

**UNH Cooperative Extension Advisory Council
Cheshire County Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2023**

Present via zoom: Tom Beaudry, Rachel Brice, Kim Bylancik, Eloise Clark, Paul Crosby, Dick Drew, Matt Kelly, Carl Majewski, Christine Parshall, Rep. Lucius Parshall

Chair Paul Crosby calls the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

November 10, 2022 minutes: Tom moves the minutes be accepted as written, Dick seconds. All approve, except Rachel abstains as she did not attend the November meeting.

Staff Updates

Matt Kelly: Matt reports the ground is not frozen, making it difficult for logging equipment and impacting the forest soils. He has done two woodlot visits. Programs include a timber harvest tour near Mt. Cresson in Swanzey Jan. 14th; an upcoming walk at the Goose Pond Forest in Keene Feb. 18th; NH Timberland Owner's Association explaining "Carbon 101" in April. He's met with staff from NRCS regarding their beech control cost share guidelines for technical service providers. Matt and Steve Roberge have a Conservation Opportunity Grant in Henniker, a demonstration site owned by SPNHF.

Christine Parshall has been active with programs in schools this winter. She visits fifth grades in Alstead and Hinsdale. She also visits Wheelock and Franklin schools monthly. She is working with two new agencies. She is demonstrating Cooking Matters lessons to 35 adults in the "Live Free Recovery" Day Program. The Monadnock Food Coop is sponsoring a SNAP incentive program. She will do workshops in March with a dozen clients.

Kim Bylancik: Kim has several events. She will conduct a 4-H Babysitting Class at the Keene Rec. Center during the February school vacation. Animal Science Bonanza is March 4th at Kimball Union Academy. It will be joined by Sullivan County's maple sugaring program. Quiz Bowl is also in March. April 1st 4-H Presents will be held jointly with Hillsboro County. She would like kids 12 years and older to practice with our AC beforehand. The Ice Fishing program is only tentative at this point due to the poor ice conditions. There is a new 4-H STEM club at the Surry Village Charter School. Kids will be building underwater robots. She would like to work with Christine on the Plant-A-Row program to raise awareness for food insecurity.

Carl Majewski held a Corn & Forage meeting at the end of November. He used local people such as the new Dairy Specialist Sarah Allen and Nick Warren, agro-ecologist at UNH. He has introduced Sarah to local dairy farmers. He's finishing up a grant providing education for programs on integrated weed management for hayfields and pastures. He will also connect with Antioch New England and do a program on cover crops for home gardens. He will be involved with the upcoming soil steamer workshop by Jeremy Lisle, sponsored by CCCD and UNH.

Budget Update

Carl met with the Executive Committee of the County Delegation (Legislators) this month. They reviewed the request without comments or questions. He did have a good conversation with a person from Troy who attended that meeting as an observer. He is interested in what we do and needed some advice. The Exec. Committee will review and make a recommendation. The Delegates vote in March. Paul asks if the AC needs to do outreach to newer legislators? While Carl didn't sense much "pushback" from this group, it never hurts to contact our representatives and encourage them to continue their support.

Meeting Places

The County Delegates Hall is unavailable for our use for the winter. Other suggested meeting places include Hannah Grimes, Keene Public Library, Keene Rec. Center and Modestman Brewing. Carl will check before the next meeting.

Other

Matt mentioned the Monadnock Area Natural History Conference is now online on the Harris Center's YouTube site. He also said the State Nursery has an online store. Stock sells out quickly.

Rachel said Land For Good needs a part-time administrative assistant.

Tom moves the meeting adjourn. Dick seconds. The meeting adjourns at 6:45 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark
Secretary

UNH Cooperative Extension Advisory Council Meeting
Hannah Grimes, Roxbury Street, Keene, NH
February 9, 2023 - Minutes

Present: Tom Beaudry, Kim Bylancik, Rachel Brice, Eloise Clark, Paul Crosby, Mark Florenz, Matt Kelly, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Christine Parshall, Rep. Lucius Parshall.

