of Interest responses - we got a 100% response rate! and thanks to Dan Brody for setting up a neat tracking system for responses.</p> <p>State Form PC and IRS Form 990 were distributed to the board - please review in the next week and let me know of any issues.</p>	
<p>Invasives (Katherine)</p>	
<p>The invasives schedule has been distributed; I hope you will register for NewtonSERVES May 4 and join us for one or more sessions on the many other dates. Thanks!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3/13 I visited Cons. Comm., which approved us to work with library gardeners to remove purple loosestrife and knotweed from library swale. • 3/22 We had a great session with a STEM sorority group from Northeastern at CSP. • 4/22 Another corporate group (Santander), forwarded from Nyssa, will do a CSP session. • 4/29 5 pm, Land Stewards walk at Dolan Pond <p>Green Newton collaboration: A program person from Green Newton Michelle Drolsbaugh wanted to start a GN invasives program (or at least a NewtonSERVES event) and Ellen Menounos steered her towards us; hopefully we will join forces.</p> <p>Sawmill Brook dumping: There is a major dumping problem (automotive recycling/trash) at Sawmill Brook and into the adjoining new area - 20-25 tires were strewn there - Conservation dept is happy that they just successfully renewed the Essex contract, and they have asked Essex to remove the debris..</p>	
<p>Membership & Outreach (Nyssa, Katherine)</p>	
<p>March 22: Susan and Alice attended a small but intense discussion with both on- and off-campus environmental and outdoor education groups at Boston College. We made several excellent contacts, including a dissertation in progress on bees and interest in invasives, annual mtg, and Bioblitzes/biodiversity monitoring from students in BC’s Environmental Studies Dept. This dept.’s weekly email is a good way to publicize our events.</p> <p>It’s that time of year again! Please consider signing up for our tabling events. Our first three events are celebrating Earth Day: April 16, April 25, and April 27. Several of our regular tablers are dealing with other life issues and may not be available, so we are very grateful for others who are stepping in.</p> <p>Mailchimp - It’s going OK and thanks to Alice and Nyssa for getting tabling signups and volunteers into Mailchimp. I think we need to start using its social media functionality, such as for publicizing invasives sessions, or for showing fun photos from our sessions.</p>	
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Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting

April 23, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Alice Ingerson, chairing, David Backer, Barbara Bates, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Chris Hepburn, Bill Hagar, Katherine Howard, Ted Kuklinski, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, and Beth Wilkinson.

1. **Welcome.** Alice welcomed the participants at 7:02 pm.
2. **Nature and Community.** Beth read her Nature and Community statement: In my weekly visit to the rebuilt Levingston Cove of Crystal Lake, I'm always delighted with the diversity of people that are there. The Cove is a gathering place for people of all ages—from infants in carriages to the very elderly. The newly renovated fishing pier, the dock next to it and accessible paths that lead to and from it are hospitable to those who require mobility aids. One week, I saw a string of four people in wheelchairs. Other times, I've seen family and friend groups with one member in a wheelchair or someone using a rollator. On a warm morning last fall, my husband and I sat on a bench to enjoy the lake, our leashed dogs at our sides. It was wonderful to see three elementary-school age children there alone, fishing and laughing together. One of the boys has Down syndrome, and the parent that later came down to check on him explained that he is comfortable there on his own. It's also great to see folks of all colors and many nationalities in Levingston Cove. It's not unusual to hear people calling across the water in their non-English languages. At the end of last August, about a dozen easels were set up so that students from a Chinese art school could paint views of Crystal Lake. I've seen Darryl Settles, known for his partnerships that empower communities of color in the hospitality and real estate industries, sitting on the bench that was dedicated to his son, Preston Settles, who suffered a fatal cardiac arrest during a high school basketball game. Levingston Cove is a beautiful and welcoming open space, and it is a testament that even worn-down open spaces can be improved to make them more welcoming. Henry volunteered to the next Nature and Community Statement on May 28.
3. **Calendar Review.** Alice observed that we have a lot of tabling events soon and that more help was needed.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Alice asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment B) to the discussion agenda. The consent agenda was approved unanimously as presented.
5. **Treasurer's Report.** Katherine reported that except for rises and falls in our investment portfolio, the financials were normal and that sponsor revenue for the Annual Meeting has been received.
6. **2025 Annual Meeting.** Katherine said that Greg Maslowe accepted our honorarium and that, prior to a walkthrough of the site (Post 440), preparations for the Annual Meeting were coming into order. Additional revenue may come through donations prior to the meeting. She also requested volunteers to help set up before the meeting. No grants recipients will present posters this year.

The slates of officers, directors and advisors to be voted on at the meeting are:

Officers: Katherine Howard, President; Nyssa Patten, Vice President; Michael Clarke, Secretary, David Backer, Co-Treasurer, Larry Smith, Co-Treasurer.

Directors: Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Henry Finch, Maurice Gilmore, Daniel Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Jon Regosin, Beth Wilkinson. The slate of officers and directors was approved unanimously. Andreae Downs will likely join the board in January. Joanna Pittman and Bill Humphries were suggested as potential directors.

Advisors: AnnaMaria Abernathy, Margaret Albright, Lisle Baker, Lee Breckenridge, Lalor Burdick, Lucy Caldwell-Stair, Bonnie Carter, Michael Collora, Kim Devore, Ann Dorfman,

Margaret Doris, Ted Kuklinski, Alison Leary, William Leitch, Brooks Mathewson, Eric Olson, Richard Primack, Patricia Robinson, Jane Sender, William Shaevel, Bruce Wenning. Diane Tillotson did not respond to inquiries; and, because of illness, Willis Wang declined to be an advisor.

The awards to be given out at the meeting are: *Charles Johnson Maynard Award: Leaders of Newton Birding*: Pete Gilmore, Liane Hartnett, Alison Leary, Haynes Miller; *Environmentalist of the Year Award*, Newton Community Farm Board of Directors, Represented by Paul Holt and Michael Spalding, Co-Presidents.

Katherine will start her term as President at the May meeting. Barbara thought that, as she is becoming president, some of Katherine's current responsibilities should be lifted from her and spread around to others inside and outside of the Conservators. Katherine said she was looking forward to the opportunities for growth while serving as president. Alicia noted that she would remain on the board probably to August. Alicia said that Andreae Downs was willing to serve on the board beginning in January and suggested others as potential candidates. Beth also came forward with a couple of possible board candidates. Some of these possibilities were discussed.

7. **Pollinator Gardens.** Alice said that there would be a Pollinator Garden Tour on June 21, 2-4 pm. Alicia and Ted moved that the Newton Conservators cosponsor the tour, use the Conservators registration system (Mail Chimp) to register participants, and donate \$100 for funding signage for the tours. Another tour will occur in the fall. This passed unanimously.
8. **Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) Commission.** Beth said the PRC had been discussing a policy for signs in and naming of public parks and that the PRC would be level funded for the next fiscal year. There has also been discussion of a new pilot plaza project in Newton Centre. Alice and Beth talked with PRC about Crystal Lake Park in preparation for improving the "Left Beach" area. The Edmands off-leash dog park is still under consideration with the off-leash group reluctant to compromise and Alice noted that our letter about the Edmands off-leash proposal is on our website. The community group, Cabot Canines, is submitting a revised proposal for off-leash dogs at Cabot Park. Beth is working with PRC to revive the development of a bee keeping policy for the parks.
9. **Conservation Commission.** Dan G. discussed the 85 Dudley Rd. project, which involves the construction of 70 homes of 2-3 stories and has moved its work largely outside of the ConCom's jurisdiction with no public funds involved. Alice has already written about this project's earlier request for CPA funds in a letter on the NC website G-drive. The "Sam White mulch" site on Rte. 9 is going to vote on Thursday, with the main concern being adequate drainage of the site. The Fessenden School wants to renovate its artificial turf playing fields and the ComCon is concerned about debris contaminating Cheesecake Brook.
10. **Consent Agenda Revisited.** Alicia said that Don Lubin's obituary is in the evening's packet. Katherine provided an update on the second edition of the "Almanac", which is dedicated to memory of Chris Criscitiello and Don Lubin and is in preparation for printing by Signal Graphics. Place names in the Almanac will be coordinated with Dan B so that they correlate with the website. Alice mentioned that the link for the MLT urban area series online meeting is available, for those who wish to attend. Katherine and several other directors plan to attend the Mayor's Community Breakfast. "Mass Parks for All" is lobbying for increased funding for state parks and Alice distributed links for supporting this. Beth said that the Newton League of Women's Voters committee on taxation on golf courses is looking for members. Mike suggested that when the 61B tax break for golf courses rolls over every 5 years, some open space should be preserved by a CR each time. Beth noted that unlike CRs open spaces golf courses are accessible only to the golf course members and not for the public. Peter said the topic of preserving open space on the golf courses is an important one and that golf courses have restricted the use of their land for winter sports over the years. Dan G. indicated that the golf

courses would be resistant to changes in 61B. Alicia said that under 61B Newton has the first right of first refusal to buy golf course land, but it would be hard to get more tax revenue from the golf courses. Mike volunteered to delve into the aims of the NLWV committee as to open space. Barbara moved to appoint Mike as our representative to the NLWV 61B committee and to, at some future meeting, discuss our views regarding this issue, which appeared to have general assent.

Beth noted that publicity for webinars was most effective if it is sent out for individual webinars about a week and a half before the event and suggested the same for walks. Ted observed that Fig City posted our walk descriptions a bit before the calendar date and did not lump them together. Susan said that Jon plans a few joint bioblitzes with the CRWA, one of which is on Tuesday, July 29 at Cheesecake Brook. Ted suggested a way of raising money for the Conservators would be for us to enroll in the Boston Marathon bib lottery (Newton gets 40 bibs) and, if we received one, have someone run in the marathon for the NC as a charity. Noting that she had received an invitation from Green Newton to a fund raiser at someone's home, Beth suggested that we might do something similar.

11. Adjournment. Adjournment was moved, seconded and declared at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: B) Consent Agenda

<p>Newton Conservators consent agenda for April 2025 Executive Committee & Board meetings</p>	<p>as of 21 April 2025 (2 pages)</p>
<p><u>Conservators programs, projects</u></p>	
<p>Minutes (Mike C.)</p>	
<p>See attachment B1.</p>	
<p>Treasurer’s Report (Katherine)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form PC was filed to the state and Form 990 was filed to the IRS. • Q1 financial statements will be distributed to the board prior to our meeting. • Audit Committee will meet on April 17 to review 2024 statements - additional participants are encouraged to attend. 	
<p>Almanac (Katherine)</p>	
<p>Almanac committee is making good progress. It has been agreed and approved by Exec Comm that design and editing services will be provided by Signal Graphics at \$80/hour. Given that the printing quotes (with Signal as the low bidder) were much lower than what we have in the budget, there is plenty of room to pay Signal for those extra services.</p>	
<p>Grants (Jon, Nyssa)</p>	
<p>Next deadline May 31. Help get the word out!</p>	
<p>Invasives (Katherine)</p>	
<p>We had a successful pull with a sorority group from Northeastern at CSP last month.</p> <p>Michelle Drolsbaugh, a program coordinator for Green Newton, wanted to organize an invasives event, and was encouraged by Ellen Menounous to join one of our existing events; after discussion with GN “program committee” they will join our Nahanton Park NewtonSERVES session. Judy Jacobs, Exec Dir of Green Newton, has similarly referred to me a corporate group from Siemens (in Auburndale) and that group will join our Blue Heron session on May 15.</p> <p>I set up the invasives session events on our website as one event per month, with the session dates for that month listed in the event; this way the sessions will be easily seen by visitors to the Events page without being overwhelmed by numerous separate entries.</p> <p>I will do lesser celandine herbicide treatment at Dexter Rd this Thursday morning April 24. Karen Lumino of the invasives team will join me and pull garlic mustard.</p>	
<p>Newsletter (Ken)</p>	
<p>The summer newsletter deadline is June 1. I am expecting submissions from Jon and Ted, and the newsletter will include an article on the annual meeting.</p>	
<p>Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)</p>	
<p>Dexter Rd session Thursday April 17,</p>	
<p>Webinars (Beth)</p>	
<p>We have one spring webinar left: “Rediscovering and Revitalizing Cheesecake Brook” on May 22.</p>	
<p><u>City & state programs , projects, issues</u></p>	
<p>Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth, Ted)</p>	
<p>The Commission agreed to start a new subcommittee on naming and sign/donor policies. Beth will give a more detailed update at the meeting, per our new policy alternating oral updates for the Conservation Commission and the Parks & Rec Commission.</p>	
<p>Friends Groups updates</p>	
<p>Friends of Cold Spring Park - More fish found! in Muskrat pond itself and in the outflows from it towards the brook. More progress on management plan. Several Scout projects are in the works, the first one probably being box steps at the Plymouth Rd entrance going down towards the dog park (the steps will be to the left side of the path so skiers and people who prefer the steep slope can still use it). (Katherine)</p>	

other City updates
On April 23 (same night as our Board meeting), the City Council’s Public Facilities Committee will hear an update on project planning and repairs/construction for Bullough’s Pond Dam. This project requires some tree removals.
See attachments for
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 30 Newton for Everyone presentation on “Housing and Climate Change” • May 28 Mayor’s Community Breakfast
State legislation
See attachment H for call to contact our state representatives about state parks funding, esp. in light of federal funding and staff reductions.

