TOWN OF BRISTOL
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Department of Community Development
235 High Street, Bristol, Rhode Island

Tuesday, May 5, 2026 @ 5:30 p.m.

MAY 2026 MEETING MINUTES

Members Present:
Tony Morettini, Chairman
Ray Payson, Vice-Chairman
Lindsay Green
Craig Fisher
Jay Maciel, Recording Secretary

Staff Present:
Ed Tanner

Members Absent:
Glenn Donovan
Lee Ann Freitas

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morettini at 5:30 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the April minutes was made by Mr. Payson and seconded by Mr. Fisher. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.
2. Open Space: Mr. Payson reported that there was a gathering at Peter Road on April 8 to remove the invasive Oriental bittersweet found there, and that there was also an associated front-page article in the *Bristol Phoenix* about its harm. Commissioners visited the Mount Hope Community Forest on Tower Street on April 28 where property boundaries, new signage and the potential for trails there were reviewed. Mr. Tanner mentioned that trail maintenance at the Perry – Tavares Farm near San Francisco Street was partly done last fall as an Eagle Scout project, but indicated that additional maintenance at the property may be needed.
3. Tree Program: Mr. Tanner reported that he and Mr. Payson attended Rhode Island's 139th Arbor Day celebration at Slater Memorial Park in Pawtucket on April 24, where Bristol received its "25 Years" Tree City USA milestone sign stickers from the Arbor Day Foundation. Mr. Tanner announced that the Bristol Arbor Day celebration will take place this Thursday, May 7, at 10:00 a.m. on the Town Common with students from Our Lady of Mount Carmel School participating. A Liberty Tree Planting for the 250th Celebration is scheduled for Friday, May 15 at 10:00 a.m. at the Independence Park boat launch.
   In attendance at this evening's meeting were Lou Allard, Urban Community Forestry Program Coordinator, and Beth Banner, Urban Forestry Specialist, from the RI Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM) to speak about available technical and financial resources DEM has to assist the Town with tree related activities. Six areas of assistance were discussed, some of which the Town already utilizes: Street Tree Inventory, Tree Canopy Assessment, Tree Ordinance Review/Development, Urban Forest Master Plan, Tree Planting Funding, and Design Assistance. The latter item refers to the Regenerative Community Design Lab (RCDL) program which provides free conceptual design assistance for community green spaces. Ms. Banner also distributed the *Tree Board Handbook*, a booklet published by the Arbor Day Foundation designed to assist tree board members understand their roles and to help them manage their local urban canopy.

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MAY 2026 MEETING MINUTES, *continued*

Commissioners reviewed a request from Chris Rooney, Utility Arborist Manager for RI Energy, regarding the proposed use of Tree Growth Regulators (TGRs) on specific town trees, to be used in conjunction with their scheduled tree trimming in the utility easement. A publication from the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service was distributed, entitled *Growth Retardants: A Promising Tool for Managing Urban Trees*. Following discussion, it was decided that Mr. Morettini would draft an advisory letter to the Town Administrator and Tree Warden stating that the Commission found no discernable negative impacts from TGR use, particularly since the Tree Warden will oversee the treatments.

4. 37th Annual Keep Bristol Clean Town-wide Cleanup: Mr. Maciel reported that the April 25 event was very successful, drawing 99 volunteers who collected 1,500 lbs. of trash across 14 separate locations.
5. Around the Room: Mr. Tanner shared that Save the Bay is seeking volunteers to document conditions for its Rights-of-Way Monitoring Program. Mr. Tanner also noted that Christian Fernandes led a conservation project for Wolf Cubs centered around making native flower bloom balls to be planted at the meadow at the Perry – Tavares Farm.
6. The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 2, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.
7. Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jay Maciel