

Hampton Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting
Wednesday March 18, 2026
Town Hall Meeting Room

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Chair Mark Samios. Members present: Kevin Grindle, Ev Hyde, Penny Newbury, Bruce Spaman. Absent: Kevin Grindle

Selectman present: John Tillinghast

Seating of Alternates: Marc for Ev (briefly, till he came)

Audience for Citizens: Andrea Spaman from the rec commission brought up the idea of a co-sponsored fishing derby on June 6, if fish were stocked in the pond at the Little River Preserve. They would promote it and take care of registrations (it would be free). Would ask the General Store to make some breakfasts to take down (\$6) to pick up and bring to the pond. If they couldn't do it, just have coffee and donuts. 3 divisions; prize for biggest fish.

Suggestion: keep it to kids 12 and under, with a parent. 20 kids anticipated.

Request: that the HCC supply the fish stocking, as well as bait, and to be present at the event. Also the rental of the porta potty (@ \$350).

Suggestion for Scouts to be part of the support staff at the event.

Another suggestion: if we did it in the fall we could avoid the construction; there is a second round of stocking, also we could combine it with the Fall Festival(September).

HCC agreed that it was a good event to co-sponsor, but to wait until we know more about the status of the boardwalk construction project and the NDDB issue, which is still ongoing.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting February 18, 2026. **Motion made** (Bruce/Ev). **Approved**

Additions to Agenda: none

Old Business

LRP Update:

Kevin sent an update via email. The biologist is working on the issue but has not submitted a report or management plan yet.

He also made a suggestion regarding the roadside clearing and the removal of the walkway to the river.

HCC discussed it and felt that the walkway should be kept in the location it was first planned. The side will also need to be fenced.

Grant Reporting:

\$3,000 was spent this month for the clearing—it will be recorded as in-kind on the next report (due April 15 for January – March). All invoices and payment receipts need to be given to Penny before then.

Question about vine cutting, and whether HCC can spend the originally requested \$400 on additional vine cutting. Need to identify the trees in the area (alders) that should be preserved.

Road/Trail Program:

Ev and Mark met with the First Selectman regarding the proposed trails program and whether we could use the town attorney's time to investigate the ownership of some of the abandoned/discontinued roads in order to move forward. He advised that he wanted to be involved in any discussion, but there was no clear approval. Ev referenced a 1968 action that allowed a (now defunct) group to take over unused roads. He would like the attorney to investigate this ruling to make a decision as to its validity.

Ev sent the HCC an email communication he had with PZC.

Discussion of gate at end of Windy Hill Rd put up by a private citizen, which is blocking the road and the Town's access to its property.

Mark would like a list of all these roads; Ev will work on it, using Randy Thompson's list.

Bruce would like the service forester to look at the 65 acres on Windy Hill Rd, and come up with a report and advice on a stewardship plan.

Motion made (Marc/Marcia) to allow Bruce to do it. Approved. He will contact him.

Marcia would like the DPW to remove fallen trees in the road bordering the Edwards property. John will ask DPW to investigate.

Little River Preserve Dedication Program:

Mark suggested a ceremony at LRP when the work is done; if we are we need to set aside some money in next year's budget. Kevin suggested a ribbon cutting to save money. Agreed. Discussed a plaque with the names of people involved; Kevin will design the plaque, as soon as the contract is awarded, to be invoiced before July 1.

Open space priority discussion (tabled from last month):

Motion made (Ev/Marcia) to table it again until next meeting. Approved.

[from last meeting minutes]: *Kevin displayed the NECCOG and state maps of properties and Ev brought Randy Thompson's old map showing current protected properties in town. Looked at various maps to see where to begin again with prioritization. Will discuss at next meeting our previous criteria of @ 10 years ago (size, proximity to other open space, proximity to Little River, prime farmland soils) and decide whether these priorities are still current. Possible new criteria: habitat value (NR database) in preparation for establishing new criteria and choosing priority properties to protect.*

Bird Boxes and Old Town Pound Rd: Marcia reported that the Scout group did not have enough lumber to build them. They wanted to do it as a project at a craft camp.

Motion made (Ev/Mark) to give the group up to a \$100 reimbursement for lumber. Approved.

New Business

26-27 budget

Mark presented and reviewed what he'd submitted to the Board of Finance. HCC has not been asked to present at the BoF yet.

Audubon/DEEP workshop: Marcia attended and made a report re: expanding bird habitat.

Communications:

Email from Stan Crawford regarding potential pollinator trail at LRP. Penny forwarded his email to members.

Audience for Citizens: none

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Penny Newbury, Secretary