No new updates for April 2025

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CRs - Monitoring (Chris)
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2025 Newton Conservators Annual Meeting
American Legion Nonantum Post 440
May 14, 2025, 6-9 PM

1. **Welcome.** Newton Conservators' president Alice Ingerson began the Newton Conservators' 64th annual meeting at the American Legion Post 44 in Newton by welcoming everyone, including our sponsors.
2. **Land Acknowledgement.** Alice gave the Nature and Community statement in which she observed, "Newton Conservators is grateful for the beauty and sustenance that the land provides for humans and the other creatures with whom we share this earth. Our goals to preserve open space and to connect people to nature require challenging the ways in which land conservation has historically excluded some peoples from protected land. Newton Conservators commits to acknowledging this exclusionary history and to building active partnerships with groups who have been hurt by that history, starting but not ending with Indigenous peoples such as the Massachusett. As Aldo Leopold wrote, "When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."
3. **Message from the Mayor.** Alice Ingerson then recognized Mayor Ruth Fuller, thanking the mayor for her help saving Webster Woods, supporting the City's parks and conservation departments and staff, and her collaboration with community and non-profit groups like Newton Conservators. In Mayor Fuller's remarks she acknowledged the city councilors in the room and in turn praised the leaders of Newton Birding, winners of the Charles Johnson Maynard Award. She then turned special attention to the evening's keynote speaker Greg Maslowe and his team from Newton Community Farm, and cited "the extraordinary wisdom, emotional intelligence, kindness, energy, deep, deep knowledge of the City's Senior Planner, Jennifer Steele."
4. **Outgoing President's Message.** Alice noted the following. "Newton Conservators is an all-volunteer organization founded in 1961. To deliver our programs, which are free to the public, we depend on membership dues, on donations, and above all on our volunteers. You do not need to be an expert naturalist or ecologist to help! To learn more about our volunteer opportunities, contact us at volunteers@newtonconservators.org. Newton Conservators' best-known programs focus on Newton's public lands. We offer guided walks and Bioblitzes, where volunteers help to document Newton's biodiversity. We also monitor conservation restrictions on nine City-owned open spaces acquired with Community Preservation Act Funds. Yet we also know that nature does not recognize property lines. So increasingly our programs also cross the boundaries between public and private land. This is especially true for the two sides of land stewardship: our efforts to [control invasive plants](#), led by incoming President Katherine Howard, and our support for native plants and pollinators, including our [Pollinator Toolkit](#) and sponsorship of [Pollinator Garden Tours](#).

In keynote presentation, Greg Maslowe challenges us to reconsider not only the distinction between public and private land, but also the distinction between protected land and land in active human use. Historically, conservation has often protected land mostly from people who make a living directly on the land. This exclusion started with Indigenous people but was expanded to foragers, fishers, farmers, and loggers of all cultural backgrounds.

Yet restricting protected land in places like Newton to only recreational uses such as hiking and nature study implies using other land – mostly far from Newton -- to grow the food we eat, the fibers we wear, and wood to build the homes we live in. This implication raises two questions that are fundamental for the future of land conservation: Should our stewardship of protected land continue to look mostly inward, focused mostly on excluding activities and people allowed on other kinds of land? Or should we also look outward, seeing protected land partly as a laboratory for learning to interact sustainably with other kinds of land?"

5. **Nominating Committee.** Board member Pete Gilmore presented the Newton Conservators' slate of officers and directors for the coming year. Katherine Howard has replaced Alice Ingerson as president joined again by Nyssa Patten as vice president and Michael Clarke as secretary. This year we also welcomed co-treasurers David Backer and Larry Smith replacing Katherine as the previous treasurer. The board of directors will now consist of Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Henry Finch, Maurice (Pete) Gilmore, David Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Jon Regosin, and Beth Wilkinson.

6. **President's Message.** Katherine acknowledged two very sad changes to our advisor community, with the passing of Eric Reenstierna, long time board member and advisor, and Don Lubin, advisor, co-author of our Almanac, and fern walk leader. They will be sorely missed. An article about Eric's life and work with the Conservators is included separately in this newsletter as is an article about Don Lubin.

Katherine thanked departing board members. Kim Devore, who energized our community events in her monarch queen persona, will become an advisor. Samantha Corbin, who was both walks and volunteer coordinator, set up important processes to engage and manage volunteers, for which we are very grateful. Also leaving the board to become advisors are two long serving board members, Ted Kuklinski and Bonnie Carter. They received special certificates of appreciation for their accomplishments, which are noted elsewhere in this report.

7. **Certificates of Appreciation.**

Ted Kuklinski. We thank Ted for his invaluable service as a Newton Conservators board member for over 25 years and his strong leadership as president from 2019 to 2021; for connecting the public to the Conservators' work through his e-bulletin, walks, videos, and video editing of webinars; for serving as Newton's Monarch King by arranging the Monarch Festival at Wellington Park, educating youngsters at community events; for collaborating to bring us the Pollinator Working Group annual tours, and modeling for us a front yard pollinator garden; for being an active member of the Newton Off Leash Area Working Group and helping to create and manage Newton's off-leash recreation areas, for leading the Charles River-North Newton section of the Christmas Bird Count for more than twenty years; for being a dedicated steward for Dolan Pond Conservation Area and sharing its beauty with the public and for serving on the board of Wellington Park; and for his leadership in the city's acquisition of 76 Webster Park, keeping two-thirds of the site as open space and creating affordable housing in the original house and two new Habitat for Humanity homes.

Bonnie Carter. We appreciate Bonnie for 37 years of service as an active Newton Conservators board member; for serving as vice president from 1993 to 1995; for serving as newsletter editor and producer from 1988 to 1998; for years of making the get-togethers held at her home to prepare Conservators mailings, occasions of joyous camaraderie; for being our resident expert on Post Office rules for our mailings; for her assistance at our public facing events, fairs and village days; for continuing to serve Newton Conservators as an advisor. Bonnie was also passionately active in the [League of Women Voters of Newton](#) and had served as president of that organization.

8. **Charles Johnson Maynard Award to Newton's Bird Leaders.** It seems quite appropriate that our Charles Johnson Maynard Award this year is being presented to a number of our outstanding "Leaders of Newton Birding," Pete Gilmore, Liane Hartnett, Alison Leary, and Haynes Miller for their long-term dedication to organizing and leading engaging bird walks, for their valuable participation in citizen science endeavors, and for generously sharing their expertise to foster the appreciation and understanding of birds in and around Newton. Pete Gilmore, a retired math professor from Northeastern, has been on our board for decades, as well as served on the board of the Brookline Bird Club. Liane Hartnett is an experienced birder and organizes the annual

Newton Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in Newton which she took over from the late great Cris Criscitiello who lived across the street from her on Raeburn Terrace. Alison Leary is one of our City Councilors in Newton, but you may not have known about her birding expertise. Haynes Miller, an emeritus Professor of Mathematics at MIT, is also an expert birder and walk leader. He looks for birds all around Newton and is very prolific recording his findings on e-Bird.

9. **Environmentalist of the Year.** This year's award really "Environmentalist of the Past Two Decades," not just one year. This year the award goes to the Newton Community Farm Board, represented by Paul Holt and Michael Spalding, Co-Presidents. The award recognizes the farm for growing an institution that provides sustainable food, offers learning opportunities for children and adults, and encourages sustainable home gardening; for supporting staff devoted to sustainable food production and community engagement; for leading successful efforts to renew and expand the buildings and infrastructure that the farm needs to thrive, including solar panels that provide most of the farm's electricity.
10. **Introduction to the Keynote Talk.** After the business meeting and awards, Greg Maslowe, Farm Manager, Newton Community Farm, gave a talk entitled "Can Farming Save Open Spaces? A Very Old Debate." In his introduction to this talk, Conservators' board member Jon Regosin noted the role of the Newton Conservators in helping save Newton Community Farm. As a Newton Conservator and founding President of Newton Community Farm, Jon stressed the word "community" in the title of the farm. It serves the community. It provides locally grown produce to the community. It donates food to community members in need. It serves children and youth in our community through writing programming. It builds community around sustainable farming, sustainable farming and land use, and helps people connect to the land." It also took a broad community effort to save and transform Newton's last working farm. "Let's talk about city government. Without the city and the Community Preservation Fund in particular, we wouldn't have been able to save the farm, So, city government was essential to saving the farm. So this brings us to our second element of community strong. We need strong community organizations. So into the story comes the Newton conservators. And the Newton conservators was engaged with the landowners, the Angino family, both before and after the property came on the market.' Jon then described the need to develop a business plan for the CPC. "This is where we start to have this interplay between the city government organizations and individuals that's how community actually works, individuals representing organizations and really dedicated government, individuals that are affiliated with city government, and then these unaffiliated individuals." The rest is history. As aldermen and city councilors got on board, this new nonprofit for the farm came into being. "When Greg was hired 20 years ago, none of us knew how things would turn out--he agreed to work for a brand-new non-profit on a rather small farm property. The Newton community has been truly blessed that Greg decided to make the farm and Newton his home for these 20 years...he has contributed so much in his role as farm manager. So on this 20th anniversary of Newton Community Farm, let's take a moment to celebrate the farm and to celebrate our community's success in saving, but not just saving, saving and transforming Newton's last working farm."
11. **Annual Meeting Keynote Talk.** *Can Farming Save Open Spaces? A Very Old Debate* Greg spoke about two of his favorite community farms, one in Lincoln, Massachusetts and the other in Fort Collins, Colorado, as models for "how farming, open space, and conservation can all work together to address some of the societal challenges we are all facing." He rejected two extreme arguments that were prominent in the history of conservation-for using all public lands to meet the public's economic needs or for setting land aside strictly as wilderness. As a third option, he advocated for using public lands that are suited for agriculture to reduce food insecurity, increase food sovereignty (by growing in each region more of the food consumed in

that region), provide farmers with access to land, preserve agriculture as cultural heritage, and reduce the negative impacts of global warming.

In his closing, Greg observed “I want to just turn back to Newton Community Farm, since part of I think why I was invited here tonight was to help celebrate the 20th anniversary of the farm. These are some of the ways that we have utilized the 2.25 acres of open space that was turned over to us 20 years ago. We grow more than 45,000 pounds of produce every single year, of which \$16,000 is donated to the Newton food pantry. Every year, we provide 28,000 organically grown flower and vegetable seedlings to the community to support home gardeners. This is really the key to the idea of food sovereignty is just getting able to grow their own food. Again, we have a high school intern program that has been running for the entire 20 years, and one of the most amazing things to me is having students who come back 20 years later, and it was really the ability to work on the farm that touched them deeply and shaped their whole life.”

These minutes are based on Ken Mallory’s article in the Newton Conservators 2025 Summer Newsletter

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke
Secretary

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting

May 28, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Katherine Howard, chairing, David Backer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson and guest Tod Macallister.

