



UNAPPROVED MINUTES

MINUTES

Ridgefield Conservation Commission
Town Hall Annex, First Floor Conference Room
66 Prospect Street Ridgefield, CT 06877
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Meeting October 5, 2026 at 7PM

Present:	Pete Nichols	Allan Welby	Jana Hogan
	Jack Kace	Anthony Markert	Matt Sharp
	Jim Coyle	Erik Keller	
Absent:	Roberta Barbieri	Jim Liptack	Tommy McCarthy
In attendance: Caleb Johnson (Town enforcement agent)			

The meeting was convened at 7:00 PM by Chairman Keller.

1. Approval of Minutes

UPON motion duly made (Nichols), seconded (Markert) and carried it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of September 23, 2026 be approved and filed in Town Hall. Commissioners Sharp and Hogan abstained.

2. Executive session—Violation enforcements/Taylors Pond/Budget

At 7:01 PM, Chairman Keller **MOTIONED** to enter into executive session for the purposes of discussing enforcement action and potential litigation, and invited the RCC's enforcement agent Caleb Johnson to join. This was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Kace. The Commission returned to public session at 8:21 PM.

3. Volunteer outreach

Mr. Keller wonders if the RCC is doing enough to stay in touch with its volunteers. He suggested compiling a master list from the already-existing lists of Rangers and Aldrich Workday attendees. He also requested that the RCC send out a letter touching base and soliciting feedback from its volunteer contacts; Mr. Sharp will write the letter. Commissioners will brainstorm ideas for future volunteer workdays, and the RCC administrator will compile a master list of contacts.

4. 2027 Annual Meeting

The 2027 Annual Meeting will be held at A.C.T. of Ridgefield on Wednesday, March 24, 2027. Mr. Keller asked commissioners to consider who the RCC should invite as a speaker, as well as individuals who should be nominated for the Edith Meffley Award. Ms. Hogan made some suggestions for potential speakers; she will follow up and see who among them is available.

5. 2027 Library Talks

Dr. Markert is scheduled to present on the forestry study of Hemlock Hills and Pine Mountain in early December, but he is concerned that the report may not be completed by then. He suggested changing the subject to a more general overview of Ridgefield's forest health. Mr. Keller agreed and offered suggestions for potential 2027 topics by month: vernal pools in March (McCarthy), tree identification in April (Markert), wild edibles and foraging in May (Keller), the Pollinator Pathway in June (Hogan), invasive

plants in September (Barbieri), trail blazing in October (Liptack), nature photography in November (Sharp), and the results of the Hemlock Hills/Pine Mountain study in December (Markert/Keller). Mr. Keller will coordinate with the Ridgefield Library to set dates for the first half of the year.

6. New business

No new business.

7. Meetings for Attendance

P&Z
October 13—Kace
October 27—TBD

IWB
October 8—Liptack
October 22—Markert

8. Chairman's Remarks

Recent articles in Yankee Magazine and Scientific American drew Mr. Keller's attention to a laboratory in Washington that is working on identifying the oldest apple trees in New England. This lab processes samples and gives results on the variety and age of the tree. Processing costs \$50 per sample; he will be sending 2 samples from trees at McKeon Farm.

He is in possession of the fall wildflower seed mix for McKeon Farm. Once temperatures get a little colder, he will broadcast them.

Chairman Keller and Vice-chairman Coyle are preparing a capital budget request to install electricity in the shed at McKeon. They are considering several questions, including what amperage should be installed and whether electricity should be brought out to the barn as well. Mr. Keller will be reaching out to electricians for quotes. Any work would require a permit from the Town.

The RCC's potential rodenticide ban is just waiting on feedback from the Highway Department, which is currently consulting with its pest control company.

ADJOURNMENT UPON motion duly made (Nichols), and seconded (Sharp), it was **RESOLVED** that the meeting adjourn at 8:41 PM.