Present via Zoom: Charlie French, Community & Economic Development

Chair Paul Crosby calls the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

Minutes January: Tom moves the minutes be accepted, Rachel seconds. All are in favor.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Youth and Family: Kim reports it's planning time for the Cheshire Fair. 4-H enrollment is strong with 7 new volunteers. The STEM club at Surry Village Charter School is up and running. It involves underwater robotics. 4-H Presents will be April 1 at Crotched Mtn. School. March 4 is Animal Science Bonanza. It features NH Ag. Ambassadors demonstrating maple syrup production. There will also be a panel on Women and Agriculture.

Nutrition Connections: Christine is visiting schools and working with a recovery program. Programs with seniors and preschool are upcoming. Rachel asks about what reports she writes? Nothing narrative, just demographics of the populations served. She follows SNAP requirements. Both Kim and Christine participated in a series of workshops as part of their professional development: how to make educational materials accessible for all types of learners, particularly those with disabilities.

Natural Resources: Matt reports landowner visits are slow this time of year. He is preparing to lead a walk at Goose Pond for the Keene Conservation Commission and Parks & Rec. Winter Tree ID at Distant Hill Gardens will offer certification for loggers and foresters. Forests pests will be the subject of another workshop on March 16. He is helping with the Big Tree Program by tying in the carbon storage value of the specimens. He's led webinars on forest carbon statewide. Matt is working with Andy Fast to develop markets for the forest economy. Tom asked how big is the carbon credit in New England? Large landowners have more opportunity to sell carbon than small landowners.

Food and Agriculture: Carl reports he's done occasional farm visits. Plans for upcoming events include a pruning demonstration March 25 at Monadnock Berries and a cover crop workshop for the home audience. He's been working on the CCCD committee to review Climate Resilience Grants for equipment and building modifications. He's on the NH Crop Exam Certificate Commission for crop advisors, part of the Agronomy Society. He's on the steering committee with the Windham County CD regarding management practices to reduce non-point source pollution from agricultural run-off flowing into the CT River.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Charlie French, Program Leader joins us via Zoom. He and his 10-11 staff members work with cities and towns statewide. There is no Field Specialist in Cheshire County. Focus areas include:

1. Business and economic development;
2. Tourism and outdoor recreation;
3. Main Street resiliency;
4. Community leadership—a very important part of their work. Their team offers:
 1. Action planning;
 2. Academies, webinars and workshops;
 3. Leadership development;
 4. Economic impact analysis;
 5. Technical assistance.

He wonders if there are any needs, we can identify in Cheshire County? Lucius suggests they could be “a second set of eyes” on the upcoming Central Square project. Charlie suggests they might have studies to help inform decisions. Paul wonders how well known are they as a resource? They did help some with broadband research. The State of NH is making 200 million available for Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) grants. They are currently leading the Housing Academy in six towns in the county. If we have any suggestions, contact Charlie at: charlie.french@unh.edu.

AC MEMBERSHIP

Paul and Tom’s six-year terms are done this year. Eloise finishes four years. Jim Weidner has resigned. The council discussed possible members: farmers, foresters, community development, business people, educators from schools and colleges, food service people. Rachel and Matt will ask some of their contacts.

Meeting adjourns at 7:22 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark
Secretary

Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: April 13, 2023

Time of meeting: 6:00pm

Location of meeting:

Hannah Grimes, Keene NH

Agenda

1. Health & Well-Being Program Update
 2. 4-H Program Update
 3. Election of Officers
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Minutes

Attendees: Kim Bylancik, Eloise Clark, Paul Crosby, Dick Drew, Mark Florenz, Jeff Littleton, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Christine Parshall, Lucius Parshall, Karen Seaver, Mike Young

1. **Minutes Feb. 9, 2023:** Dick moves the minutes be accepted, Paul seconds. All approve.
2. **PROGRAM UPDATE**

Health & Well-Being: Christine Parshall

Mike Young, Health & Well-Being team leader explains the goals of this program: 1. Individual behavior changes by working with schools and other agencies to figure out what programs to provide. 2. Managing chronic disease and mental health. We provide education through networks but are not clinical workers. 3. Reduce health care costs and create a resilient workforce.