1. **Welcome.** Katherine welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm.
2. **Nature and Community.** Henry read his Nature and Community statement: Springtime is here and our native plants are struggling for a place in our majority invasive planted Newton gardens. But, on a larger scale the biggest challenge to national biodiversity is probably the attempts by the Federal Government to gut the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Toxic Substances Control Act, National Environmental Policy Act and others. And, to sell off public land for logging, mining and many types of development. Right now is the time to be actively fighting this destruction not just locally but nationally. I encourage everyone to keep aware of what is happening on our watch and to act on supporting individuals and groups working for the future of our natural environment.
Mike has volunteered to give his statement at the June meeting.
3. **Calendar Review.** Nyssa noted the following upcoming events: Nonantum Village Day June 1, Highlands Village Day June 8, the Pollinator pop up sale June 17, the pollinator tour June 21, Juneteenth June 19th at the Hyde Center from 12 noon to 4 pm, and the Mayor's breakfast May 28. Nyssa requested tabling help for the Highlands Village Day on Thursday, June 8 and the Farmers Market Plant sale on Tuesday, June 17 for which Henry volunteered.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Katherine asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment E) to the discussion agenda. The consent agenda was moved with no changes, seconded and approved unanimously.
5. **Prospective Board Members.** Katherine has met several people over the last month, with whom she will discuss with the executive committee and possibly invite to attend board meetings.
6. **2025 Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting appeared to have gone very well. There was some need for vegetarian meals, so that some attendees ate only salads. The speaker, Greg Maslowe, gave an excellent talk on the value of community farms. Katherine suggested that if we eliminated the dinner more venues might be possible such as Allen House, which provides both indoor and outdoor venues. Barbara suggested that we alternate the dinner with other types of social hours. Beth suggested that other types of social hours would require almost as much work. Katherine requested volunteers for next year's Annual Meeting committee. Beth, Barbara and Katherine volunteered.
7. **Official Letters.** Harry Sanders, who has been interested in Edmands Park matters for decades, requested permission to post Alice's letter to the PRC about the proposal for Edmands Park becoming an off-leash area. Barbara said that we should not give individuals or other organizations our correspondence but may post them as a collection by date and subject on our own website and allow others to link to them. Chris felt that perhaps not all letters should be posted on our website. Katherine asked for volunteers to provide guidance on the issue. Chris and Barbara volunteered.
8. **Trail Guide.** Dan said that the text and photo curation was almost complete. Bids have been received for printing the trail guide and a full-size mockup will be available to the printer prior to the print setup including a back cover envelope for an 18" x 24" map. Doug Greenfield of the City's GIS has generated excellent site maps for the guide. A draft will be presented to the board before printing. Text is now being sent to a copy editor. Jennifer Steel and Nicole Banks will also review it.

9. **Nahanton Park.** Issues regarding Nahanton Park have been raised including the “net roofs” on some parts of garden plots that can trap birds, and how the meadow and the Nature Center should be maintained. Issues have also been raised about the maintenance of Cold Spring Park. Walk-throughs have been discussed for both parks. Members of the board and representatives of PRC will meet for the Nahanton Park walkthrough possibly in June or July. Friends of CSP will also meet with Marc Loreda and possibly other councilors on the walkthrough of Cold Spring Park on June 22.

Chris and Henry talked about re-settling the bridge over the small creek on Florie’s path at Nahanton Park into place. There was consensus that the meadow at Nahanton park should be mowed once a year.

10. **Mayoral Candidates.** Chris suggested that Marc Loreda and the second mayoral candidate be invited to one of our board meetings to discuss open-space issues. Beth suggested that we draw up a list of questions for the candidates and then hold a public meeting at which they would answer them.
11. **CR Option for 61B Golf Courses.** Mike presented a previously circulated paper relating to the possibility of gradually garnering permanent conservation restrictions on 61B golf courses. He moved that the board endorse the idea of introducing permanent conservation restrictions to the Newton League of Women Voters committee on 61B golf courses as a way of ensuring the permanent preservation of parts of the three Newton 61B golf courses in a gradual way, which passed unanimously.
12. **Interns.** Two high school women have contacted us about being summer interns for the Newton Conservators. One wants to be a marketing/design intern. Katherine will see what their interests are and if they are compatible with work that needs to be done this summer.
13. **Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission.** Beth said the PRC approved their Bee Policy with edits on April 28, but the final version is not yet available. Beth is working with Ahron Lerman of the PRC on this.
14. **Pollinator Gardens.** There will be a Pollinator Garden Tour on June 21, 2-4 pm.
15. **Consent Agenda Revisited.** Alan Noguee has observed that sometimes large numbers of people show up for our walks causing two groups to be formed. Consequently, there is a need for a second amplification system (Chatterbox). Barbara agreed that we should have two sound devices. Katherine will order a second Chatterbox if a suitable new model is less than \$250.
16. **DEIJ Committee.** Katherine, Nyssa, Susan and likely Jon agreed to be on the revived DEIJ committee.
17. **American Chestnut.** Katherine Howard, Alan Noguee, Ted Chapman, Beth Wilkinson met with representatives of the American Chestnut Foundation to see how viable the recently available chestnut seeds might be in Newton. While there are problems with the genetically modified chestnuts, Ted Chapman will accept some of the seeds to see how they will grow in Newton. Beth suggested that the Foundation might do a webinar on the chestnut blight and new genetic developments, which might be presented in 2026.

18. **Adjournment.** Adjournment was moved, seconded and declared at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: B) Consent Agenda

**Newton Conservators consent agenda for May 28 2025
Executive Committee & Board meetings**

as of 5/25/25 8pmE

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Sunday May 18 for Executive Committee
Sunday May 25 for full Board

Conservators programs, projects

Minutes (Mike C.)

See attachment E3-E5

Treasurer's Report (Katherine)

Treasurer planning meeting with David and Larry happening on June 2.
Letter to Anne Reenstierna with donor list sent on May 22.
The Almanac edits are with the Signal Graphics designer.

Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)

CRs - Monitoring (Chris)

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)

I would like to resurrect this group! Please let me know during the meeting if you would like to join.

Grants (Jon, Nyssa)

our third grants deadline is the 31st of this month.

Invasives (Katherine)

Small but successful sessions have been happening. Chinese Running Club of Needham at Upper Falls Greenway. Newton Serves small (minimal registration but decent walkins); 5 or so Green Newton walkins at Nahanton NewtonSERVES who seem very interested in continuing. 4 workers from Siemens Auburndale (Riverside) office at Blue Heron trail, 2 very interested in continuing.

I'll be working with Eric Highers in June on the knotweed at Cooks Bridge outflows to the Charles (Eliot St Upper Falls). We will cut and paint it in June; we and then continue to cut monthly. Approval already granted by J Steel.

The knotweed areas we mostly pulled and some cut in CSP across from the small meadow are back, but much sparser. The continued pulling and monthly cutting method does seem to work, but still takes years. The area along Beacon St where we cut and painted in Fall 2024 is also back, but sparser. The herbicide is not a magic bullet - it does still take years of attention and retreatment.

Media & Publicity *incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media*

Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine)

please sign up for tabling events if you can!

Newsletter (Ken)

The summer newsletter deadline is June 1, please try to meet this deadline.

Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)

Dexter:

I treated lesser celandine in April (with J Steel permission). Karen Lumino and I removed invasives and trash including 3 cinderblocks (now in my driveway - ?) and cleaned up the street edge. Barbara and her neighbor friends and 2 kids worked on GM there including the top of the slope (above our property line).

Ordway:

I visited in May and found and removed 2 small GM plants, and picked up some trash.

Newton Public Schools curriculum unit(s) (Nyssa)

Trail Guide (Dan B.)

Walks (Susan) & Other Events

Barbara's W Woods walk on May 10 and the Bird Walk on May 11 were both highly successful (Katherine). The Hemlock Gorge guided walk by Katherine and John Mordes was equally successful, drawing 20+ people. Saw Mill Brook walk will be on June 14. No walks are scheduled for the summer, but Jon will be hosting a Bioblitz on June 7 that was posted in the spring newsletter. He also has a Bioblitz of Cheesecake Brook scheduled with the Charles River Watershed Association on July 29th. A write-up of that and another Bioblitz scheduled for and hosted by Jon on Sept. 14 in Webster Woods will be forthcoming in the summer newsletter. I will start planning for fall walks in July (Susan).

Webinars (Beth)

The webinar on Rediscovering and Revitalizing Cheesecake Brook will take place on May 22. Then, it's time to work on plans for fall webinars. We have a commitment for a webinar by Bob Mallard of the Native Fish Coalition and a good request to ask Sara Webb about the threat to eastern deciduous forests. I'd also very much like to find a speaker on the topic of phenology—and how climate change is affecting it. Identifying birds by their calls is another terrific topic, but I don't think we'll get to it this fall. Please let me know if you have other suggestions.

City & state programs , projects, issues**Conservation Commission (Dan G.)****Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth)**

- (1) A revised draft of the beekeeping policy for parks was presented to the commission at its April meeting. Members presented their comments and voted to approve the policy with edits. An update will be available soon, and when it is, the bee subcommittee will review it and report back to board.
- (2) Luis Demorizi gave a presentation of pre-season beach and stormwater improvements for Crystal Lake, which include removing asphalt under the beach and replacing it with sand, repairing erosion, patching the wall, and removing a fence above crumbling asphalt.
- (3) A subcommittee has been established to review park signs and memorials (including naming). Mark Feldhusan, Mary Fitzgerald, and Beth Wilkinson are the members of that subcommittee.

CRs – pending or to be requested**Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)****Bees on Newton public land (Jon)**

See PRC update - plan approved with edits on 4/28/25

Tree ordinance (Beth, Katherine, Bill)**Friends Groups updates**

CSP: Box steps at Plymouth Rd will be installed by Scout Paul Vielle on June 1. He posted a sign to obtain park user feedback, and I was told the feedback was all positive. The steps will be at the side to allow room for skiers and runners and others who prefer not to use the steps. (Katherine)

other City updates**Other items****State legislation**

We received a thank you letter from ESP Program Manager Ben Martin - see Attachment E6-E7

A Letter of support for a DEP grant for Fulfilled Goods to buy a dishwasher was sent by Exec Comm on May 15 (deadline for submission). The dishwasher will allow FG to rent reusable dishes/utensils to community groups for events as well as to more efficiently clean containers for the store. see Attachment E-8

Newton Conservators 'Board of Directors Meeting

June 25, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Katherine Howard, chairing, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Chris Hepburn, Katherine Howard, Alice Ingerson, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson and guests Karen Lumino and Melissa Gee.

1. **Welcome.** Katherine welcomed the participants including guests Karen Lumino and Melissa Gee at 7:03 pm. The group introduced themselves to Karen and Melissa.
2. **Nature and Community.** Mike read his Nature and Community statement. Our Diverse Flag:
Our flag is a symbolic cloth composed of many diverse pieces.
While it may inspire the military, it is not a military symbol.
The red stripes represent the blood of Native Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and many other minorities killed by hate.
The white intervals represent their innocence and hope for the future.
The stars stand for the aggregate of intensely shining lights that our states should be.
The lights are for justice, equality, respect and freedom of speech and worship and freedom from want and fear.
They are set in the clean blue sky of our natural environment that spans over us all.
3. **Thank You, Alice!** Katherine and many others personally thanked Alice for leading the Conservators with wisdom, insight and passion through five very busy years and for her vast knowledge of city, conservation and land trust workings. Ken thanked her for her support of the Newsletter and members of the board thanked her individually.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Katherine noted recent updates to the Consent Agenda and asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment A) to the discussion agenda. The consent agenda was moved with no changes, seconded and approved unanimously.
5. **MLTC Urban Series.** Katherine and Alice summarized the interesting points of the MLTC Urban Series. Alice suggested developing DEIJ partnerships and long-term partners in open space with the help of the MLTC and Mass. Audubon. Other possible partners include open space groups in neighboring communities, the CRWA and Green Newton.
6. **CR Option for 61B Golf Courses.** Mike updated the group on the draft report titled the “Initiative to Review the Taxation of Newton Golf Courses and Country Clubs” which is being done for presentation to the League of Women Voters-Newton (LWVN) and was previously circulated. Our document to introduce the concept of conservation restrictions to the report has been incorporated into the report, which was seen as a significant step forward. Clarifications and changes to the report were suggested by Alice, Katherine and Mike, including that CRs are not mentioned in the conclusion and recommendations sections. Alice pointed out that if Newton must *choose between* increasing revenue and increasing public benefits, it cannot pursue both. These observations will be forwarded to the group writing the report and we will try to find out the timeline for finalizing the report. Katherine suggested that we form a 61B working group; Mike will take the lead, and other members will be Susan, Katherine, Peter, and Bill.
7. **Public Access to Conservators’ Official Letters.** Barbara and Chris proposed the following Official Letter Policy:
1. As a general rule, all official letters stating a Newton Conservators position on an issue or to a public official will be made available on the Conservators website in a publicly accessible file. Personal letters will not be on the website but may be on the G-drive.
2. However, a document may be withheld from posting on the publicly available website by the President, the Executive Committee or by a vote of the majority of the Conservators Board. This was moved by Barbara and seconded by Larry and passed unanimously. Jon pointed out that any

letter to city government becomes a public record, so that we should respond with the cover language “in response to your request for a public record”.

