



HALLOWELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 16 AT 6:30 PM
HALLOWELL FIRE STATION MEETING ROOM, COOS LANE
IN PERSON, ZOOM OPTION AVAILABLE *BY ADVANCE REQUEST*

March 2026 Minutes

1. Introductions, public comments – no public attendees.
2. Establish quorum (4 voting members) – Hilary, Jean, Jacqueline, Sarah, Rosemary and Maureen present, quorum established.
3. Assign meeting secretary - Rosemary
4. Agenda additions – added 13a) proposed HCA native plant sale project for Old Hallowell Day; 13b) DEP 2009 Deed restrictions on 10-acre lot near Foye Rd and Winthrop St.
5. Consent agenda – Unanimously approved
 - a. Draft minutes 2/23/2026
 - b. FY 2026 Cash Accounting
 - c. FY 2027 Budget Request
6. Old Business updates
 - a. Using Constant Contact for HCC e-news (Rosemary) – City has a Constant Contact Standard Package license for 0-500 contacts. There are basic contacts segmentation features in Standard to send specific emails to different targeted(tagged) contact lists. Currently City staff is not familiar with feature nor trained to use it at this time. Will keep in mind for potential future use.
 - b. HCC info on city [Web site update](#) – thank you to Jill and Dan Kelley! Information has been updated and organized for more effective communication and ease of sharing with community on current HCC initiatives.
 - c. Reflective vest purchase options (Jean) – Jean provided pricing levels based on Class 1, 2, 3 vests from big box stores, online, and local print shop. Members decided to support local print shop; once **Hilary** confirms safety vest requirements for Big Night participation, **Jean** can move forward to confirm final costs with local printer and order.
 - d. Consulting visit on Res invasives control (Hilary) – Two Trees Forestry consultant will hold April 7, with April 8 as rain date. Rec Commission has approved use of “Trails” allocated budget line item to cover fees up to \$500. **Hilary** will coordinate and reach out to other interested parties. Plan is to start identifying and to help prioritize invasive controls and management at the RES.
7. Recreation Commission update (Jean) – key topic addressed in 6d above.
8. Solar siting draft ordinance (Jacqueline and Maureen). Review Version 2 and discuss questions.
 - Team reviewed v2 draft based on DOER and Readfield references; agreed any legal expertise or legal reviews would be at City Council discretion
 - Team worked through some of the overlaps in existing ordinances and additional research will need to be done on setbacks, sound/noise levels, use of terminology ‘power generating facilities’ in existing ordinance, etc.
 - Team worked through allowable land use table (zoning districts vs types of solar installations). Agreed to collapse solar installations into 2 types as included in the DOER model ordinance:

Solar Energy Systems for commercial offsite use & *Solar Energy Systems, Accessory Scale* for private use onsite: definitions included in draft. Determination was made because towns such as Readfield that defined solar energy systems into subcategories based on size still lumped these sizes for performance standards. Allowable use discussions referred to current Zoning Districts map, current district descriptions, the 3 commercial solar farms now in Hallowell, and keeping in mind to preserve the look and feel of the zone or neighborhood (Preserve the City's character!). --Team agreed to have Hilary consolidate work to date and Maureen to finish draft of Storage Battery ordinance. Also agreed to include a recommendation to City Council on AI or Large Data Center installations when Solar and Battery Storage drafts are submitted.

Solar siting Ordinance Next Steps and Action Items...

- a) **Hilary** will consolidate work to date to V3 for Solar Ordinance and look at setback requirements per zoning district
 - b) **Maureen** will finish draft on Battery Storage Facilities
 - c) **Jacqueline** will do another review of What's Missing? to strengthen or improve standards
 - d) **Rosemary** will research existing sound ordinance and any overlap
 - e) **Hilary and Rosemary** will coordinate next level of reviews with solar professional and code enforcement office; maybe add a review with a conservation expert. Document any additional open questions.
 - f) **Tbd** draft presentation to ORC/City Council on the HCC process including remaining open questions
9. Timber harvesting regulations (Rosemary) – HCC was notified of potential erosion issues around a timber harvesting or staging area on a Hallowell lot near the Vaughan Brook culvert on outer Central St. The code enforcement officer and state district forester were notified to investigate and provide feedback to HCC for future reference and community education, awaiting response from state forester. The Vaughan Brook watershed is currently on the State's threatened list for NonPoint Source Pollution (erosion and runoff).
10. Spring e-news – April 1 – **Rosemary** will draft enews and forward to Hilary
11. Earth Day GCP clean up April 25th – Rosemary is organizing with other community groups; more info and details to follow on park cleanup and downtown litter patrols, 9am to 11am.
12. HCC meeting decisions – No meeting in April. June 22 group thank you outing.
13. Other Business

13a) proposed HCA native plant sale project for Old Hallowell Day – **Hilary** has the local native plant farm coop interested in doing a pop-up plant sale on OHD. **Jean** will contact owner of parking lot on Winthrop and Second Sts to see if we can use it. More information to come!

13b) DEP 2009 Deed restrictions on 10-acre lot near Foye Rd and Winthrop St. – a local landowner had deed covenants and restrictions placed on another one of his lots after DEP investigated an illegal road built through a wetland in the city. The restrictions basically make the 10-acres, including a 2-acre wetland, undevelopable. This information needs to be preserved in the tax records, with code enforcement, or in another appropriate place. **Rosemary** - Action to be determined as HCC reviews at next meeting.

14. Upcoming events
- a. HCC Monthly meetings – 5/18, 6/22

- b. KLT Lyceum – Thursdays, March 12, 19, 26 at 6pm in City Hall Auditorium – HCC sponsoring and HCC members present to offer support and introductions.
- c. *What's on Your Utility Bill? Empowering Ratepayers* Thursday, April 2, 5:30-7:00 pm, Hubbard Free Library. Presenters Emily Rochford (ME Community Power Cooperative) and Maggie Somers (MCV) hosted by HCA.
- d. Earth Day GCP cleanup – Saturday April 25
- e. Birding at Howard Hill and Berry Conservation Area (KLT Lyceum Workshop) – Sunday, May 3, 7am. Meet at the end of Ganneston Drive at the Howard Hill entrance.
- f. Spring Repair Café – Saturday, May 9th, 10am – 2pm at the Fire Station Meeting Room
- g. Climate Action Celebration and Community Engagement – Thursday, July 9, 6 – 9 pm, City Hall Auditorium
- h. WindowDressers Community Build - October 17-22, Buker Center gymnasium