Members Present: Andy Toepfer, acting Chair; Linda Hecker, Everett Wilson, Susan Hammond.

Absent: Kevin Stine, Liisa Kissel, Bill Dunkel, John Whitman, Lise Fortin, Gabby Ciuffreda.

Staff present: Emily Davis

Public: Meg Gonzalez

Presenter: None.

1. Call to Order
   - Meeting called to order at 5:04 p.m.
   - Action: Minutes from the April 25, 2019 meeting were approved, with a motion by Linda Hecker, seconded by Susan Hammond. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Additions or Changes to the Agenda
   There were no changes.

3. Continued discussion of opportunities for Commissioner engagement
   - Linda Hecker started the conversation by referencing and recalling some ideas that were previously discussed. This included an iNaturalist training, which was recently hosted by the Guilford Conservation Commission and seemed to be very interesting and helpful. She reported that this platform engaged people in an easily-accessible citizen’s science project.
   - Linda also talked about the Emerald Ash Borer work that they have been doing, with a small grant that helped funds the purchase of GPS tablets to help the Town identify ash trees in the town.
     - With this program, the work of the town in identifying ash trees is connected to the State’s database, and the State can provide some resources, maps, and reports to the town for doing so.
     - The Commissioners agreed that this kind of program would likely be of interest to other towns, and thought it was worthwhile to pursue an outreach event that engaged other Conservation Commissions.
• Emily added that perhaps this may make the Commissioner engagement more meaningful (to work with town groups, not the general public), since the Committee would be more of a technical resource to the municipalities.
• Emily thought that there may be an opportunity to apply for and receive a larger sum of grant funds that could cover the costs of the tablets and associated trainings for a number of interested towns, so the ash tree inventory can be done at a larger scale.
• Andy Toepfer had asked the present Commissioners if they agreed that this was a worthwhile project to pursue, and they agreed.
• WRC staff can work with the Town of Guilford and Linda Hecker to see what may be involved in replicating this program in other towns.
• Finally, the Commissioners also mentioned that concerns of emerald ash borer may be of interest to the road foreman. Emily said that she would connect with Jeff and Marion, to see about getting a section of the next road foremen’s meeting set aside for concerns about EAB and tree cutting (generally this is schedule in November).

4. Update on the Windham Connectivity Collaborative Project

• Emily shared an update on the Windham Connectivity Collaborative project, and that the group had been able to divide into smaller working sub-groups, around these topics/programmatic areas:
  • Listening/Visioning Sessions: (Designing, hosting, and facilitating community conversations around the collective vision for a community's future, as a first step towards education and outreach).
  • Town Planning: (Coordination among towns, examination of town plan policies and bylaws, increased communication among town officials).
  • Place-based Programs: (Public outreach and education programming; would be informed by community listening/visioning sessions).
  • Neighborhood Conservation: (Supporting neighborhood-scale conservation efforts, first focusing on the Harrisville Brook project as a model for potentially getting a future program in place that would extend elsewhere, as applicable).
  • Data Inventory & Linkage Mapping: (Understanding the scope of data that exists, understanding the data holes that are needed, and being able to communicate the information through legible maps).
  • Regional Conservation Partnership (RCP) Feasibility: Over the long-term, understanding the ecosystem of potential partnerships in the region and across state borders, and assessing the viability of an RCP as the evolution of this local effort)
• Emily also mentioned that the group was going to meet on Wednesday, July 31st, at 5:00 at the WRC, and encouraged anyone who is interested to attend.
5. **Update on the Tactical Basin Plan process**

Emily shared that her and Marie had been in touch, and that Marie was still developing a draft of the Tactical Basin Plan. She hopes to have a draft for the Committee to review at the next Natural Resources Committee meeting.

6. **Upcoming watershed events**
   - Green River picnic on August 18th
   - Green River bus tour on Aug 23rd
   - Green River marathon on Sept 1
   - Refer also to the Windham County Conservation events email list

7. **New Business**
   - Emily gave an update on the Grants in Aid status of towns. All municipalities in the Windham Region enrolled except for Readsboro and Vernon.
   - Emily also mentioned a staff update: the unfortunate passing of Mike Shaughnessy, the impending maternity leave of Marion Major, and the announcement that Emily will also be leaving the WRC staff at the end of August.

8. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 pm, with a motion Everett Wilson and seconded by Linda Hecker.