8. **Edmands Off-Leash Dog Park.** Our letter to PRC Commissioner Banks about the Edmands Park Off-Leash Dog Park, was not distributed to stakeholder organizations such as OLAWG, Friends of Edmands Park, Cabot Canines and Edmands for All. The pro and con stakeholders’ groups (Cabot Canines and Edmands for All) will be working over the summer to develop a new compromise proposal (the Cabot Canines April proposal specifies three midday hours as on leash). It was agreed we should distribute by email our letter to all the stakeholder groups to be in time for these summer discussions. Beth said the issue will return to the PRC in September, which may make a statement that the Commissioner would consider. Since OLAWG is an advisory group to the PRC, it is not subject to the open meeting law. Barbara asked Jon where a restricted-area off-leash area might be sited in Edmands; he responded that the southern part of the park near Mill St. would be possible as it is already invaded and disturbed. The areas of meadow, esker and pond should not be permitted as off leash. **Larry said that an area restriction would be preferable to a time restriction. The lack of enforcement at all off-leash parks was recognized as a continuing problem.** Jon volunteered to be our representative at the PRC meetings bringing Cabot Canines and Edmands for All together, if the PRC department allows us to participate in the process. Such meeting will likely be in July.
9. **Advocacy Walks.** Katherine attended the Cold Spring Park Walk on June 22 with the Friends of Cold Spring Park, the mayoral candidate Marc Laredo, and a few city councilors (Kalis, Getz, Malakie). Various ways of discussing open space issues with mayoral candidates were explored, which may involve a questionnaire to the candidates based on previous question sets. The responses could be published in the fall newsletter.
10. **Nahanton Park.** The walkthrough for Nahanton Park will be at 9 am on July 28 with both Luiz Demorizi and Ahron Lerman of the PRC attending.
11. **Volunteer Positions.** A request for various volunteer positions was in the most recent newsletter, including Bookkeeper, Membership Coordinator, Ebulletin coordinator, and Social Media coordinator. Regarding the Social Media position, Katherine suggested that this person could produce a regular/frequent “Nature in Newton” posting using content (nature photos and identifications) provided by our directors. If these were posted regularly on social media (using the Mailchimp scheduling functionality) this would provide good outreach and publicity for our group.
12. **Hammond Pond Parkway.** Barbara and Alicia presented to residents of the Towers of Chestnut Hill about Webster Woods and the Hammond Pond Parkway project; there were many concerned questions about the HPP project and Alicia followed up to get answers from DCR. Those answers, which included a possible solution to the lack of sidewalk for Towers residents walking to Webster Woods, were circulated with the meeting packet. Katherine suggested these answers would be of interest to our mailing list if we can get them out quickly. An article on the issues and plans is being written and Katherine will see if we can present that early via the Ebulletin.
Katherine had signed a Massachusetts Parks for All letter of support for an increase to DCR’s budget, as approved by Executive Committee. Katherine had also submitted a letter of support for DPW’s grant request for stormwater design work at Auburndale Park; the letter was approved by the Exec Comm. Both letters will be posted on the new Official Letters website area.
13. **Walks.** To avoid overcrowding, Susan suggested that we limit walks to 30 people and try scheduling some walks during the week. Barbara already limits her walks to about thirty of which about half usually attend.
14. **Adjournment.** Adjournment was moved, seconded and declared at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: A) Consent Agenda

Newton Conservators consent agenda for June 2025 Executive Committee & Board meetings		as of Jun 22 2025TE (3 pages)
SUBMISSION DEADLINES	Sunday June 15 Executive Committee Sunday June 22 full Board	
<u>Conservators programs, projects</u>		
Minutes (Mike C.)		
See attachment B1.		
Treasurer's Report (Katherine)		
Transition to David & Larry is in progress. Bookkeeper volunteer help wanted is being advertised in newsletter. Annual Mtg finances approx a net cost of \$1200, about \$1100 worse than last year - due to \$200 increase in Post 440, \$100 NVB sponsorship not yet received, \$750 lower gifts, \$50 higher tip to Maria staff, and a few too many meals guaranteed - we had only a couple walkins. Expenses are also not all in I believe. Please submit so we have a full picture. Re: new Trail Guide we paid copy editor \$648 (13.5 hrs @ \$48/hr) - this will appear in Projects on June financials. Re: Almanac reprinting - Signal has not made much editing progress yet Annual Meeting committee - no discussions as of yet and no dates or venues have been reserved.		
Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)		
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)		
Grants (Jon, Nyssa)		
Invasives (Katherine)		
Cook's Bridge knotweed work with Eric Highers - part 1 completed, part 2 to be scheduled. J Steel requested that KH and Crystal Lake neighbor with a canoe remove and apply herbicide to a norway maple blocking the outflow near the MBTA track. Invasives walk with Roger Kirschner of Friends of Edmands Park. Ellie Goldberg and neighbors are now enthused about invasives work and working with Friends group.		
Media & Publicity <i>incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media</i>		
Ebulletin Coordinator and Social Media Coordinator are among the volunteer positions being recruited.		
Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine)		
Membership coordinator is among the volunteer positions being recruited.		
Tabling - we skipped Waban Village Day, and we plan to skip July 4 event (Katherine).		
Newsletter (Ken)		
from Barbara Bates: One of the 13/14 year olds on my congregation's Coming of Age (COA) ceremony read an absolutely wonderful credo about how the Envir/Sci program converted her to a serious outdoors woman. I have spoken with her (and her parents) and Linnea Dun Rappaport will be doing a Fall Newsletter article (adapted from her credo) as well as co-leading with me an		

intergenerational walk at Edmands Park in the fall involving some nature games. She thinks she can recruit some middle schoolers as well as some NNHS students to join the walk.

We are in the planning stage and she feels she can meet the deadlines of Aug 1 for first drafts of both article and walk description.

Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)

Stewardship visits need to be scheduled.

Newton Public Schools curriculum unit(s) (Nyssa)

Trail Guide (Dan B.)

Copy editor invoice paid for \$648 (see Treasurer report). (Katherine)

Walks (Susan) & **Other Events**

I am starting to plan the walks for the fall season. In addition to our regular walk and Bioblitz leaders (Barbara, Henry, Jon, and Katherine, as well as Alan Nogee, a student via Barbara, Ted Chapman and others I'm most likely omitting here), I have found three new possibilities for leading walks. Two are a husband (Jim Meadors) and wife team who led a walk on ferns in Lincoln that I attended through the Lincoln Conservation Trust. It was a terrific walk; very clear & informative. The other person is Jeff Adams, a naturalist who has given walks for Lincoln Conservation Trust, and has led walks in Middlesex Fells, around Long Pond in Winchester and Sudbury Valley Trustees properties. I am planning on attending one of his walks this Wednesday. Please let me know if you have any feedback on these potential walk leaders.

I would like to discuss two items: 1) putting a limit on attendance and 2) offering walks during the week in addition to the weekend. 1) I have been on many of these walks over the years and have enjoyed them immensely. However, a walk is a much better experience if one can hear the leader and see what they're referring to or looking at. If one is at the front of the pack of participants it's no problem but if one is at the back, the leader can't be heard and it can be frustrating. A microphone certainly helps but with a group of over 30 people, perhaps walking single file on a wooded path, even this additional equipment doesn't help the people at the back of the group (who are more likely to be infirm or elderly). I suggest limiting groups to 30 people. 2) The weekday option would give leaders more days to choose from to lead a walk. The preference would still be the weekends but if someone wanted to do an extra session or couldn't make any of the weekend dates, it would be good to have a weekday option.

Webinars (Beth)

Planning is under way for the fall webinar season.

City & state programs , projects, issues

Conservation Commission (Dan G.)

Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth)

An update on the revised proposal for an off-leash dog park at Edmands Park will be presented at the P&R Commission meeting on Monday, June 16.

The grand opening of the Upper Falls Splash Pad was on June 16, and the Spears Park Community Garden ribbon cutting was on June 17.

On a related note: At the request of Brendan Whittaker, a longtime Newton Conservators' member and former Secretary of Vermont Agency for Natural Resources and the Vermont Secretary of Environmental Conservation, a group including Barbara Bates and Katherine Howard has started discussion about restoring some American chestnut trees on PR&C (and conservation) lands. We had a good meeting with representatives of the MA/RI branch of the Native Chestnut Association, who have offered us 50 hybrid American-Chinese and 10 American Chestnuts. Marc Welch expressed willingness to offer some help with the project. There will be more information once our group has

another planning session.

CRs – pending or to be requested

Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)

Bees on Newton public land (Jon)

Tree ordinance (Beth, Katherine, Bill)

Friends Groups updates

CSP - the beautiful new box steps at Plymouth Rd are in place, now complete with rope handrail. Marc Laredo and the Councilors used and admired the new steps on the CSP tour today 6/22/25. (Katherine)

Pollinator Tour June 21 – seems to have been highly successful (Katherine)

other City updates

Other items

State legislation

June 11 meeting at Towers community on Webster Woods and Hammond Pond Parkway project - it was a great success. Barbara and Alicia made excellent presentations on the wonders of WW and the status and goals of the HPP project. Alicia did follow up with DCR on the HPP safety questions and concerns from the residents. DCR answered the questions very well - see Attachment D. (Katherine) (Should these answers also go to our mailing list or members?)

Newton Conservators' Board of Directors Meeting

July 23, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Katherine Howard, chairing, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Dan Green, Chris Hepburn, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson and guest Tod Macallister.

1. **Welcome.** Katherine welcomed the participants at 7:04 pm.
2. **Nature and Community.** In lieu of a prepared Nature and Community statement, Katherine described the interesting backgrounds of recent invasives volunteers. These have included high school students of French, Mexican and Asian backgrounds. Adult volunteers have included a young Chinese educator, scientists, and community activists. Katherine believes that the invasives program is one route for us to engage new people and become more diverse.
3. **Calendar Items.** Nyssa noted the following tabling events for which we need volunteers: Newtonville Village Day, October 5, Upper Falls Village Day, September 14, Indigenous Peoples Day, October 15, and the Harvest Fair, October 19.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Katherine asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment A) to the discussion agenda. Barbara moved the consent agenda, which was accepted with no changes.
5. **Trail Guide.** Dan noted the various improvements in the new trail guide, which is 38% larger pages than the previous edition and contains much more information about the parks and trails, including an 18 x 25” map of city-wide trails and QR codes. He intends to engage a printer in July. He expects to request the board to approve the price of the guide and discounts to members in October. Distribution of the guide should begin in January 2026 with a print run of 1,000 copies at an estimated cost of \$11, 530. Tod Macallister suggested that real estate agents might like copies to distribute to potential homebuyers thinking of relocating to Newton. Ken suggested a newsletter article about the day the guide is released to publicize it.
6. **Membership Committee.** Beth, Nyssa, and Katherine volunteered to be on the membership committee.
7. **Edmands Off-Leash Dog Park.** Katherine said that Ahron Lerman of the PRC will meet with Cabot Canines on July 24. The proposal will not go back to the PRC commission until Ahron, Luiz Demorizi and Carol Stapleton have received a workable proposal. Ahron will confer with Jon Regosin soon and the Conservators will have a representative at the next meeting with Cabot Canines at the end of August. Katherine suggested to Ahron that off-leash dogs might be confined to a specific area. Ahron said there might be a central site for complaints about how dogs were using the park. The current proposal would greatly increase the use of the park and needs more on-leash hours, restrictions and controls, particularly in the spring when flora and fauna are the most sensitive to incursions. Some trails in the park should be closed and the main trails better maintained. Public and private trail funds might be used for trail maintenance and improvements. Dogs might be limited to residents only on the weekends. Katherine felt that the PRC was willing to wait to consider the proposal until after Cabot Canines had provided ways in which they could contribute to ameliorating the effect of off- and on-leash dogs in the park.
8. **Nahanton Park.** Katherine will participate in a walk through Nahanton Park on July 28 where aspects of the park such as birds, gardens, resettling the bridge on Florrie’s Path, parking at the soccer field, invasives, the woodcock field, and Nature Center repairs should be considered. The bridge will be resettled and anchored by volunteer contractors. Chris felt that Florrie’s path should be upgraded, possibly by a Scout group. Both Luiz Demorizi and Ahron Lerman will attend along with Ouida Young of the law office. Alicia suggested that the Office on Disabilities might be able to help extend the accessibility of Florrie’s Path beyond the bridge. The


conservation restriction for the park is still in planning and aspects of the history of the park as an almshouse may be cited in the CR request. Chris suggested that Katherine circulate her list of discussion topics to others participating in the walk before July 28. Barbara observed that residents at the Jewish Community Center might be interested in helping in some way to maintain trails in the park. Katherine also will remind the group on Monday that there is a management plan for the park that was formulated by the Audubon Society.