Most of Christine's work is in-person and hands-on, such as Nutrition Connections classes with the MC2 high school program and Franklin School in Keene. Funding for her position comes from two USDA programs. 1. Expanded Food & Nutrition Educational Program (EFNEP) includes home visits to low-income clients. It's only for parents and kids. 2. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP-ED) includes all low-income adults, youth, and family. Examples of programs are Seniors Eating Well, Cooking Matters, Kids Eat Fit and Around the Table. Classes are taught in schools and other venues such as Monadnock Family Services, Cheshire County Treatment Court, Emerald House in Keene, Feeding Tiny Tummys, Live Free Recovery in Keene, Keene Head Start. Programs are rebounding after the pandemic. In 2022 she served 57 adults, 237 youth. In 2023 she's served 93 adults and 445 youth to date. She has also joined some of her colleagues offering on-line programs.

3. **PROGRAM UPDATE**

4-H Healthy Living: Kim Bylancik

The number one skill of 4-H programs is for children to develop their communication abilities. Kids learn this skill through public presentations, demonstrations, active teaching of other children or explaining their ideas to judges. Kim showcases the recent 4-H Presents program. Presentations were both passive, such as posters and pictures and active teaching, such as demonstrations. Children also learn to plan and organize a presentation. They take ownership of the subject. The goal is for youth to move toward independence and leadership. Kim had hoped to have one of the teen presenters at our meeting but illness prevented her from attending.

4. Election of Officers

Paul receives a certificate of appreciation for his six years of service on the AC. He will be retiring as chair. Thank you, Paul! The job involves consulting with the CoA (Carl), setting the agenda for meetings and attending the two statewide meetings per year. Aaron volunteers to be Chair. Mark will continue as Vice Chair. Eloise will continue as Secretary. Paul moves the slate of candidates be accepted. Dick seconds. All are in favor.

May 11 will be our next meeting date. The meeting will be at the county farm where staff updates will continue.

The meeting adjourns at 7:40 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark

Secretary

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Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: May 11, 2023

Time of meeting: 6:00pm

Location of meeting: Stonewall Farm, Keene NH

Agenda

1. Food and Agriculture Program Review
 2. Program Updates from Other Staff
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Minutes

Attendees: Tom Beaudry, Kim Bylancik, Eloise Clark, Dick Drew, Mark Florenz, Dave Hoffman, Jeff Littleton, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Luis Morales, Jim Mountford, Christine Parshall, Lucius Parshall, Karen Seaver

Chair Aaron Moody calls the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.

1. **Minutes April 13, 2023:** Dick moves the minutes be accepted. Lucius seconds. All approve.
2. **Updates:** Carl suggests future meetings include tours of area farms and woodlots or guest speakers. Next month Anton Beckerman, Director of the UNH Ag. Experiment Station will be visiting the AC meeting. It is also Matt Kelly's annual review.
3. **Food & Agriculture:** Kelly McAdam, the Program Team Leader will not be able to attend this meeting to discuss the statewide program. Carl reviews a project he has been working on entitled "Integrated Weed Management for Pastures and Hayfields: A Guide for Landowners". Carl and Nicholas Warren, Research Scientist researched and wrote this UNH publication.

The publication was funded by the New England IPM Center. This document is for both farmers and nonfarm landowners. Sometimes there is conflict between renters and landowners regarding management. Hayfields and pasture cover 100,000 acres in the state. Grass is our biggest crop. Not only does this land provide feed for grazing animals, it also provides wildlife habitat and contributes to the rural character of the state. Weeds reduce the quality and quantity of forage. Some weeds can be toxic or crowd out grasses leading to a decline in farm profitability. There is currently incentive among farmers to make silage and not buy feed because of its cost.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for weed must balance costs, effectiveness of treatment and environmental concerns. Relying on herbicides alone can lead to herbicide resistance of targeted species. It's important to identify the species present at a site and understand its life cycle and nuisance potential. Carl uses dandelion and smooth bedstraw as two contrasting examples. Practices besides herbicides include checking soil fertility, tightening grazing management and well-timed mowing. Results need to be monitored for success and adjusted as needed.

