

## MINUTES

**Members Present:** (Chair) M. Soares, M. Davis, J. Knighton, E. King, C. Rittenhouse, and W. Ouimet

**Members Absent:**

**Alternates Present:** A. Bowman

**Alternates Absent:**

**Staff Present:** M. Stankov

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Soares called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Members present are (Chair) M. Soares, A. Bowman, M. Davis, J. Knighton, E. King, C. Rittenhouse, and W. Ouimet. Alternate A. Bowman is seated for retired member J. Silander.

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rittenhouse MOVED, Bowman seconded approval of the November 19, 2025, minutes as presented.

Motion PASSED (6-0-1) with Soares abstaining.

### 3. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

**A. No members of public attending**

### 4. OLD BUSINESS

#### A. Easement Monitoring

After Action Report: Mountainview Estates

#### B. Water Quality Sampling

Recommend to table until we receive feedback from the town attorney

Discussion of alternative approaches if groundwater is flagged by the attorney.

Rittenhouse MOVED to table until feedback is received from the town attorney, Soares seconded.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Commendation of Recently Retired Members

**John Silander** joined the Conservation Commission in June 1995, serving the Town of Mansfield for 30 years. With an esteemed career as a research ecologist and faculty member in UConn's Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, he brought to the commission a deep understanding of natural systems and a persistent enthusiasm for their preservation. John has been a tireless and vocal advocate – at the State and local levels – for land conservation, public open space, and preservation of valuable and declining habitats like wetlands. For too many items that can be listed here, he has provided thorough reviews and commentary, often highlighting the leading scientific understanding that should be considered, on proposed development projects and land-use planning, such as our Plans of Conservation & Development (2015 and 2025), zoning, inland-wetland regulations and their enforcement. In addition to these contributions, John volunteered additional time to attend site walks at potential project sites and conduct monitoring visits of Mansfield's open spaces protected by conservation restrictions. It is hard to fully estimate the size and breadth of the positive and lasting impact that he has had on this Commission, this community, and its residents.

**Meg Harper** joined the Conservation Commission in 2016, serving the Town of Mansfield for over 9 years. With her life-long career in this region as an archaeologist and historian, Meg added unique and under-represented expertise to the Commission's review of IWA permit applications and land-use planning/management. From her start on the Commission, she voiced the legitimate concern that, due to how Connecticut defines inland wetlands, many seeps and springs do not meet the definition and go unprotected. Without protection, alterations from development can eliminate or directly impact those wetlands, as well as result in impacts to the natural hydrologic processes in the surrounding land area. Throughout her time, Meg was an engaged and attentive Commissioner and dedicated to our charge to advocate for the protection of streams, wetlands, and waterbodies.

### B. UConn Golfing Facility – Scoping Comments and Feedback

2026 01 14 Golf Practice Facility CEPA Scoping Comments

Stankov provided an overview of the scoping comments and PZC additions, including adding the Depot Campus as an alternative site.

Discussion of chemical inputs and whether any monitoring will occur, especially with regard to movement off site or into groundwater.

Rittenhouse MOVED, Davis seconded, that the Conservation Commission endorses the scoping comments and those of PZC, including consideration of the Depot Campus as an alternative site. The Conservation Commission additionally asks for confirmation that the species present in the Waxman Conifer Collection are represented and catalogued elsewhere at UConn.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

## **6. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS**

- A. Stankov and Knighton reported that a grant was submitted to install bioreactors in some local streams. This is a Town, Local Farm, and UConn partnership.**

## **7. COMMUNICATIONS**

The following communications were noted:

- A. CT Association of Wetlands Scientists Annual Meeting**

Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Aqua Turf Club, 556 Mulberry St, Southington, CT 06479

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting of the Conservation Commission is scheduled for February 18, 2026.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn at 8:09 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to read "Chadwick Rittenhouse".

Chadwick Rittenhouse  
Secretary