9. **Election Candidate Survey.** Katherine asked for volunteers for a subcommittee to develop a questionnaire for a candidate survey on open space issues. Beth, Susan, Alicia and Barbara volunteered. Katherine determined that it would not be possible to get the results into the fall Newsletter, but that a special ebulletin could be issued. Alicia said that the few questions should include the candidates' commitments to addressing climate change and should be available to voters by late September.
10. **CR Monitoring.** Chris said that it's time to begin the next round of CR monitoring. Updated 2025 forms may not be available but the 2024 forms can be used by simply changing the year. Chris urged monitors to include the landowner on the site visit. Chris will try to incorporate recent CR-monitoring volunteers into experienced CR teams.
11. **Request for Support for the Lowell "Run for Nature" Event.** Jon Regosin, who was not present, had proposed that the Conservators donate \$250 to sponsor the Lowell Run for Nature Event on Sunday morning, September 28 to support the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust. Nyssa suggested that we develop a relationship with the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust by participating in their event and that they could participate in one of our events. Some members felt that transferring funds from our nonprofit to another would be inappropriate, although we have discussed in DEIJ context the possibility of such support when for an underserved population. The board voted that financial support should be done only by individuals. Katherine, Henry Barbara and possibly Ken and Susan volunteered.
12. **DEIJ Subcommittee.** Susan, Katherine and Nyssa constitute the DEIJ committee.
13. **Revisiting the Consent Agenda.** Ken said that August 1 was the deadline for the fall Newsletter. Alicia and Barbara will write an article on the improvements at the Hammond Pond Parkway for a website post and ebulletin. Alicia felt that a walkway to connect the Towers at Chestnut hill to Hammond Pond would be a good idea to suggest to DCR, which may be possible when they repave the area that has been used for equipment parking.
14. **Adjournment.** Adjournment was moved, seconded and declared at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: A) Consent Agenda

Newton Conservators consent agenda for July 2025		as of 7/20/25 8pm
Executive Committee & Board meetings		(?)
SUBMISSION DEADLINES	Monday July 14 4pm Executive Committee Wednesday July 23 full Board	
<u>Conservators programs, projects</u>		
Minutes (Mike C.)		
See attachment B.		
Treasurer's Report (Katherine)		
Financials (Att C) through June 30 were produced with participation from Larry and David. I will email them and put them in the board packet. Most things are on track and there was little activity this quarter:		
- Edmands Pollinator grant of \$500 was paid (grant was approved last year conditional on plant list etc; approved for payment recently)		
- Trail Guide copyeditor was paid \$648 - shows in Special Projects		
- the NAV (net asset value) of our index fund investment keeps going up - another 8% in Q2, yielding \$29K YTD unrealized gain.		
- the Annual Meeting net cost of \$1200, higher than previous years, was due to \$750 less in gifts, \$200 increase in Post 440, a \$100 sponsorship not yet received, increasing the tip amount by \$50, and having few walk ins. Annual Meeting expenses may not yet be complete - please submit any outstanding items. We need to have complete picture for future planning.		
Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)		
Cheesecake Brook Bioblitz with CRWA is on 7/29 at 4pm. Go to our Events page to register. (Katherine)		
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)		
The 2025 CR Monitoring Sheet is now available on the Conservators shared Drive in the CR Monitoring folder. Go to the 2025 CR Monitoring sign-up sheet, and just type in your name. Hopefully, the person in the first column will contact the others and arrange a time for the visit. The other info as to the form for 2025, etc., will be forthcoming, but will be essentially the same as the ones for 2024. Here is the signup sheet:		
 CR Monitoring Sign Up Sheet for 2025 :		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)		
On agenda for 7/23.		
Golf Course 61B		
Mike to convene small group to discuss next steps with LWVN report.		
Grants (Jon, Nyssa)		
Invasives (Katherine)		
Sessions are going fine though poorly attended (but I'm meeting some great new people!). For July/August I have scheduled sessions every Thursday Saturday and Sunday mornings 8:30-10 and that is helping to be more organized.		
At Edmands Park there is gratifying interest in natives and invasives, and efforts from Roger Kirschner, Michele Weinfeld, Ellie Goldberg, and other neighbors. Perhaps building on the pollinator garden effort, they seem to want to work on something helpful and productive that is not dog park controversy. There has been continuing education in the biodiversity challenges there and interest expressed in a possible restoration effort.		
Media & Publicity incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media		
No responses yet to "Help Wanted" for Ebulletin and Social Media volunteer positions (or any of the positions) . (Katherine)		
Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine)		
Walks and webinars additional 142 contacts have been added to Mailchimp. Our monthly Mailchimp cost will be slightly higher as a result. Ongoing analysis needed to remove people who continue to be un-engaged. No response		

yet to Help Wanted for Membership Coordinator position. (Katherine)

Membership Comm needs to propose what to do for renewal levels and membership benefits in light of plans for new Trail Guide. (Katherine)

Newsletter (Ken)

Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)

Stewardship sessions needed at Dexter and Awtrey. KH to schedule. Please let me know who is interested in helping there. (Katherine)

Newton Public Schools curriculum unit(s) (Nyssa)

Trail Guide (Dan B.)

This will be a main agenda item at the 7/23 meeting. (Katherine) See Attachment D.

Walks (Susan) & Other Events

I sent out a spreadsheet soliciting dates for fall walks to some board members and several other people. So far, I've received dates from Alan Noguee for Cold Spring Park (9/20) and Jeff Adams, a naturalist who leads walks for conservation organizations in the metro area, for Kennard Park (10/5). **I asked people to respond by July 20** so I will have time to pull together walk write-ups and photos for Ken's newsletter deadline of 8/1. See Friend Groups, below, for more info.

Prepping for obtaining leaders to add to our current roster of walk leaders: I've reached out to Jim and Ellen Meadors, who led a fern walk for Lincoln Conservation Trust. They want to defer their fern walk in Newton until spring because various ferns senesce by or during fall.

I plan to reach out to and explore engaging (unless anyone has objections): 1) Stefanie Haug, a psychotherapist and mindful outdoor guide who led a forest bathing walk recently (I may enlist her for a mid-week event for seniors); 2) Elizabeth James-Perry, an Aquinnah Wampanoag Culture Bearer, educator, and restorative Native gardener who is dedicated to the revival of valuable Indigenous knowledge and "who explores themes of Northeastern Woodlands, maritime traditions, and Native identity and sovereignty"; 3) Dr. Darlene Flores, a member of the Taino Higuayagua Caribbean Tribe and Newton resident who leads Indigenous people's walks; 4) Boot Boutwell, a freelance naturalist who has led walks for The Friends of the Fells for nearly 25 years, The Trustees of Reservations, Arlington Community Education, The MA Association of Conservation Commissions, The New England Wild Flower Society and Mass Audubon; and 5) Elsa Lawrence, who attended one of our walks and stated that she has led walks at other organizations and is a Master Gardener.

Webinars (Beth)

Fall webinars still in process.

City & state programs , projects, issues

Conservation Commission (Dan G.)

Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth)

Ted Chapman reported that the Newton Community Farm Board is in the process required to renew their license and lease for the farm property.

CRs – pending or to be requested

Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)

Bees on Newton public land (Jon)

Tree ordinance (Beth, Katherine, Bill)

Mothers Out Front has a draft of recommendations for the Tree Ordinance and has asked to meet with me to get my comments.

Friends Groups updates (Susan)

I reached out to various Friends groups to learn about their interest in hosting walks.

Sent a spreadsheet to the following people who expressed interest in leading a walk: Janice Bourque of Crystal Lake Conservancy has agreed to do one for the lake this fall and Alan Nogee will do one for Cold Spring. Michele Hahns of Friends of Houghton Garden has not responded yet (and did not for spring 2025 walks), nor have Haynes Miller and Alison Leary of Friends of Nahanton Park or Dr. John Mordes of Friends of Hemlock Gorge (but he may not be doing walks anymore).

Did not reach out to: Chestnut Hill Reservoir group (I could not find email or website address or phone #) and Friends of Edmands Park (this seems like too contentious of a spot to hold a walk for the time being and there could be a lot of dogs disrupting the walk).

Reached out to but decided not to do walk at this time: Susan Servais of Waban Hill Reservoir friends group said the City recently mowed a lot of the area around the reservoir so it's not that interesting right now for a walk; Kathleen Grieser of Bullough's Pond Association who does not want to allow walk-ons to her walk due to possible personal safety concerns (two NC board members felt that restricting walks to only those who register is inconsistent with NC's open-door approach).

"Bigfoot Adventure" in CSP. on Friday 7/25 10:30 - 4:30 (Alan Nogee trying to manage the situation and get Ahron/Luis involved) (Katherine)

CSP Cleanup/Bioblitz on July 5 by Brandeis student Elena Guarante (KH attended, it was interesting/successful but poorly attended). I was interviewed by Fig City news about it. (Katherine)

Elena's next event is billed as just a Cleanup (no mention of Bioblitz) - it is at Auburndale Cove Sat Aug 2 from 2-4. (Katherine). See attachment I to register.

Alan Nogee met recently with the Cemetery folks (Maryann Buros and others). It appears there is some interest in installing a gate (not for cars) across from Beacon St CSP entrance. They had actually looked into it themselves. Also potential coordination on bioblitz, impact of their increased unmowed areas, invasives, cork tree removal. (Katherine)

Great feedback on the new box steps - and thanks to Dan Brody for posting it as a news item on the NC website. I propose that Scout Paul Vielle and FCSP board member Christian Reivero get an award! (Katherine)

At Hemlock Gorge, DCR is being wonderful about mowing the Ellis St Superintendents field that was entirely BSW, and it is looking miraculously transformed. MWRA has finally just mowed the steep slope at the stairs to Echo Bridge, which was 90% BSW and knotweed - they did a fantastic job. (If they could just do it more often it could possibly be as successful as what DCR has done.) At the platform under Echo Bridge where one does the echo, MWRA has boarded up the access stairs with a very nice sign saying repair work will be done this coming week 7/21-7/25. I am planning to post the sign in our Conservation News. The sign also lists the name email and phone of the MWRA Community Relations person:

Troy Wall 617 305 5762 Troy_Wall@mwra.com. I will put the photo of the sign in the board packet. Very helpful to have this! (Katherine) See attachment G in board packet.

Other City updates

Edmands Dog park - KH sent an email 6/30 and then a reminder 7/16 to Comm Banks that we would like to have a rep at the sessions trying to come up with a new compromise proposal. She responded 7/19 and wants to talk to me by

phone on Monday morning. We shall see! (Katherine)
Also see my updates on Edmands listed under Invasives above. (Katherine)

Other items

State legislation

There was a follow up email from Mass Parks for All saying the DCR budget was funded at \$400K less than MPA was supporting. I will put the email in the board packet. (Katherine) See attachment H in Board packet.

