

**TOWN OF EAST LYME
COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025, 7:00 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 1**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
EAST LYME, CT
2025 DEC 18 A 8:07
Cassidy
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT

Penny Heller, Chairperson
Laura Ashburn
Harvey Beeman
Don Danila
Steve Dinsmore, Alternate (*seated*)

ABSENT

Mark Christensen
Marjorie Meekhoff, Alternate

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Heller called the East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Special Meeting of December 10, 2025, to order at 7:03 p.m.

II. Seating of Alternates (if necessary)

MOTION (1): Motion made by Commissioner Danila, seconded by Commissioner Beeman, to seat Alternate Commissioner Dinsmore for Commissioner Christensen. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

III. Call for Additions to the Agenda – none

IV. Call for Public Delegations – none

V. Review and Approval of Minutes

a. November 12, 2025 Regular Meeting

MOTION (2): Motion made by Commissioner Beeman, seconded by Commissioner Ashburn, to approve the November 12, 2025, Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meetings. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

b. November 24, 2025 Special Meeting

MOTION (3): Motion made by Commissioner Danila, seconded by Commissioner Beeman, to approve the November 24, 2025, Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meetings. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

VI. New Business**a. 2026 Budget**

Discussion ensued regarding the Commission's current FY2025/26 and proposed FY2026/27 budgets. Chairperson Heller reported that Director of Planning Gary Goeschel requested that the Commission discuss the possibility of adding a line item for Trail Development. Discussion ensued regarding Darrow Pond, including its recent inappropriate mowing. The Commissioners agreed that site maintenance does not fall under the Commission's purview. Commissioner Dinsmore recommended the Commission draft a Conservation Plan, outlining the Town's vulnerable/sensitive areas, watersheds, areas of concern, conservation easements, open space, etc., and volunteered to review the Town's POCD (Plan of Conservation and Development), which includes the qualifications for deeming a land valuable and properties that may be eligible for open space and the Conservations Plans of other, similar towns. The Plan could be used to assist the Commission and support its zoning recommendations. Commissioner Beeman concurred, adding that, while the Commission has investigated the Town's water management issues and makes recommendations to other municipal agencies regarding proposed land use changes, it has lacked in other areas, including educational outreach and proposing greenway plans. The item will be added to the Commission's future agendas.

The Commission agreed to amend the following line item:

	FY2025/26	FY2026/27
Meetings/Conferences	\$ 200.00	\$ 150.00

MOTION (4): Motion made by Commissioner Danila, seconded by Commissioner Ashburn, to approve the FY2026/27 Commission of Natural Resources budget request of \$1,300.00 for. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

VII. Old Business**a. Vehicle damage to dunes on beach by the Niantic Bay Boardwalk**

Commissioner Beeman provided highlights of Parks & Recreation Director Jerry Lokken's response to their letter regarding the vehicle damage. A survey was conducted with the East Lyme Public Trust showing that the beach sand was stable and the beach grass and vegetation were expanding. They are currently removing invasive species and encouraging the seeding and growth of native species. The Parks Crew is sensitive to the damage caused by their vehicles and is doing its best to minimize any impacts. Unfortunately, it is sometimes necessary to drive on the beach to remove debris or piles of invasive plants. They will investigate the possibility of utilizing an ATV, rather than a truck, and research recommendations for alternative tires to

minimize future damage. He stated his openness to discuss any new ideas, thoughts, and/or concerns.

b. Proposed Cedarbrook / Catbird Lane Re-subdivision

Chairperson Heller stated that she was informed that an incomplete engineering report was drafted. The Commission has submitted its comments, for the record, and the item will be included on the Planning Commission's January Agenda.

VIII. Reports and Communications

a. Communications – none

b. Agribusiness Subcommittee – Commissioner Christensen not present; no report

c. SustainableCT Subcommittee

Commissioner Dinsmore is continuing to correspond with the Subcommittee to obtain data from Eversource for the Energy Portfolio Manager.

d. Pollinator Pathways East Lyme – Commissioner Meekhoff not present; no report

e. Chairman's Report

The Commissioners scheduled for re-appointment will notify the Town Clerk and/or Ex-Officio Selectperson Hardy regarding their continued interest in serving as a member of the Commission.

f. Ex-Officio Report – not present; no report

IX. Adjournment

MOTION (5): Motion made by Commissioner Danila, seconded by Commissioner Ashburn, to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Substitute Recording Secretary for the Town of East Lyme