



# Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

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## **HORSE HILL NATURE PRESERVE SUBCOMMITTEE OF MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 MEETING MINUTES**

### **Call to Order -**

The meeting was called to order by subcommittee chair Marc Gagnon at 7:03 p.m.

### **Members present:**

Marc Gagnon  
Tim Adams  
Ellen Kolb

### **Members absent:**

Christine Nazaka  
Eric Starr  
Lynne Wenz

Note that Kirk Ware has resigned recently. The subcommittee thanks him for his past interest and service.

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### **Public Hearings - None**

**Approval of minutes** - On a motion by Mr. Adams seconded by Mr. Gagnon, the minutes of the June 29 subcommittee meeting were approved, 3-0-0.

### **New Business -**

**Eversource project:** Mr. Adams and Mr. Gagnon reported that the utility line work within HHNP performed by Eversource has been cleaned up. We don't know if any work is pending in another phase. The two power line towers in the middle of HHNP, over wetlands, appear to have been left alone during the recent project.

**Completed summer activities:** The recent trail trimming near the Old Kings Road/Watanic Bowmen trailhead by volunteers from the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) went well. Mr. Adams and Mr. Gagnon along with a volunteer from NEMBA made progress a few weeks ago trimming back invasive plants on the trail near the Amherst Road entrance, with particular attention to multiflora rose. Mr. Gagnon and Ms. Kolb walked through HHNP on July 10 to evaluate bridge conditions.

**Planning for fall activities/workday:** A date has not yet been set for a fall workday. The principal project will be the bridge on Blodgett Hill trail near the Loop Trail off the Amherst Road entrance trail. A culvert there needs to be cleared and the area regraded by hand in order to address water damage. Also, some trail junction signposts need to be re-set and repainted. Mr. Gagnon will get an estimate from Home Depot for a compound that can be used for the re-setting, and Ms. Kolb will check with MCC members for paint availability.

**Discussion of proposed new Long Pond Overlook trail:** An informal trail is already in place on the south side of Long Pond. It is a short connector that is popular as a birding and photography area. Encroaching vegetation has recently been trimmed back. The subcommittee would like to see this made an “official” trail with a junction post and number, with the trail to be added to the next edition of printed maps. Ms. Kolb will bring this up with MCC at its next meeting on September 12.

**Motion by Mr. Gagnon to recommend official creation of the Long Pond Overlook trail;**

**Seconded by Mr. Adams**

**Motion Carried**

**3-0-0.**

**Other Business** –

**Status updates:**

Mr. Gagnon reported that he and his wife posted the QR code (linking to the HHNP map) to map boxes, and it’s being used by visitors. Resupply of printed maps needs to continue.

Some kiosk refreshment is due. Mr. Gagnon reported that Lexan is left over from his earlier work on the kiosks, and he could make up to four map boxes with the material.

With thanks for the assistance of Mike Boisvert of MCC, Mr. Gagnon reported that a downed tree was cleared from Ledges trail. Mr. Adams reported that someone had also cleared a downed tree from Rocky trail.

The Watanic Bowman have scheduled a shooting event for Sunday, September 10. Mr. Gagnon has contacted Mike Boisvert to see if the town can re-grade the road leading to the Old Kings Road/Watanic trailhead before the event. Minor bridge repairs are pending. There is no serious damage in need of immediate attention, although the Blodgett Hill bridge (see New Business, above) needs work before winter’s freeze/thaw cycles.

With subcommittee member Lynne Wenz apparently unable to attend meetings, does the subcommittee need to name a replacement? Consensus of members present at this meeting is that it’s appropriate to let MCC know that HHNP volunteers are welcome. The same message is posted on HHNP kiosks. Ms. Kolb will ask Cindy Glenn of MCC to be sure the message is on the Merrimack Outdoors website (MCC’s official site). The bike demo on HHNP trails that had been scheduled by a private company was called off by that company.

**Subcommittee member roundtable:**

All members present agree that the status of the Fields Farm property is a concern. Which should come first: creation of a subcommittee, or a formal evaluation of the property? Ms. Kolb reported that Steve Perkins of MCC was planning to contact the Nashua Regional Planning Commission about mapping MCC properties including Fields Farm. An extensive network of mountain bike trails is established within the property, without permission from or notice to MCC. Mr. Gagnon has spoken to some bikers who use the property and are interested in volunteering for trail work there. He expects to join some trail users for a site ride.

**Next meeting date:** November 29, 2022.

**Officer elections:** On a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Ms. Kolb, the subcommittee supported a slate of Marc Gagnon, chair; Christine Nazaka, vice-chair; and Ellen Kolb, secretary/clerk. Motion passed, 3-0-0.

**Adjournment -**

**Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Gagnon. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.**

**Motion Seconded by Mr. Adams**

**Motion Carried**

**3-0-0**