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting

September 24, 2025, 7-9 PM

Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Katherine Howard, chairing, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Jon Regosin, Larry Smith, and guest Alan Nogee.

1. **Welcome.** Katherine welcomed the participants at 7:03 pm.
2. **Nature and Community - Goodbye Alicia.** Katherine expressed our gratitude to Alicia for all her hard work in her almost two years on the board. Alicia thanked the board and reflected on the effect birding has on people and its contribution to society.
3. **Calendar Items.** Nyssa noted the tabling events for which we need volunteers.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Katherine asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment A) to the discussion agenda. Barbara moved to approve the consent agenda and minutes, which passed with no objection.
5. **Cutler Park.** DCR has requested approval of a trail master plan for Cutler Park, which is in the outreach and public comment stage on the partially complete boardwalk. Barbara encouraged members to attend the online hearing and to send comments to her so that she could represent them at the meeting.
6. **Climate Action Plan.** Alan Nogee noted the revision of the city's climate plan and the state's biodiversity plan. He proposed to Jennifer Steel that the climate plan be revised to include aspects of the state biodiversity plan. This proposal centers on the following items: 1. Include biodiversity consideration in city planning and decision-making. 2. Establish a Biodiversity Task Force or Commission – To set clear targets, coordinate across departments, monitor progress, and ensure accountability. 3. Protect and increase open space – Increase protection of our existing natural areas and prepare to act quickly when new open space opportunities become available. 4. Protect forests and natural area habitats – Assess and restore the health of park and conservation forests and wetlands, including understory vegetation. 5. Scale up invasive species management – Increase resources and incentives for controlling invasives and restoring native habitat. 6. Create and maintain native plant gardens, corridors, and landscapes – Expand and sustain native plantings and connected habitats across public and private lands. 7. Lead by example and educate residents, businesses and landscapers – Shift landscaping norms toward native plants and launch public education comparable to our energy campaigns. Alan solicited the backing of the Newton Conservators to endorse his proposal. Jon, who was a member of the state working group that produced its biodiversity plan, felt the city climate plan and the state biodiversity plan were separate items. Katherine proposed a subcommittee to work with Alan on the issue. Peter said that it would be important to get Jennifer Steel's support to get it into the climate plan, which is more energy based.
7. **Edmands Off-Leash Dog Park.** Jon attended a site visit to Edmands Park. His impression of the group attending was that it was mixed as to their knowledge of the off-leash proposal. Nicole Banks said that Ahron Lerman would be the PRC representative to OLAWG. Jon will connect with Ahron about the proposal. Nicole Banks indicated that the proposal was under revision and that enforcement would not likely improve. It remains to be seen how the new mayor will weigh in on the issue.
8. **Webster Woods CR Draft.** Nyssa said that the draft CR for Webster Woods became available in August and was sent to both the NC board and advisors. Several format errors were detected in the draft. An attorney, Kim Kimmel commented on the draft. Katherine observed that the enforcement funds may not be adequate. Another problem is that the Boston College parking lot is close to the vernal pool, which may cause environmental problems. Soil and water testing

should be done on a regular basis. Katherine felt that allowing the spread of an invasive species should be a prohibited act and that the CR should require an active management program for invasive species. The group agreed to move ahead on the issue.

9. **Election Candidate Survey.** Katherine thanked Barbara for fixing the website so that its response was quicker when the candidate survey was posted. The survey results were also distributed through our ebulletin. The survey seemed to prompt candidate interest in the open space plan and the climate plan. Candidates who were running uncontested tended not to respond. Alicia suggested that we follow up with some of the successful candidates to inform them of the work the Conservators do.
10. **CR Monitoring.** Nyssa said that the CR sign-up list is posted on the website and that the monitoring should be done by the end of October so that the reports could be submitted to the city in November. Katherine observed that invasive plants growing between the rocks supporting the Waban Hill Reservoir could cause structural damage and that this should be mentioned in its CR monitoring report. Rosters for the monitoring teams have been updated.
11. **Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting will be Thursday, May 7, 2026 at Post 440. Katherine solicited ideas for speakers and awardees and suggested diversity in possible speakers.
12. **Tree Ordinance.** Katherine suggested that the tree ordinance committee should meet to look at changes in the ordinance.
13. **Golf Course Ch61B Update.** Mike said that the NC committee's comments on version-12 of the proposed LWVN report, which were distributed in the meeting packet, will be sent to the LWVN working committee during the week.
14. **Dudley Road Parcel.** The new owner of the Dudley Road parcel has eliminated unbuildable open space by blasting away rock ledge so that that area can be built upon.
15. **Social Media Coordinator.** A candidate, Anna Kaplan, for social media coordinator has been accepted. The coordinator would format media pieces with pictures and videos from individual Conservators to be posted on social media using Mail Chimp. Abigail Dobey is willing to be the ebulletin coordinator.
16. **Membership Committee.** The membership committee needs to meet on the trail guide, pricing, the year-end funding solicitation and other issues.
17. **Nahanton Park** The Nahanton park walkthrough, which was conducted by Luis Demorizi, who has moved on to be the director of Franklin Park, will be followed up by Ahron Lerman.
18. **IPMC Representative.** Katherine noted that we need a new representative to the Integrated Pest Management Committee for which Katherine has a potential candidate, who is a NC member.
19. **Public Access Path at Bigelow Condominiums.** A group of neighbors would like the path near Ober Road in Oak Hill on the Bigelow Condominiums land to be cleared and accessible to pedestrians again.
20. **132 Homer St.** This property near the Newton Center Playground and the Cochituate Aqueduct has been subdivided into three small parcels. Neighbors would like one parcel of about 15,000 sq ft preserved as open space, but it does not appear to have significant open space value.
21. **Adjournment.** Adjournment was moved, seconded and declared at 9:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: A) Consent Agenda

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
October 22, 2025, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Katherine Howard, chairing, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Alicia Bowman, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Nyssa Patten, Jon Regosin, Larry Smith, and guests Ted Chapman, Jay Werb, Alan Nogee, Katherina Elbert, and Anna Kaplan.

1. **Welcome.** Katherine welcomed the participants including several guests at 7:03 pm. She noted that Karen Lumino (not in attendance) was interested in volunteering for things she could do at home or online.
2. **Nature and Community Statement.** In lieu of the statement, Katherine summarized a plan developed recently with Dr. Darlene Flores, the organizer of Newton’s Indigenous Peoples Day observance. She had approached us to collaborate on a nature walk in Webster Woods for indigenous youth to be funded we hope by a grant from the Mass Organization for Outdoor recreation (MOOR), the application for which she will submit by its due date this Friday. The grant would include transportation from Mashpee and Cambridge as well as lunch. Nyssa, Barbara, Susan and Katherine will assist in preparing the grant. Chris moved to endorse the grant proposal with a second from Susan. The motion passed unopposed.
3. **Calendar And Social Media Volunteers.** Nyssa noted the tabling events for which we need volunteers. Anna Kaplan has volunteered to be our Social Media Coordinator to post pictures and videos. Anna introduced herself at the meeting; she graduated from Newton North High School and is now studying marketing at the University of Connecticut. Abigail Dobies could not make the meeting; she is now our E-bulletin Coordinator and will share Mailchimp and email accounts with Anna. It was agreed that we no longer use the website to archive e-bulletins; Barbara will move the existing archive to our G Drive; it was agreed we don’t need to add to the archive going forward, as the events listed are already archived in Wordpress. Ken asked about formatting and the resolution of files needed (jpegs, pdfs, videos, other media items and credits thereof). Directors should send pictures and blurbs to mediacoordinator07@gmail.com.
4. **Consent Agenda.** Katherine asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment A) to the discussion agenda. Barbara moved to approve the consent agenda and minutes, which passed with no objection.
5. **Nature for Massachusetts Coalition Ballot Initiative.** Alan Nogee explained that the Nature for Mass Coalition is a broad group including the AMC, Sierra Club and about 20 other organizations engaged in passing an act “Creating Nature Access for All” either by Legislation or by ballot initiative. Its goal is to set aside revenue (approximately \$100M annually) from the existing state sales tax on sporting goods and recreation-related sales to create a designated fund for protecting and conserving water and nature. Alan suggested that the NC join the coalition. by signing up on their website (www.natureforma.org), There is no cost and no commitment to do signature gathering. Barbara moved that we join the coalition, which passed unanimously. Golf courses sales would be included as they are considered recreational vendors.

6. **Upper Falls Trail Grant.** Ted Chapman introduced Jay Werb for the discussion of the Upper Falls Greenway proposal. Ted briefly presented the progress on the Pony Truss Bridge, Pigeon Hill and Riverside Trails, and future developments including the Commonwealth Ave. Greenway from Lyons Field to across the Charles River and the new Riverside development plan and its proposed shared use pathways. His main subject was the Upper Falls River Walk and Blue Heron trail from Bobby Braceland Park along the river to where the bridge near the radio tower across the Charles River is. This work proposed to improve access and protect the shoreline would stay within the former railroad easement. Possibilities of running a boardwalk trail under the “Sunset Bridge” through a wetland presents a problem as do necessary permissions from condominium abutters. The group hopes to submit a proposal for a Mass Trails Grant on February 1 and to take advantage of Northland mitigation funds. The project itself could be a \$100K-\$300K effort, with a 20% match required. To fund the estimated \$5000 needed for initial cost estimates and design, the Upper Falls group expects to get \$1000 from the Upper Falls Community Development Fund, \$1000 from Upper Falls Area Council, \$1522 of the funds that Newton Conservators holds for the Upper Falls Greenway group (it was voted to approve such use), and is asking for additional support from Newton Conservators’ Trails Revolving Fund, which would presumably be paid back later by the Northland Mitigation funds. Henry asked about the bridge at the end of the Greenway to Needham, which Jay Werb felt was unlikely to be connected. Barbara moved that up to \$4000 be approved for the Executive Committee to work within to provide the initial funding needed for the grant submission; Katherine seconded, and this passed without opposition.
7. **Edmand’s Park Trails and Off-Leash Dog Park.** Beth noted at a PRC meeting that there had not been a response to our letter regarding the Edwards Off-Leash proposal.
8. **85 Dudley Road Parcel.** Katherine has written a letter to send to the Land Use Committee of the City Council regarding the potential purchaser’s proposal for the property, which is deleterious to wildlife, the environment and which the ConCom also opposes. Participants in the discussion felt that Katherine should send the letter.
9. **Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting will be Thursday, May 7, 2026 at Post 440. Katherine included a list of possible speakers in the meeting packet, which was discussed. Barbara suggested Zoe Schlanger, author of The Light Eaters, about a new theory on plant evolution. Nick Dorian, Avalon Owens and Sam Jaffee emerged as other potential candidates. It was agreed a subcommittee would prioritize and follow up with potential speakers.
10. **Membership Renewals and new Trail Guide.** Katherine suggested that this renewal season we ask members to upgrade to the sustainer level (\$75) to get the new trail guide “for free”, but that we not change dues levels this year. (She suggested that in the future we consider eliminating the \$35 level and renaming the \$50 level.) Dan said that the text maps and photos of the new trail guide are close to complete, while the design work still needs to be done; he still expects the new book to be available in early-mid 2026. Katherine was encouraged to proceed with her draft renewal membership letter as circulated in the meeting packet. For those who will receive the new Trail Guide “for free” (new members at all levels, and renewals at \$75 and up), \$23 (the cover price of the new book) will not be tax-deductible (but as few people still itemize deductions, we don’t think this will be of much concern to our members).

11. **Candidate Survey.** Katherine will thank the candidates who responded to our open-space survey before the November election.
12. **PRC.** Beth said there were five candidates for the PRC Open-Space Coordinator position vacated by Luis Demorizi. She also noted at the last PRC meeting that the Commission had not responded to Katherine's letter about the proposed off-leash area in Edmands Park.
13. **CR Monitoring.** Chris said the CR monitoring reports on the Newton Commonwealth Golf Course and the Waban Hill Reservoir Park were in. Late changes should be sent to Chris. Katherine said there was nothing new on the Webster Woods CR.
14. **Ch 61B Golf Courses** Mike said that our changes to the report to the LWVN on possible CR options to the current way the Newton CH61B Golf Courses are treated are still pending.

