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MINUTES
December 4, 2025

MEMBER ROLL CALL:

Ralph Lutjen, Chairman – Present
Mike Brooks, Vice Chair – Present
Mike Mosher –Excused
Marc Ohlson –Excused
Nicole Nordlund - Present

Ted Slader (Alternate) – Present
Marcia McKenna – Present
Josh Shackford - Present
Liza Rogerson (Alternate) – Excused

OTHERS PRESENT: Lauren Woss - Madison TV and Katharine Young, Land Use Boards Administrator and Jeff Cullington

MEETING POSTED: The meeting was posted in the Madison Town Hall Upper & Lower levels, Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on November 26, 2025.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Lutjen called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

ELEVATION OF ALTERNATES: **Motion** by Lutjen, seconded by McKenna to elevate Slader to a full voting member. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Lutjen asked for any comments or issues with the minutes from the November 6, 2025 meeting and since there were none, he asked for a motion.

Motion by Shackford, seconded by McKenna to approve the November 6, 2025 minutes as written. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

Motion by Lutjen, seconded by Shackford to approve the November 6, 2025 Non-Public minutes as written which are sealed. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously**.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jeff Cullington, 951 Plains Road – He introduced himself and explained he attended the meeting to learn more about the Conservation Commission and expressed an interest in potentially helping out with commission activities.

OLD BUSINESS:

Tim Nolin – Forest Land Improvement: Nolin was not present at the meeting. Chairman Lutjen commented about activities needed for the Chain of Ponds and he explained that Nolin is aware of the need for a plan. Chairman Lutjen further explained that he believed that Nolin has scoped out the work effort for monitoring and he believes the cost would be around \$500.00 per year.

Chain of Ponds Update: Chairman Lutjen stated that the closing of the Chain of Ponds property took place on November 10th at the offices of Cooper Cargill Chant. Chairman Lutjen explained that the seller had not submitted all of his required documentation by the closing date, so those items were placed in escrow but cleared the following day. He further explained there was one issue regarding equipment belonging to the seller which was located on the property which needed to be removed. Young, Land Use Boards Administrator confirmed the equipment was removed by 3:00 pm on the same day as the closing.

Chairman Lutjen explained that at the closing, the Conservation Commission paid \$213,000.00 for the easement and that the Conservation Commission would be receiving a check in the amount of \$17,000.00 which is to assist in costs for the maintenance of the easement. He further explained that this money will be tracked separately and can only be used for the Chain of Ponds maintenance.

The Commission discussed future plans for the property and it was noted that ATVs are not allowed and signage will be posted to that effect. The property owners will need to address some encroachment issues.

Chairman Lutjen stated that a press release about the acquisition was published, though it was significantly modified and shortened from what was prepared. Chairman Lutjen noted that this was their largest land acquisition in town history being 625 acres, which had been a conservation target for approximately 20 years.

Chairman Lutjen stated the “Chain of Ponds” was important to preserve due to its impact on Silver Lake, as well as its natural beauty. There were concerns that without conservation, the land might have been used for development, excavation, or gravel removal, which would have affected the property quality.

Chairman Lutjen explained we would need a property description from Nolin for the Chain of Ponds and that maybe funding to do this project could come from the Master Plan.

Property Review Commitments: The Commission discussed that with the Chain of Ponds acquisition, they will need to do property review work in the coming year. Tim has volunteered to do the property description. The Commission also expressed a desire to digitize all property records to make them more accessible to the public, but funding for that project remains an issue.

New Business: Chairman Lutjen stated there was no new business presented.

Selectman's Report – Nordlund: Selectman Nordlund reported on her follow-up with DES regarding the fish contamination in Silver Lake. She explained that she talked with an aquatic biologist at DES who provided her with testing data. The data showed that the mercury levels were highest in 1996 and 2019, though different fish species were tested in those years (trout in 1996 and pickerel in 2019). She further explained that while Silver Lake does not appear on the regular DES list of contaminated lakes, the test results showed levels that were over the limit for consumption. Mercury and dioxin were identified as the primary contaminants typically found in New Hampshire lakes. It was also mentioned that a recent watershed management plan described Silver Lake as one of the cleanest lakes in the state.

Planning Board Report – Ohlson: Ohlson was not present at the meeting.

Administrative Correspondence:

Warrant Articles:

The Commission discussed two proposed warrant articles:

1. \$10,000 for the Forest Maintenance Account - The Commission agreed to keep this amount the same as last year. It was noted that approximately \$4,400 was spent from this account during the year, and a positive balance remains.
2. \$5,000 for land acquisition and conservation purposes - The Commission agreed to request this funding again. It was mentioned that this could be needed for potential legal counsel related to a property that might be gifted to the town but would come with certain costs.

A third article that was included last year for \$500 for youth of Madison conservation training and instructive opportunities which was determined to be unnecessary for this year.

The Commission also noted that the letter from Green Mountain Conservation Group would be included with the annual report.

Annual Report: Chairman Lutjen stated that he would be working on the annual report and that members would have an opportunity to review it at the January meeting.

Chairman Lutjen went over the account balances as noted below:

Account Balances as of October 1 – November 2, 2025

Conservation Land Use Change Tax: \$225,809.46 + \$6.13 Interest + = \$225,815.59

Forest Maintenance Account: \$59,293.63 + \$2.01 Interest + 4 Deposits from cutting on

Goodwin Burke (\$25,692.57) = \$84,988.21

Conservation Gift Account: \$358.80 + \$0.01 interest = \$358.81

Capital Reserve Account: Balance as of November 5, 2025 was \$65,037.88

Young, Land Use Boards Administrator stated there were additional deposits to the Forest Maintenance Account after November 2, 2025 from the timber logging at Goodwin-Burke Forest for oak recovery, totaling approximately \$17,000.00.

McKenna questioned if the commission was going to set new goals for the upcoming year. Chairman Lutjen stated they will discuss this at the next meeting.

Motion by Lutjen, seconded by Shackford to adjourn the meeting. The motion was voted on and passed **unanimously** and the meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

Submitted by,

Katharine Young
Land Use Boards Administrator