

Town of Groton
Invasive Species Committee
2 February 2026
Meeting Minutes



Town of
Groton
Massachusetts

Committee Members Present:

Charlotte Weigel
Jonathan Basch
Olin Lathrop
Adam Burnett
Ron Strohsahl

Committee Members Not Present:

Brian Bettencourt
Ann Carpenter

Agenda:

1. Review minutes and action items from December meeting
2. Printing Porcelain Berry Brochure
3. Annual report review
4. Invasive treatment in Carol Wheeler Park and the adjacent MBTA land/Consideration of Stewardship council grant for endorsement
5. Invasive Species Forum
6. Community Grants and Funding Sources
7. February Meeting schedule
8. All other business

The Meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM.

1. The first order of business was: Review minutes and action items from the December meeting
 - a. Minutes:
 - i. Minutes amended for accuracy
 1. Olin Lathrop moved to approve the minutes as amended
 2. Charlotte Weigel seconded the motion
 - a. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote
 - b. Action Items:
 - i. Assigned Previously:
 1. **Jonathan Basch** to find cost of purchasing our own scent/pheromone trap for spotted lanternfly - *completed* - not available commercially, but may have option to test prototypes. Funnel traps have been previously tested and are effective and capturing non-target wildlife
- ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to identify lanternfly funnel traps for purchase**
2. **Ron Strohsahl** to add Vegetation Management Plan files to shared drive location for review at the next meeting - *completed*

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3. **Olin Lathrop** to follow up with the Select Board regarding the Committee's charge - *not completed* - sent initial email but did not follow up. Other members can follow up if they want.
4. **Brian Bettencourt** to email contact information of School Grounds Chief (Colin Fredette) to Olin Lathrop to describe treatment process and inquire whether school would be interested in undertaking the process - *completed*
5. **Olin Lathrop** to research regulations regarding when spraying is allowed around schools - *completed* - Regulations are onerous. Requires several days of notification/signage and must be closed for multiple days afterwards. Treatments could be completed during a vacation week, or during summer, when children are not present.
6. **Olin Lathrop** to contact Colin Fredette regarding herbicide treatment at schools - *completed* - He is aware of the regulations and has two licensed applicators on staff. We can advise them on how to treat invasives on properties and assist with mechanical treatment
7. **Jonathan Basch** to contact Richard Hewitt and Community Preservation Committee regarding printing the brochures - *completed* - Minuteman Press provided quote, Commissioner of Trust Funds approved up to \$350 for printing.
 - a. Committee unanimously votes to approve Jonathan Basch to spend up to \$350 to purchase 1,000 copies of the brochures

ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to purchase 1,000 copies of the brochures, spending up to \$350, as approved

8. **Charlotte Weigel** to email Dan Bove from MA Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding available habitat management grants - *completed* - No response
 9. **Jonathan Basch** to begin draft of annual report - *completed*
2. The second order of business was: Printing Porcelain Berry Brochure
 - a. Minuteman Press provided quote
 - b. Commissioner of Trust Funds approved up to \$350 for printing
 - c. Discussion regarding how many copies we want printed
 - i. We have had to reorder some copies of other brochures, better to buy them all at once
 - ii. We have been approved of enough money to purchase up to 1,000 copies
 1. Olin Lathrop moved to print 1,000 copies
 2. Charlotte Weigel seconds motion
 - a. Approved by unanimous vote
 3. The third order of business was: Annual Report Review
 - a. Report reviewed and edited for accuracy
 - i. Olin Lathrop moved to approve Annual Report for submittal to Town
 - ii. Charlotte Weigel seconds motion
 1. Approved by unanimous vote
 4. The fourth order of business was: Invasive Treatment in Carol Wheeler Park and adjacent MBTA land / Consideration of Stewardship council grant for endorsement

