



Regular Meeting

Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 6:30 p.m.
Community Room, 43 Bombardier Road, Milton, VT 05468
In Person and/or Via Zoom

Members Present: William Pikul, Bonnie Pease, Laurie DiCesare, Colin Santee, Steve Mitchell, Betsy Paret, Joseph Duquette, Timothy Cunningham (via Zoom)

Members Absent: Bonnie Whitlock

Staff Present: Kris Dulmer (Tree Warden / MCC Liaison)

Others Present: Erica Guralnick (Milton Recreation Commission)

I. Call to Order

William Pikul called the meeting to order at 6:33p.m.

II. Agenda Review

No Change

III. Public Forum

Nothing

IV. Business

A. Downtown Core Master Plan Workshop (March 14, 2026, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.):

Cassie LaFayette, who works for Milton Planning and Zoning Dept., has been working on the Town Plan and hourglass project. She invited MCC members to an upcoming Downtown Core Master Plan workshop where we and other Town board members can vote on how we would like the Town Center to look. Interested members who wish to attend will e-mail to her.

B. MTF ADA Trail Update:

Timber & Stone agreed with our suggestion of removing the extra bench. William will send some measurements to them.

C. Natural Resources Inventory Update:

Colin says that a natural history inventory is part of the Town Plan. He is contacting other Conservation Commissions who have made inventories and is estimating cost options.

Laurie gave a presentation about the MCC hosting a Milton BioBlitz this Summer. (See Hand-out "MCC: Milton BioBlitz 2026".) Laurie explained the hand-out and answered questions about how the MCC would participate. Members agreed to hold the BioBlitz during one of three potential week-ends this Summer. Laurie will consult with potential walk leaders and will choose a date by the end of the week. We will work with the Recreation Commission and will post information in the Summer Programs brochure. On Green-Up Day, working with volunteers from the Recreation Dept., we will hand out information to the public and post notices on social media.

D. MCC Banner Presentation:

Steve held up our finished MCC banner with park logos. We all agreed the work was well done at a good price.

E. Milton Town Forest (MTF) Map Update:

Steve showed us an updated kiosk map for the MTF. He will lighten the background to light-green. The final map will be weatherproof, very durable and 4 ft. long. Tim will help with determining the walking distances for the trails. He suggested adding QR codes. Bonnie said new maps will need to include the street address (ex.: "599 Westford Road" for the MTF.) Instead of contour lines, William suggested we note a few elevation points.

Betsy MOVED that we allocate \$40. to Steve Mitchell to reimburse him for MTF kiosk map proofs. Laurie SECONDED; MOTION PASSED.

F. Project List Review:

There were no updates to Betsy's project list.

G. Green-Up Day (May 2, 2026):

Colin met with Hannah and Ben in Recreation. They will be helping hand out Green-Up bags at the Bombardier picnic pavilion and will host a Bombardier Park Clean-Up the next day. These events will be announced in the Spring Programs brochure. Colin handed out Green-Up/Clean-Up posters; additional posters will be available later. William said we will need about 800 bags. Colin said the bags have been ordered. Colin will pick up donuts and coffee. Betsy said we have \$450. allocated for Green-Up.

H: VT Conservation Plan Meeting (March 9, 2026, 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.):

William said he hopes some of us can attend this meeting.

H. Lamoille Riverwalk Road Signs:

Betsy said that a third sign may be attached to the original Ritchie Ave. post at no additional cost.

I. Treasurer's Report:

Betsy noted recent expenses of \$50 for our Association of VT Conservation Commissions membership and \$96 for the MCC banners.

V. Nature Notes:

Laurie recently photographed 3 deer from the upstairs window of her home. She also saw three deer crossing East Road. Colin read some reviews from the Lamoille riverwalk Checkerberry sign-in sheet. Many mentioned 'great trail blazes.' Bonnie says she saw a raccoon on her nature camera.

VI. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Betsy MOVED that we accept the Minutes of January 27, 2026. Bonnie SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED.

VII. Adjournment:

Joseph MOVED that we adjourn. Bonnie SECONDED. All APPROVED. Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

All documents pertaining to this meeting may be viewed using the following link:

https://miltonvt.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/TownOfMiltonFilesFolders/IgB8qTbZD8ECSINGDKulBiMBAWDWSVN1MfSsd_CbRnSdPE?e=98cDys

Minutes recorded and submitted by William Pikul

APPROVED

MINUTES:

William Pikul, Chair

Date

Milton Town Clerk

Filed this day with the Milton
Town Clerk's Office.