Carl has offered this class through webinars for farms, landowners, and other agricultural service providers. He hopes to reach out to land conservancies as well. The group asks about poison ivy control. Ideas include acetic acid, mowing (not recommended), goats, selective herbicides that affect broadleaved plants but not grass.

4. **Other news:** Kim reports 4-H horse riders are focusing on equitation and showmanship. Dave reports Stonewall Farm is partnering with Keene High School horticulture program. There are 42 kids in this program, including an active FFA group. (Future Farmers of America). Dave has planted cold hardy grape vines and miniature kiwi fruits at his farm. He has been working with Lago Hale from the Ag. Experiment Station to target novel or underutilized crops with potential for NH.

Dick moves the meeting adjourn. Aaron seconds. Meeting adjourns 7:10 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark

Secretary

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Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: June 8, 2023

Time of meeting: 6:00pm

Location of meeting: Anita Moeller and Mark Cullen Property, Richmond NH

Agenda

1. Natural Resources Program Review

Minutes:

Present: Tom Beaudry, Rachel Brice, Paul Chiarantona—Public Affairs, UNH Extension, Eloise Clark, Mark Cullen—property owner, Darrel Covell—Natural Resources Program Leader, Dick Drew, Dave Hoffman, Matt Kelly, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Christine Parshall

Chair Aaron Moody calls the meeting to order at 6:14 PM. Location is a woodlot owned by Anita Moeller and Mark Cullen on Tully Brook Road, Richmond, NH.

May 11, 2023 minutes: Tom moves the minutes be accepted. Dick seconds. All approve.

Paul Chiarantona is the public affairs person for Extension. He is new to the job. He is here to help support the Advisory Council's goals, including training and recruitment.

Darrel Covell gives an introduction to Natural Resources. About 100 people from Cheshire County have participated in UNH programs including those on climate resilience, chainsaw safety for women, invasive species control, arborist training and 44 Nature Groupie volunteers.

Anita Moeller and Mark Cullen Property: We are meeting at their 86-acre woodlot. In July '22, it was adversely affected by hemlock looper caterpillars defoliating the thick stands of hemlock. Mark explains how Matt Kelly provided them with information about the steps to stage a salvage harvest on 36 acres. Hemlock was selectively harvested, while leaving mature hardwood timber. Slash from cut trees was left to enrich the forest soil and store carbon. The plan is to transition to an oak dominant forest with red maple and black cherry. Red oak is our most valuable tree for both wildlife and timber. But it is difficult to germinate due to competition from black birch and browsing deer. Through a NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant, Matt and helpers planted 300 oak seedlings with protective tubing (from deer) and stakes. The project cost about \$1500 including materials and labor. The site will be monitored

over the next three years to track survival of the seedlings and monitor invasive buckthorn. The group toured the site and planted oak seedlings.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark
Secretary

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Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: September 14, 2023

Time of meeting: 6:00PM

Location of meeting: Cheshire County Extension Office, 12 Court St., Keene NH

Agenda:

1. Guest Speaker: Katie Lerversee, Keene Community Kitchen Director of Operations
 2. 2024 Budget
 3. Staff Updates
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Minutes:

Present: Kim Bylancik, Eloise Clark, Mark Florenz, David Hoffman, Matt Kelly, Katie Lerversee, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Christine Parshall, Lucius Parshall, Karen Seaver

Chair Aaron Moody called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM at the County Court House, Keene.

Minutes: May 2023: Lucius moves the minutes be accepted, Mark seconds. All approve.

Keene Community Kitchen Presentation: Carl introduces Katie Lerversee, Director of Operations. She describes the Mobile Food Pantry. It is in its second year of a pilot program serving outlying towns in the Monadnock Region to address food insecurity in “food deserts”. They have set up at six locations, two still pending. Other organizations have also tagged along, such as the Monadnock Humane Society and Feeding Tiny Tummies. The Mobile Food Pantry also tries to dovetail with smaller town food banks, if they exist.

