



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD INLAND WETLANDS BOARD
Web Based Meeting Hosted on Zoom

FINAL MINUTES
Thursday, June 11, 2026

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not a verbatim transcription.

Members present: Susan Baker, Chair; Tim Bishop; Vice Chair; Alan Pilch, Recording Secretary; Keith Carlson; Noah Berkowicz; Carson Fincham

Members Absent: David Smith

Also present: Caleb Johnson, Inland Wetlands Agent

I. Call to order:

Ms. Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. A quorum was present.

II: Discussion

- Quick update on 27 Abbott Avenue. The neighbor association attorney asked the judge for additional time to submit an appeal, which is why it is not on the agenda this evening.
- Taylor's Pond possible dam removal is still in discussion with the Conservation Commission. This seems to be very complicated and will likely take time, they will keep us posted. Louise Washer of the Norwalk River Watershed Association is still helping with the starting point of the Norwalk River,
- Mr. Johnson will not be attending the June 25, 2026 meeting because he will be on vacation, but Ms. Paranjape will be present in his absence.

III: Application(s) for Receipt:

No applications for receipt.

IV: List of Ongoing Enforcement by Agent:

1. 225 Bennetts Farm Road

Mr. Johnson gave an overview of a violation on a previous subdivision which included a landscape designed drainage swale with a stone lined channel. The original approved wetlands permit showed a drainage swale but no rock lining. There are no flagged wetlands identified on this property. The swale is to drain water that pools on neighboring properties. The neighbor believes that when the landscapers brought in the rocks a drainage pipe that drains the neighboring property got crushed and now her property is flooding. The drains appear to be for stormwater.

Mr. Pilch asked for the original subdivision permit and application. Ms. Baker asked for information to be uploaded to the website. Mr. Johnson has created a violation folder on the town software and will upload the information.

This is in front of the IWB because there was a wetlands application for a subdivision that approved the unlined drainage swale and this change would have required a revision to a Special Permit.

V: Other Business:

1. 238 Mimosa Circle – Revised planting plan discussion.

The revised plan was distributed to the IWB. Mr. Johnson shared his screen and compared the old approved plan to the revised plan. Mr. Kristofferson was present to discuss the revision on behalf of the owner. Ms. Baker asked why they were making a revision once the plans were approved. Mr. Kristofferson explained that the proposed vegetation required a moist soil type. Once work began on the site, Mr. Kristofferson realized that the soil conditions were quite dry and experienced direct sunlight a majority of the day, the home owner went to a nursery for suggestions on alternate plantings that would have a better chance of survival.

Mr. Bishop is not in favor of the plan because it is not native plantings and not a great riparian buffer plan. Mr. Pilch believes the previous plan was more diverse adjacent to the watercourse and thinks the plants would be appropriate in the initial plan. He doesn't believe planting arborvitae would be useful. Ms. Baker suggested returning to the original person who created the planting plan and discussing the change in soil type with them to possibly suggest alternate native plants. She also does not support the new plan.

Ms. Baker suggests that the property owner should work with the plan approved and make minor adjustments as necessary to that plan with the help of the original plan designer. Small changes can be handled administratively. Mr. Kristofferson said he does not think the property owner has any concerns with what he plants just wants something with a high rate of survival. Mr. Pilch suggested that the plants on the west side need to be native. Mr. Bishop suggests that it is in the applicant's interest to get the correct plantings so they survive and do not become a financial hardship. Ms. Baker suggests not touching what is proposed along the brook but changes can be proposed along the western side and be administratively approved by the wetlands agent, Mr. Johnson.

2. Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Regulations discussion

Ms. Baker gave an overview of the current list of questions that were passed along to Attorney Beecher. Edits were made to tidy up the edits that were discussed the last meeting.

Mr. Bishop had an idea in definitions for vernal pool. He would like to propose language.

Mr. Pilch shared his screen with the regulations to discuss the definitions and went to vernal pools. Mr. Bishop stated that it is all physical and biological aspects and that mentioning hydroperiod is important. Mr. Fincham agrees that hydroperiod is important. Ms. Baker suggests referencing a resource from the Conservation Commission and their list of inventoried vernal pools. They decided to leave the definition as presented.

The IWB scrolled through the draft revision document and discussed remaining notes/comments in the margins and redlined text that will go to Attorney Beecher for one more round of review.

Ms. Baker suggests creating a repository and spreadsheet of reference documents to share with the public. There is also a brochure and some updates to the website that Mr. Johnson will propose to come up with a plan on how to present those.

This will be ready to share with Attorney Beecher and should then be ready to schedule a Public Hearing.

3. IW-24-1; 220 Branchville Road – Planting bond release (\$8,430.00)

Mr. Johnson is having computer issues. He inspected the property and all the plantings were doing very well with the exception of White Pines. They planted four and three did not make it. The fourth is thriving. Mr. Pilch shared the map on the screen. The missing white pines do not bring the plantings down to less than 80%. The IWB has requested the white pines be replanted, if the owners are willing to do it

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to release the bond in full based on the agents recommendation that they will meet 80% survival. Seconded by Mr. Fincham. Motion passes 6-0.

4. IW-22-3; 10 Black Pine Ridge – Planting bond release (\$6,746.40)

Mr. Johnson is having computer issues. He inspected the property and all the plantings were doing very well. Mr. Pilch shared the map on the screen. There were some plantings (sedges) that showed signs of deer grazing, but more than 80% of the plantings were intact.

Motion made by Mr. Bishop to release the bond in full based on the agents recommendation that they will meet 80% survival. Seconded by Mr. Carlson. Motion passes 6-0.

VI: Approval of Minutes

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting:** May 28, 2026

Motion made by Mr. Pilch to approve the minutes as is. Mr. Carlson seconded. Motion carried 4-0-2. Mr. Fincham and Mr. Bishop abstained.

VII: Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Ms. Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:16 PM.

Submitted by

Beth Peyser, Recording Secretary via Zoom Recording

Note: The Zoom recording for this meeting can be accessed at the following link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/lK_E2GHT4_uVKuO2RMTuerjXG-2k_LEdt6lllOnJeC0rd55OtcRn4_M-jUsMwc9_fwLFZ0X9SqXiXa5L.CrxcRERtmBnNzB0L