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- a. Peter Cunningham has been in contact with Greystone, the legal firm for the MBTA, and they are willing to waive the fee cost of review. But, we're still waiting on permission to access land adjacent to the Squannacook River.
- b. Olin Lathrop filed Request for Determination of Applicability with Conservation Commission that would allow us to treat invasives on MBTA property in Riverfront Area and within 100 feet of wetlands
- c. Stewardship Council Committee is requesting the Invasive Species Committee vote to endorse the grant
 - i. Olin explains portions of the grant:
 - 1. Most of the grant will be used to purchase restoration plantings near the river, and mulch for Carol Wheeler Park
 - 2. We may be able to request grant funds be used to purchase additional herbicide applicator insurance to allow us to work on properties other than Town-owned land
 - 3. Small amount of funding has been allocated for purchasing addition herbicide
 - ii. Motion to endorse the grant application made by Charlotte Weigel
 - 1. Motion seconded by Ron Strohsahl
 - 2. Endorsement was approved unanimously

ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to email Charlotte Steeves with endorsement from Invasive Species Committee in support of Stewardship Committee

- 5. The fifth order of business was: Invasive Species Forum
 - a. Olin Lathrop would like endorsement from the Groton Invasive Species Committee to begin communication with interested parties regarding starting a Statewide Invasive Species Forum to encourage statewide collaboration
 - i. Olin Lathrop would like to contact other agencies including DCR, DFW, and MDAR to see if they have grant availability to fund the Forum
 - ii. Depending on number of people to attend, may need to charge money (\$25-50)
 - 1. Need to find a venue to host, decide whether to serve food, etc.
 - iii. Single track, with 30-45 minute presentations throughout the day in morning and evening sessions
 - iv. One day, all day, first or second Saturday in November
 - b. Jonathan Basch: We think it is a great idea, we approve the idea conceptually, but before endorsing it we should have more specifics, collect statements of interest, have an organization plan. Specifically, what facilities will be used, what content will be provided, declare what benefit would come from the conference.
 - i. Organizing an event of this size is a large undertaking. What would be the role of the Committee members? Would it conflict with our limited volunteer hours to treat invasives throughout the Town? Is there another organization doing anything similar or who has experience with organizing events that we can work with?
 - c. We may have partnership opportunities with Wild and Scenic Committee and Nashua River Watershed Association

ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop to research additional logistics and details of proposed Invasive Species Forum

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6. The sixth order of business was: Committee Grants and Funding Sources
 - a. Funding from Wild and Scenic Committee grant could be utilized for portion of Invasive Species Forum
 - b. Wild and Scenic Stewardship Council grant cycle opens in March
 - i. Do we have any upcoming work that we could submit a grant request for?
 1. Jonathan Basch: We don't have any proposed work with the same scope and size as Surrenden Farms, but should consider additional ideas throughout the year.
 2. Jonathan Basch: Purple loosestrife appeared more prolific this year. We could purchase loosestrife beetles for biocontrol, however we have not established the documentation to validate this observation and provide the justification for this project
7. The seventh order of business was: February Meeting schedule
 - a. Third Monday in February is a holiday
 - b. Meeting will be moved to February 23, 2026
8. The eighth order of business was: all other business
 - a. Adam Burnett to discuss existing Vegetative Management Plan (VMP) with Mark Haddad for invasive management on Nod Road dump
 - i. Invasive Species Committee can assist and provide guidance during their work
 - b. Adam Burnett displayed the sprayer extension that was purchased
 - i. Will research additional part for connection to the backpack sprayer
 - c. Annual Conservation Forum is scheduled March 26, 2026
 - i. Focus on conservation but invasives are an issue that will be addressed
 - ii. Will be held at the Groton Senior Center at 6:30p
 - iii. Pat Huckery from US Fish and Wildlife will be presenting
9. Meeting Adjournment
 - a. Olin Lathrop moved to adjourn
 - i. Charlotte Weigel seconded
 - ii. The motion to adjourn approved by unanimous roll call vote

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.

OLD ACTION ITEMS + NEW:

1. **Jonathan Basch** to identify lanternfly funnel traps for purchase
2. **Jonathan Basch** to purchase 1,000 copies of the brochures, spending up to \$350
3. **Jonathan Basch** to email Charlotte Steeves with endorsement from Invasive Species Committee in support of Stewardship Council
4. **Olin Lathrop** to research additional logistics and details of proposed Invasive Species Forum