15. **Adjournment.** Adjournment was declared at 9:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: A) Consent Agenda

Newton Conservators consent agenda for October 2025 Executive Committee & Board meetings		As of 10/19/8pm
		pages)
SUBMISSION DEADLINES	Monday Oct 13 for Exec Committee on Oct 15 Sunday Oct 19 for full Board on Oct 22	
<u>Conservators programs, projects</u>		
Minutes (Mike C.)		
See attachment B		
Treasurer's Report (Katherine)		
A 2nd ChatterVox was purchased (\$235). Katherine will store one, Susan will store the other.		
I attended the MLTC session on legal work and title searches on 10/15/25 by Irene delBono. Need to discuss implications for NC.		
9/30/25 financial statements will be prepared soon.		
Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)		
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)		
Grants (Jon, Nyssa)		
Invasives (Katherine)		
Dexter, Awtrey to be scheduled. Wabasso is now scheduled for 10/25 with high schoolers.		
KH - I found my first Spotted Lanternfly in Waban. I shared it on iNaturalist, it is now research grade; there are now 4 observations in Newton in iNaturalist. I reported it to state MDAR, and got back the automated "thank you for reporting; we already know of the infestation in your town..."		
Invasives session with Northeastern U sorority group on 10/26 in CSP.		
Invasives session with BC Outdoor Adventures group on 11/9; possibly will domore at Wabasso.		
Media & Publicity <i>incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media</i>		
Ebulletin now being prepared by Abigail Dobies.		
Social Media posts scheduled on Mailchimp - being explored by Anna Kaplan (who will attend our mtg on 10/22).		
Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine, Beth)		
Renewal plan being proposed - to be discussed at board meeting. Propose to not change dues levels this year.		
Propose to give new Trail Guide to all new members, and all renewals at \$75+.		
Newsletter (Ken)		
Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)		
Newton Public Schools curriculum unit(s) (Nyssa)		
Trail Guide (Dan B.)		
Walks (Susan) & Other Events		

Webinars (Beth)
The next two webinars will be Bob Mallard on November 13 to talk about the importance of native fish for suburban/urban conservation and Dave Small on December 4 to share information about observing moths and attracting them to our properties.
Two brief clips from Dave Wattles’ 2023 webinar on coyotes (which, coincidentally is the topic of the “Did you miss this webinar?” piece for the winter newsletter) were used in a one-session course for animal control officers in California.
<u>City & state programs , projects, issues</u>
Conservation Commission (Dan G.)
Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth)
Commissioner Banks did not attend the September meeting, and there was no Commissioner’s report.
CRs – pending or to be requested
Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)
Bees on Newton public land (Jon)
Tree ordinance (Beth, Katherine, Bill)
At the September meeting of the Urban Tree Commission, Marc Welch reviewed the statistics his department has gathered so far from the updated tree ordinance. The minutes that summarize those statistics will be posted online after they are approved by the commission.
Friends Groups updates
other City updates
<u>Other items</u>
State legislation
DCR Cutler Reservation Phase I & II Results of Trails Master Plan - BLBates attended the DCR “preview” presentation along with Needham Conservation Officer, Walkers and Bikers groups. Here is a link to my report on our G-Drive: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tWaM74LSxyhUcABVEB4KESfVFSXohQ9/edit?usp=sharing&oid=100486512188152082639&rtpof=true&sd=true
Ober Rd Bigelow House condo owners now want to restore the public access path, and do landscape restoration and invasives management on the property.

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
November 19, 2025, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Katherine Howard, chairing, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Alan Noguee, Nyssa Patten, Jon Regosin, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson and guest Garry Miller.

1. **Welcome.** Katherine welcomed the participants at 9:02 pm.
2. **Nature and Community Statement.** Nyssa gave a report on Indigenous People’s Day gathering that was held at Newton North High School, which was welcoming to all and exuded a good feeling among a diversity of people.
3. **New Board Member.** Alan Noguee, who was not present during this section of the meeting, was unanimously elected to be a director. Alan joined the meeting at 7:15 pm. Andrea Downs will join the board in January.
4. **Calendar.** The next board meeting will be on December 17 and the Holiday gathering will be on January 21 at Henry’s home. Significant others are welcome. Henry will set up and circulate a link to a sign-up sheet for bringing food.
5. **Consent Agenda.** Katherine asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment A) to the discussion agenda. Mike noted that Beth had been added to the list of participants in the October minutes. The minutes and consent agenda were passed without opposition.
6. **Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting will be Thursday, May 7, 2026 at Post 440. Katherine said the speaker at the Annual meeting would be bee specialist Nick Dorian. She suggested Bob Mallard and the Native Fish Council for the Maynard award for their work on fish in local streams. Mayor Ruthanne Fuller was also suggested for the Environmentalist of the Year award. The Trail Guide Committee was nominated for a Directors Award. Katherine agreed to contact these awardees to ensure they are willing to accept the awards. Last year the meeting was about \$1,200 over budget. Beth suggested that we follow the lead of Green Newton by offering host tickets at a higher price, perhaps \$250 with those purchasing them being recognized in the program and possibly with a special name badge
7. **New Mayor.** Katherine said that mayor-elect, Marc Loredó, had responded positively to Beth’s letter and that we would discuss inviting him to attend a board meeting at our December meeting for his attendance at our January or February meeting, which might be held at the Waban Library or City Hall. Katherine will set up the meeting up with Loredó’s communication’s director, John Rice.
8. **Boston College.** Excerpts from Katherine’s Webster Woods letter to the *BC Heights* appeared in an article in that publication, which also had a report on the Fish webinar - reflecting an increased interest by BC students in the environment and open space.
9. **Newton Cemetery Grant Request.** The Newton Cemetery submitted a request to fund signage about their new no-mow area. It was suggested that the wording of the signage text could be shorter and simpler. Chris questioned the open-space rationale for the signage and why the Cemetery or a friends group didn’t fund it or that we might share costs with their friends group. Katherine suggested putting a cap of \$500 on the amount

for the grant and asking to approve the wording of the sign. The item passed without opposition. Beth indicated that Bob Mallard might submit a proposal on Laundry and Hammond Brooks for funding at \$500-600 each.

10. **City of Newton Climate Action Plan - Update.** Alan Nogee had submitted comments that wetlands and nature-based mitigation should be highlighted and that the policy group should be a Commission not a Working Group. Katherine had submitted (her personal) comments to add light pollution, dam removal, and making environmental choices in what residents buy, particularly in food packaging in grocery stores. Alan wondered if the new administration would support a biodiversity initiative and suggested we form a committee of Alan, Jon Pete, Beth, and Katherine to make recommendations on the initiative.
11. **MA Dept of Fish and Game Community Biodiversity Grants.** These individual grants will be from \$20,000 to \$200,000 with an application deadline of December 26. Katherine felt that many of the Newton Conservators activities would qualify for a grant under this program, such as removing invasives at Nahanton park, planting chestnut trees, restoring the Woodcock meadow and the large meadow at Nahanton. Beth suggested improvements to the old deer park. It was agreed to explore options with Evan Abramson and city staff.
12. **Edmand's Park Trails and Off-Leash Dog Park.** There was no update about the dog park; Katherine noted an invasives session was held to remove Japanese knotweed by the brook.
13. **85 Dudley Road Parcel.** In a communication delivered before the meeting, David related that he is meeting with Land Use Committee chair Andrea Kelley on November 20th to discuss her response to our letter, and the status of the project. He will send an update after that meeting. The developer has a purchase and sale agreement and is known for luxury housing projects rather than affordable ones. The new administration and new councilors in January might change the political landscape on this project. Katherine suggested that the Conservators might be involved in a joint open space/housing proposal for the property.
14. **Bullough's Pond Dam.** Katherine reported she had made personal remarks at the Nov 4 Public Services Committee (PSC) meeting, to ask if dam removal had been considered and what were the short and long term costs compared to the repair option Jonathan Yeo has some information about dam removal and Katherine will talk to him and report back to the group. It may be that the area would be more protective to houses and schools downstream, if it were removed. The PSC requested more information from DPW on new technologies before proceeding. The board agreed this topic should continue to be followed by the board.
15. **Membership Renewals and new Trail Guide.** Dan said that the Trail Guide text is complete; the photos have been selected; the maps are nearly complete; and the graphic designer is beginning to get into the final format and will solicit final comments from the board in December or January. Katherine, who is processing renewals in lieu of having a Membership Coordinator, reported people seemed to have noticed the special offer and many were renewing for \$75 in order to get the new Trail Guide in 2026.
16. **Candidate Survey.** Katherine will thank the candidates who responded to our open-space survey before the November election.

17. **CR Monitoring.** In a communication before the meeting David related that he and Larry had walked the Commonwealth Golf Course on November 11th and spoke to the manager Dave Stowe. Chris said that three non-directors helped with monitoring this year and that the CRs on city-owned property should be in soon.
18. **Spotted Lantern Flies.** Katherine suggested that we publicize that spotted lantern flies have invaded Newton. Beth thought a webinar on spotted lantern flies might be in order. They do not kill trees but attack agriculture produce such as grapes and secrete an offensive sticky liquid.
19. **Invasives.** Katherine and Jon worked on removing Chinese Wisteria from around Crystal Lake.
20. **Newsletter.** Ken said the winter newsletter mailing is imminent. Katherine volunteered to help. Items for the spring newsletter should be in by the end of January. Event listings for the spring newsletter should be for March 15 dates and later.

21. **Adjournment.** Adjournment was declared at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke

Attached: A) Consent Agenda

Newton Conservators consent agenda for Nov 2025		as of Sunday Nov 16 7pm
Executive Committee & Board meetings		
SUBMISSION DEADLINES	11/11 for Executive Committee 11/16 for full Board	
<u>Conservators programs, projects</u>		
Minutes (Mike C.)		
See attachment B.		
Treasurer's Report (Katherine)		
I am sending out 9/30/25 financials. Feeler is out for an admin/bookkeeper person - Karen Lumino connection. We received another \$5K donation from the estate of Marilee Wheeler whose nephew is local teacher Paul Martenis. (I had assumed last year's was a one-time thing!)		
Bioblitz (Jon, Ted)		
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)		
Please, let's complete the CR Monitoring reports so they can be sent to the City before the new administration comes in. Remember they are due Nov. 15. Thank you to those that have completed them! The finished ones are now in the CR monitoring file on the website.		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)		
Grants (Jon, Nyssa)		
A grant from the Newton Cemetery is residing in the "Pending Grants" folder in our G Drive. They are hoping to create a sign to explain a new no-mow section of the cemetery. Here is the draft wording of the proposed sign.		
Please address any concerns to the Grants committee (Nyssa, Ken, Jon)		
Invasives (Katherine)		
Lots of activity and progress being made. Crystal Lake wisteria along MBTA tracks being tackled with permission from city/PRC and con comm. Sessions with BC Outdoor Adventures 11/16 at Wabasso CA and with BC Ecopledge 11/23 at Deer Park. Spotted Lanternfly is now firmly invaded in Newton. MDAR treatment efforts are focused on agricultural areas and those with high risk of causing further spread eg railroad lines.		
Media & Publicity <i>incl. e-bulletin, website, YouTube, social media</i>		
Abigail continues to produce e-bulletin; she has a new job starting in Jan so we'll see if she will continue. We still have not figured out how to use Mailchimp for social media scheduled posts, so Anna's posting activity has been limited. Please continue to send material to mediacoordinator07@gmail.com .		
Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine)		
Renewal package stuffed and mailed Nov. Responses coming in ... I will give an update at the meeting.		
Newsletter (Ken)		
Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)		
Dexter "monitoring" visit done 10/27.		
Trail Guide (Dan B.)		
Walks (Susan) & Other Events		
Jeff Adams, who gave two guided walks in Kennard Park this past fall, will lead another walk in January. I limited it to an hour and a half due to possibly very cold weather. I would like to know about NC's liability coverage regarding these walks and possible accidents or injuries that might occur on them. Do we have any? Should we discuss?		
Webinars (Beth)		

Bob Mallard's presentation on native fish was well-received, with 139 signing up and 78 attending. And folks have been checking in to see when the recording will be available on our YouTube page. On December 4, Dave Small will talk with us about moths and attracting them to our properties.