MCC: Milton BioBlitz 2026 Presentation by Laurie DiCesare Feb. 24, 2026

What is a BioBlitz?

"A bioblitz is a communal effort to record as many species within a designated location and time period as possible." [VCE]

Summer 2026 Dates?

Suggested: June, July or August for best Odonates (Dragonflies / Damselflies) and Lepidoptera (Butterflies / Moths) and VT Entomological Society (VT insect club) participation.

Scope? One day or a week-end? Week-end offers more possibilities for participation...and more data. This may depend on the number of walk leaders and volunteers who are interested in helping.

Milton Sites and Habitats to Consider:

***Bombardier Park:** East & West: Sandplain habitat; wetlands; woodland trails, great birding site.
Possible new rain garden site? "Before and after" installation species lists?
[Picnic tables and restroom facilities.]

***Eagle Mountain (Lake Champlain Land Trust):** Henry Road & Cold Spring Rd. trailheads:
Woodlands, fields, calcareous rocks, seeps; some **rare plants** documented around Hoyt Overlook.
[See also Eagle Mtn. brochure / trail map.]

Lake Arrowhead: Route 7 North: Milton area accessible via boat launch by Low Bridge in Georgia.
Great birding and fishing site; extensive shoreline with marshes.
Arrowhead Dam: [Access difficult; not a primary site]

***Lamoille Riverwalk:** Ritchie Ave. & Checkerberry trailheads;
Lamoille Riverwalk Trail: woodlands (many fern species, **rare wildflowers**, **Bladdernut trees**), sandplains, riverine habitat. [See also LRW brochure / map]
Ritchie Ave. Boat Launch: Rocky shore / varying water levels: wildflowers (butterflies), water plants; Odonates (**Arrow Clubtail Dragonfly** 8.27.2019 [LD] VT S4 vulnerable); **osprey**, herons,

***Milton Town Forest:** Main parking lot & Carriage Barn trailheads:
Wildflower fields (butterflies), adult dragonflies, Milton Marsh (eagles, wading birds, Odonates); Milton Pond (dragonflies, water birds, beaver...), wetlands (seeps and streams); dark, forested areas with many varieties of fungi; rocky outcrops. [See also MTF brochure / trail map.]

NatureHaven: 431 East Road: 1.4 acres with fields, wetland, dragonfly/damselfly pond.
(8 species of damselflies; 23 species of dragonflies including **Harlequin Darner VT S2-S3** 6.8.2018 LD; **Arrowhead Spiketail VT S1-S2** 6.7.2021); fruit and nut trees; wildflowers, birds, fungi.
[Laurie's home; parking lot 5 min. from MTF CB; Possible B&B site for visiting group leaders;]

Riverside Park: Route 7 North: Riverine birds, Odonates.
[Picnic tables with view of the Lamoille River; historical information.]
[Adjacent FEMA flood-reclaimed property?]

***Snap Fitness Trail / Bonnie Way (by Premier Tire & Auto):** Route 7 South:
ATV trail behind Snap Fitness: Short forested lowland trail leading to a 30-acre wetland
Many species of fungi; abundant Odonates and amphibians; rare plants, wading birds.

Bonnie Way Field: Abundant wildflowers (12 species of butterflies; 2 species of moths recorded to date); beetles; spiders, dragonflies (4 species noted; fly-bys from adjacent wetlands). Most species visible from sidewalk. [Field is for sale; may soon become house lots.]

***Sandbar State Park**: Route 2.

Sandbar State Pk.: Sandy beach environment; some adjacent forest. Osprey and other shore bird species; butterflies and dragonflies. [Public bathrooms; possible campsites for visitors; entry fee or State of VT Green Mtn. Passport required.]

Sandbar Waterfowl Area: Many species of ducks. [Parking challenge for this roadside site.]

Lamoille Boat Launch: On route 2 near Sandbar SP. Riverine habitat. [Small area.]

Van Everest Boat Launch: Near Georgia border.

Rocky Lake Champlain shoreline (wading birds). [Port-o-lets, small area.]

Resource Organizations:

Lake Champlain Land Trust (Eagle Mountain): Help with species ID, walk leaders?

VT Entomological Society (VES): See VermontInsects.org / Newsletter. (Walk leaders?)