Questionnaires have been distributed to participants and yielded insights. Most participants have not used the Keene Community Kitchen (KCK) because of lack of transportation or a “shame factor.” People are embarrassed to use the larger facility but are willing to use the smaller sites. The KCK has realized several issues: 1. It is difficult to use KCK staff for the Mobile Pantry and also cover the main facility. 2. The Mobile Pantry is a very physical job. Many of the host people cannot handle the volume delivered. 3. There is some duplication of effort with other groups. While the effort is laudable, it is not sustainable for staff long-term. The food access group is looking for ideas and feedback from towns and others to clarify what the program might look like next year. They want communities to “own this.”

Questions and discussion follows. Does the KCK have the ability to conduct a needs assessment? Perhaps Cheshire Medical Center can help? Is that something Extension’s Community Development program can help advise? Could Cheshire Career Center teens be used to help with the physical aspects of the job? Could the Mobile Pantry coordinate with Meals-On-Wheels? Thank you, Katie, for your thoughtful presentation.

2024 Budget Process: Carl explains the next year’s budget follows the “same contours” as previous years. The county covers salaries of 25% for the field specialists, 75% for 4-H and 100% for office staff. Operating costs are a 2.5% increase from last year. UNH sets the rates for salaries. There are no rental expenses, as staff are housed in a county building.

PROGRAM REPORTS

Food and Agriculture: Carl reports he has been busy with programs and many farm visits during the growing season. He coaches farmers to put conservation practices into effect. Programs include: field corn pest management, grain production and “bedded pack” manure management that showcased a new style of manure spreader. His farm visits included help from ten other Food & Ag. State Specialists. Carl also described the rough growing season and its impact on farmers: freeze damage in February and May, flood injury that requires monitoring and management for disease. There is no cash assistance for crop loss, only low-interest loans from the FSA (Farm Service Agency).

Nutrition Connections: Christine’s upcoming Fall and Winter calendar is full. However, summer is a very slow time as she only serves low-income populations. Could she partner with the Mobile Food Pantry or programs at Stonewall Farm? She feels live demonstrations are not possible. She notes not as many kids are available because of many summer programs. Christine hopes to have more programming next summer.

4-H: Kim reports the Cheshire Fair was a big success. Seventy kids were exhibitors. Popular clubs are equestrians, robotics, goats and dairy. Two more dairy clubs are re-starting after Covid. Both the Communications team and Dairy program are currently represented at the “Big E.” Several teens will attend the National Dairy Conference in Madison, WI. Enrollment is now back to pre-pandemic levels. The 4-H year begins October 1st. She could enroll more kids, but adult volunteers are in short supply.

Natural Resources: Matt describes property visits throughout the summer. He’s led workshops on invasive species, tree identification, climate & forest carbon capture. He’s also worked with others on webinars. He describes a short, animated film on securing forest carbon.

At a NR program meeting he learned 55% of adults in NH say they are familiar with Extension. They also discuss how to market Extension. Forest health is suffering with the rough weather this summer. He has viewed tornado damage, eroded logging trails, increases in disease and fungi. Beech leaf disease has now been found in Swanzey, Chesterfield and Jaffrey. Matt is excited about a \$1,000,000 grant to increase the use of hemlock and spruce for cross-laminated panels. These 2”x10” can be used for structural purposes, replacing steel and concrete. This three-year grant begins Oct. 1st. Programs for architects and developers are planned. He also reported on a new carbon credit program for family forests through the Nature Conservancy.

The next meeting is October 12. Suggestions for speakers or places to visit are welcome.

The meeting ends at 7:45 PM.

Submitted by,

Eloise Clark

Secretary

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Cheshire Advisory Council Meeting

Date of meeting: November 9, 2023

Time of meeting: 6:00pm

Location of meeting: Cheshire County Extension Office, 12 Court St., Keene NH

Agenda:

1. Guest: Anton Bekkerman, UNH Ag Experiment Station
 2. Office Update
 3. Program Updates from Staff
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Present: Tom Beaudry, Eloise Clark, Dick Drew, Mark Florenz, Matt Kelly, Carl Majewski, Aaron Moody, Karen Seaver. **Guest:** Anton Bekkerman—UNH Agricultural Experiment Station

Minutes:

Chair Aaron Moody calls the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

Minutes: September 14, 2023. Dick moves the minutes be accepted. Tom seconds. All approve.