City & state programs , projects, issues

Conservation Commission (Dan G.)

Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth)

On Monday the 17th, Ted Chapman will present an update on the Upper Falls Greenway/Riverwalk improvements.

CRs – pending or to be requested

Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)

Bees on Newton public land (Jon)

Tree ordinance (Beth, Katherine, Bill)

Friends Groups updates

other City updates

Other items

State legislation

Responding to Mayor-elect Marc Laredo's reply to our letter. When/how talk with John Rice? How schedule Marc talking with the board? How choose the topics on which to focus?

Newton Conservators Board of Directors Meeting
December 17, 2025, 7-9 PM
Online – Zoom Meeting

Participants: Katherine Howard, chairing, David Backer, Peter Barrer, Barbara Bates, Dan Brody, Michael Clarke, Henry Finch, Pete Gilmore, Dan Green, Bill Hagar, Susan Lyon, Ken Mallory, Alan Noguee, Nyssa Patten, Jon Regosin, Larry Smith, Beth Wilkinson and guest Garry Miller.

1. **Welcome.** Katherine welcomed the participants at 7:02 pm.
2. **Nature and Community Statement.** Beth gave her Nature and Community Statement: I would like to talk about connectedness. In his summary of the recent work of Native Fish Coalition in Newton, Bob Mallard wrote the following: “As we have moved our way through Newton’s streams and ponds, we found that in some cases things are being done in one place without a full understanding of what they might impact upstream and downstream. It would be more impactful in a positive manner, and less impactful in a negative way, if folks took a big picture view of these often interlinked aquatic ecosystems. Cold Spring Brook, Hammond Brook, and Laundry Brook are a single connected watershed. This includes Cold Spring Park, Newton Cemetery and Arboretum, Newton Free Library, Newton City Hall, Hammond Pond, Newton Center Playground, Bullough’s Pond, etc. The same holds true for Paul Brook and South Meadow Brook, Cheesecake Brook and Dolan Brook, etc. And, of course, they all tie into the Charles River.”

That statement and Bob’s maps caused me to focus more thoughtfully on how all parts of our city are connected, on how what happens in one part of the city often affects all of the city. As the year ends, it seems to focus on how all of nature in our community is connected. Our native bees are dependent upon the availability of native plants. Birds arriving in the spring are dependent on the plants blooming at the right time. The health of our waterways is dependent upon our limiting runoff from fertilizer from our yards and salt from our roads. As the year ends, I’m grateful to be part of Newton Conservators, an organization dedicated to preserving and improving that connectedness.

Katherine volunteered to give the Nature and Community Statement in January.
3. **Waterway Connectedness.** Picking up on Beth’s statement and Bob Mallard’s work, Katherine suggested that waterway connectedness might be a good topic for us to follow, and we could ask a volunteers to do this.
4. **Calendar.** The Holiday gathering will be on January 21 at Henry’s home. The signup sheet is on the website.
5. **Consent Agenda.** Katherine asked if anyone wanted to move items from the consent agenda (Attachment A) to the discussion agenda. The minutes and consent agenda were passed without opposition.
6. **Preparation for Meeting with Mayor Laredo.** Katherine said she heard back from John Rice, who is recovering from a knee replacement, and suggested that the Mayor might want to interact with us at either our January or February meeting. A subcommittee of Katherine, Beth, Alan, and Jon will work on preparing for that meeting.
7. **Letter to the Mayor.** The group discussed our letter to Laredo of November 6 and noted that he expressed excitement about Governor Healey’s plan for Biodiversity grants, which he was wanted to pursue and which the Conservators will also. Barbara noted that the Bullough’s Pond dam was not mentioned in the letter, and we may want to tell him

we support looking at dam removal as one of the options. It was also noted that a new Parks and Rec commissioner had yet to be appointed, but that Marc Welch will serve as acting Commissioner and Ahron Lerman will be the new Director of Parks and Open Space. Beth suggested that we prepare a list of open space items that he could present to his staff. The venue for our meeting with the mayor might be the Waban Library or City Hall.

8. **Letters to the City Council.** Katherine mentioned the difficulty in seeing others' comment letters about city council topics, such as 85 Dudley Rd, due to the new policy that they must be requested via a formal Public Records Request. She agreed to start that process for 85 Dudley Rd. Alan suggested that the issue of letters submitted to the City Council should be circulated by the Council with the docket item. This was further discussed later in the meeting, when Alan also suggested that a letter concerning this be sent to the City Clerk with a copy to the new mayor.
9. **Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting will be Thursday, May 7, 2026 at Post 440. The Speaker will be bee specialist Nick Dorian. Bob Mallard and the Native Fish Council were nominated for the Maynard award for their work on fish in local streams. Mayor Ruthanne Fuller was also suggested for the Environmentalist of the Year award. The Trail Guide Committee was nominated for a Directors Award. Susan volunteered to be on the Annual Meeting Organizing Committee along with Katherine, Nyssa and Beth.
10. **Trail Guide.** Dan B. thanked everyone for their comments on the part of the draft trail guide, which he released for review. There are 28 sites included in the guide, 22 of which have completed maps. The guide is about 60 pages long. Dan queried whether the process of reviewing the Trail Guide was amenable to everyone, which it was. Henry suggested an alternative picture for the covers, which he will later circulate. Katherine said that because of IRS rules for donor advised funds and IRAs, we will have to modify our free Trail Guide plan for those types of donors.
11. **Crystal Lake.** Alice Ingerson will come to our January or February meeting to discuss "several aspects of a long-term strategy" for Crystal Lake. She believes the complaint letter from the owner of 230 Lake Ave, which was in the meeting packet, to be just one part of the discussion.
12. **State Biodiversity Grant Application.** Katherine said that a grant to do meadow restoration at Nahanton Park had been ruled out as the grant timeline was too short. "Protecting the Biodiversity of Cold Spring Park Forests" was suggested as a proposal for a public/private partnership for a State Biodiversity grant as was "Addressing Invasive Amur Corks at Cold Spring Park" as a means of controlling invasives that are damaging the red maple forest, through tree cutting and herbicide cut stump treatment. The grant submission deadline is December 26th, 2025. The request from the Conservators would include a \$10K cash match, plus \$2.5K for restoration plantings if/when needed, plus \$2.5K of in-kind services. The Friends of Cold Spring Park would also potentially provide \$15K in funding. Chris asked whether the Trails Revolving Fund could be a source of funds. Jon moved to approve the \$10K in matching funds and the subsequent \$2,500 for future replanting from a to be determined combination of the Trail Revolving Fund, the Stewardship Fund and unrestricted funds, which the group voted to approve. It was also agreed that in the event the grant is not approved, we will still move forward with the city forestry department to start the needed work and may use approved matching funds for that effort. Barbara requested Jon to write a newsletter article about

invasive Amur cork trees. The group also approved approximately \$400 for Zach Shein (a biologist and licensed applicator) to finish mapping and treating cork trees in the CSP upland areas.

13. **DCR Renovation Plan for the Leo J. Martin Golf Course (LJMGC).** The comment period for the DCR plan is about to end. The group discussed possibilities of including more walking trails and connectivity, and that DCR should think about the bigger plan for the Riverside area, before proceeding with renovation. Barbara expressed a concern about the possibility of being hit by golf balls while walking through a golf course. The group agreed that Katherine will draft a comment letter, to DCR.
14. **85 Dudley Rd. Parcel.** The Stumpo proposal was withdrawn without prejudice from the Land Use Committee. Alice Ingerson will discuss this with Ted, Beth, Nyssa, Katherine, and Henry and other directors who would like to participate on December 22 at 4:00 pm. Katherine will let Dan G know and ask him if he can participate, or whether he has a conflict of interest if he is interested in the parcel.
15. **Bullough's Pond Dam.** Katherine listened in on the Public Facilities Committee on December 3, which decided to hold the issue over to the next Council to provide more time to consider possible actions on it. The Committee noted that culverts along Laundry Brook (and across the city) may be insufficient to handle the runoff from major precipitation events. A stormwater consultant has been hired by the city.
16. **Webster Woods Conservation Restriction.** Katherine reported a good meeting with the law department, though our requested items concerning soil and water testing cannot be included. Chris said that Boston College had done baseline water testing, which may be available, and if so, that will be included in the Baseline Report.
17. **Chestnut Tree Proposal.** Ted Chapman has proposed planting chestnut trees along the large meadow in Nahanton Park, as part of a collaboration with the American Chestnut Society. The discussion of planting possibilities will continue with Friends of Nahanton Park; other planting locations are also being considered.
18. **Light Pollution.** Nancy Morrison, Secretary for Dark Sky Massachusetts, contacted Katherine for us to add a link to Dark Sky's website. Katherine plans to contact Nancy and observed that we might be able to do more with the city regarding local light pollution.
19. **Newsletter.** Ken said that the deadline for the Spring Newsletter should be 2/1/2026.
20. **Walks.** Susan suggested a mushroom walk for the spring. Henry volunteered to lead it. The sense of the meeting was that it would not be a foraging walk, and no one would eat the mushrooms.
21. **Adjournment.** Adjournment was declared at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clarke
Attached: A) Consent Agenda

For December 17 2025 Board Meeting

Newton Conservators consent agenda for Dec 2025		As of Sunday Dec 14 7pm
Executive Committee & Board meetings		
SUBMISSION DEADLINES	Dec 9 for Executive Committee Dec 14 6pm for full board on Dec 17	
<u>Conservators programs, projects</u>		
Minutes (Mike C.)		
See attachment B1.		
Treasurer’s Report (Katherine)		
Renewals going strong. \$5K gifts from P Barrer, Marilee Wheeler estate.		
New Almanac is selling well at Newtonville Books, where it is prominently displayed along with the Trail Guide.		
Walks (Susan) & Other Events		
Webinars (Beth)		
167 people signed up for Dave Small’s webinar, and it was received well, with continuing positive comments from many people. (Everyone is invited to Dave’s Moth Ball next July.) Now, there will be a bit of a hiatus until Barbara’s vernal pool webinar on March 5. In the meantime, I’ll start to work on the topics and speakers for our spring 2026 series; please share your ideas for topics.		
Newsletter (Ken)		
The winter newsletter is online and was mailed just before Thanksgiving. As a reminder, the spring 2026 submission deadline is February 1. Please let me know if you are planning to contribute items that need to go in the newsletter. I especially need to know planned walks, bioblitzes, and webinars to be sure they are part of the mix of articles.		
Membership Committee (Nyssa, Katherine)		
Glitch in renewal offer for “free Trail Guide” - Donor Advised Funds and IRAs must be 100% tax deductible, so people renewing that way can’t be given a free trail guide as it has a \$23 Fair Market Value. We need to discuss how best to explain/apologize to that group, which could be about 40-50 people. I have a proposal to offer to sell those people a new Trail Guide at a deep discount, which could still be considered insubstantial to satisfy IRS.		
Invasives (Katherine)		
Wisteria work at Crystal Lake completed, for now.		
Newton Conservators properties (Katherine)		
Grants (Nyssa)		
CRs - Monitoring (Chris)		
All the CR monitoring reports are now in and being sent to the city and the owners of the Bracebridge Rd. property. Thanks to all who accomplished this!		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice (DEIJ) (Nyssa)		
Trail Guide (Dan B.)		
<u>City & state programs , projects, issues</u>		
Conservation Commission (Dan G.)		
Parks, Rec & Culture (Beth)		
In November, the Naming and Sign committee presented its recommendation that parks no longer be named after		

For December 17 2025 Board Meeting

people, and after a lively discussion, there seemed to be consensus that names would be based on environmental and historical elements. A vote will be taken at the next meeting. There will be no P&R Commission meeting in December.

CRs – pending or to be requested

WW CR in process - we had a good meeting with Law Dept on 12/8/25.

Greenway extension to Needham (Bill)

Bees on Newton public land (Jon)

Tree ordinance (Beth, Katherine, Bill)

Friends Groups updates

Grant submission to state biodiversity grant program is in process; to remove cork trees from CSP. To be cosponsored by NC.

other City updates

Bullough’s Dam removal - 2 Laundry Brook abutters contacted us to ask to work together to investigate dam removal option.

Other items

State legislation

Dark Sky MA contact lives in Newton; could we get a volunteer to help work on this issue?