Events: April 11, 2026: Spring Meeting at Birds of VT Museum, Huntington, VT. Field trip planning and potluck lunch; public welcome; free Museum tour (two floors of hand-carved birds/dioramas.)

July 11, 2026: Family Field Trip at Birds of VT Museum: Short walk to a pond; free museum tour.

Maine Entomological Society (MES): See MaineEntoSoc.org. [Notice in MES May Newsletter?]

Events: June 27-28, 2026: BioBlitz (see May Newsletter for information.)

Herb Wilson (MES) and other authors of "Butterflies of Maine ..." (walk leaders?)

Resource People (Area of interest; possible assistance?): UVM Field Naturalist students?

Laurie DiCesare (MCC): Naturalist / photographer with specialties in Ethnobotany and Odonates. BioBlitz planner, possible walk leader and/or program presenter (plants & insects); species list compiler.

Kris Dulmer (MCC): Milton Tree Warden (tree walk?)

Bonnie Pease (MCC): Naturalist / photographer. Walk leader?

Bonnie Whitlock (MCC): Wetlands Ecologist / birder (Wetlands or bird walk?)

Other MCC Members: Help with park walks, publicity, site access (Town Office / Grange?), sign-ups for participants, iNaturalist site & species lists; pot-luck dinner?

Michael Sabourin, Bryan Pfeiffer, Josh Lincoln, Charley Eiseman, et.al. (VES): Entomologists; odes and leps experts. Possible insect walk leaders?

Declan McCabe: Biology Professor at St. Michael's College; author of "Turning Stones: Discovering the Life of Water." Wetlands walk and or presentation?

Tom Scavo: Expert botanist; writes for iNaturalist. Possible botany walk leader, help with iNaturalist? [Friend of Laurie's; has walked MTF and Snap Fitness trail.]

Tom Norton: Expert botanist. Possible botany walk leader, help with iNaturalist? [Tom Scavo's mentor; botany walks with Laurie and Tom Scavo.]

Shirley Zundell: Expert birder; peregrine falcon observer for Audubon.

[Friend of Laurie's; has helped Laurie with natural history inventories, esp. Odes and Leps.]

Kate Taylor: Author of "Butterflies of VT" @2025. Butterfly/insect walk?

[Laurie reviewed her original copy for the VES News.]

Possible BioBlitz Week-ends:

June: June 6-7

June 13-14

June 20-21

June 27-28 [MES: BioBlitz]

July: [July 4-5] [No; 4th of July Holiday]

[July 11-12] [No; VES walk at BOVM]

July 18-19

July 25-26

August: Aug. 1-2

Aug. 8-9

Aug. 15-16

Aug. 22-23

Aug. 29-30

BioBlitz Week-end Programs Outline:

BASIC: (With few volunteers, select a few favorite sites.)

Saturday Morning Walk (~9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; birders may start earlier.)

Saturday Afternoon Walk (~1 p.m. to 3 p.m.)

Sunday Morning Walk (~9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; birders may start earlier.)

Sunday Afternoon Walk (~1 p.m. to 3 p.m.)

Resource Information provided to Trip Leaders and Participants: (At sign-in site with Town map?)

Information sheet with map of Selected Sites with directions and programs offered.

Other Sites of Interest with directions for independent participants (see site list above.)

Information on how to sign up for iNaturalist to record species. [This may be online info.]

Sunday Evening Pot-Luck Dinner (~6 to 8 p.m.): Venue? [Town Office, Library or Grange?]

Sign-In sheet with contact information for all participants.

Pot Luck Dinner (MCC may provide coffee, tea, paper plates, utensils.)

Thanking trip leaders (gift certificates from local businesses?) and participants (bookmarks?)

Group discussion about unusual or favorite species found.

Help participants with iNaturalist access / species documentation.

Pot-Luck Assistance Needed:

Food donations and site preparation.

Securing gift certificates for trip leaders.

(Laurie will provide nature bookmarks for participants and

Nature Note thank-you cards but could use help writing the notes)

Tech help for people who want to sign onto iNaturalist (demo. how to enter a few sample species.)



Vermont Atlas of Life

<https://val.vtcostudies.org> › Vermont BioBlitzes

Start a BioBlitz | Vermont Atlas of Life

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How to organize a bioblitz:

Once you've picked a **location and date** you'll need to get to work organizing your bioblitz. Your responsibilities as the organizer are to:

- Create an iNat project
- Recruit observers
- Rehearse an upload plan
- Recruit identifiers
- Plan how to report back results from the bioblitz