1. **UNH Agricultural Experiment Station (AES).** Carl welcomes Anton Bekkerman to the AC meeting. Anton has a background as an agricultural economist focusing on commodity markets. He has been with UNH AES for 3.5 years as an administrator. He spent 11 years in Montana in a similar role.

Anton is here to explain and publicize the work done by the AES. Its mission as a research institute is to apply public funding for scientists to do cutting edge research to benefit agricultural producers. He is working with Extension to help get the word out. There is a joint advisory committee of agricultural educators and researchers on the state level. Tom Beaudry serves on that committee. AES wants to make sure the research is understood and applied to farms. Some recent projects include aquaculture and food production on forest lands. Another example is researching what food can be used as medicine to reduce chronic illnesses. What varieties of crops will be of the most benefit in 10-15 years to improve health outcomes? What are other important issues 5-25 years from now? How can research help producers maximize their output during this era of climate extremes? Research reports are issued twice per year on topics such as forestry and dairy.

The agricultural experiment station works with other AES's both regionally and nationwide where areas of common interest are shared. There is collaboration on 200-300 topics. High tunnels, nematodes and tree species adapted to a warmer climate being examples. However, there is some competition for resources and territoriality about research projects/intellectual property. Funders like to see multi-state collaboration.

The actual physical facilities at UNH includes Fairchild dairy farm, an agronomy research farm, greenhouses, and an organic dairy, one of only two nationwide. There are also 22 woodland sites. All are within a seven-mile radius from UNH in Durham. Anton would like to see more scientists embedded in different communities. There are two positions for social scientists, a forest, and an agronomic economist. The reality is UNH is having budget cuts. Enrollment is down. AES is “infrastructure rich” but “people poor.” Many positions are open. Intentional planning is needed. Farmers do have input on what research is needed. Part of Carl’s job is to express farmer’s positions to the AES. Tom urges more involvement in the CT Valley.

2. **Office Update:** Carl has reviewed the budget with the Commissioners. A 2% increase is likely. The commissioners expressed interest in the 4-H program. Kim Bylancik will make a presentation to them.

3. **Program Updates:**

Food & Agriculture: Carl has planned a corn and forage meeting for 11/16. It’s become an annual event. Presenters include an animal nutritionist/forage expert, dairy specialist and a video from AES. Longer term projects include farm resiliency planning for weather extremes. What cover crops and healthy soil practices make for resiliency?

4-H programs: Kim reports 80 attended the annual celebration and awards night. Cans were donated to food pantries. Wreath making is in the works.

The 4-H position has not been posted for hiring. Since the position is primarily funded by the County, a statewide hiring freeze is likely not the case. Tom moves Aaron to draft a letter to Cooperative Extension to post this position. Dick seconds. The group is concerned regarding this lack of action. The program has gone from nearly dormant during Covid to a robust and popular club. The AC wants to see the momentum continue. All voted in favor of the motion. Aaron will work with Carl on the wording of the letter.

Nutrition Connections: Christine sends a written report. She is finishing programs with Cheshire County Treatment Court, Swanzey Head Start and Nelson School. She is continuing monthly visits for “Pick a Better Snack” with Franklin, Wheelock, and Winchester Schools. She recently started programs with Vilas School and two virtual programs. Upcoming programs will include the Alstead Primary and Hinsdale Schools, more Head Start centers, Keene Housing Older Adult programs. She is always seeking opportunities to work with income eligible parents. Karen comments, her children really enjoy Christine’s visits to Alstead School.

Natural Resources: Matt is busy with 7 woodlot visits in the past three weeks, with three to come. He has been a guest lecturer at Franklin Pierce University. He has also done programs with MC2 Charter School on street trees, plus a logging business workshop. He’s working with Steve Roberge to create a statewide survey to gauge the effectiveness of

woodlot visits. He is the technical chair for revisions to Good Forestry in the Granite State, focusing on forest carbon. He plans a one-minute video about that for a social media release. He's been tapped to be on the UNH Council on Inclusion (REO).

The meeting adjourns at 7:30 PM.

Submitted by,
Eloise Clark
Secretary

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