

**Town of North Stonington
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE
Town Hall Conference Room
June 8, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.**

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

This, the first gathering of the Hewitt Farm Committee, was called to order by First Selectman Nick Mullane at 3:00 p.m. with appointed committee members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick Cooper and Nita Kincaid present. Appointed member Eddie McGowan was notified of the meeting but was unable to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Madeline Jeffery, a member of the public, stated that she had been invited by Mr. Mullane to attend the gathering and was subsequently invited to join the group at the table.

MINUTES

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Nick Mullane distributed a copy of the May 16, 2008 letter - Blumenthal to Mullane - and reviewed its contents with respect to allowable uses on the Hewitt Farm property.

Nick stated that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) was conducting on-going work to have the "carriage house" roof repaired and fence around the Farm House re-built. He then described what maintenance and improvements have been made to the property since it was acquired by the Town. Nick described planned work for the dam, the "carriage house" and the cabin, and stated that the BOS will take the lead on these previously planned projects but will keep the committee apprised of its decisions and activities with regard to them. He also noted that the old boat shed and pavilion are in need of attention.

Nick indicated that he would provide the committee with a report on Hewitt Farm income and expenses to date.

The status of dam repairs was discussed. BOS is appealing the decision on FEMA funds for storm damage. A meeting with the DEP is scheduled and it is hoped that the large spillway can be refurbished this year. There is \$135,000 left from the Hewitt Farm purchase funds.

The committee noted that it would like to see a resolution to the objection voiced on (and denial of) item #21 in the December 15, 2010 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES, which addressed the maintenance and potential restoration of Greene Gables. The committee believes that this item should be re-visited at some time in the future when better facts about a potential restoration are available.

To establish its bounds of responsibility, the committee asked Nick what was expected of it with regard to management of tenants and lessees. Nick stated that the BOS was performing this function, as no leases are currently under negotiation. He will keep the committee apprised of related decisions and activities and will involve the committee if significant lease changes are to be made in the future.

Nick next addressed the structure of the committee per se including requirements to meet FOI, and the need to publish and post a Meeting Schedule, Agenda and Minutes for each meeting, and Annual Report. He noted that the committee is formal sub-committee of the BOS. Nick stated that a quorum would be 3 of 5 members and all in attendance agreed that a modified *Roberts Rules of Order* would be used to make formal decisions. We will be providing a calendar of our meeting dates for the remainder of the calendar year.

The committee discussed the request of a Girl Scout and Boy Scout to conduct projects on the property. Committee members identified under ACTION ITEMS will assist these individuals in bringing their proposals to the full committee for approval. Progress on both projects will periodically be communicated to the Conservation Commission.

The committee discussed the design, content and possible locations of site signs that had been forwarded by the Conservation Commission for consideration. Ellie Banker and Jack Brown who had not previously seen the proposal requested additional time to review it on their own. There was a brief discussion of the wording on the proposed sign and whether it could be phrased in a more "friendly" manner.

When asked by the committee how it would purchase items or have work performed on the property, Nick stated that money is available for certain types of work and purchases, but the Highway Department or town staff would be used whenever possible. Purchases will be requested through the BOS using the normal procurement procedures.

One by one, committee members then told why each had volunteered to be on the committee. It was suggested that instead of having a Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary and Treasurer, the committee because of its small size might operate more effectively with two Co-chairs, alternating between meetings with one conducting the meeting and the other recording Minutes. All in attendance were in agreement, but Eddie McGowan will be contacted to solicit his opinion.

In concluding, the committee discussed the best time to schedule its regular meetings. Those in attendance believe that because the committee is quite small, it is essential that all members be present for every meeting. Everything possible will be done to accommodate those with tight personal schedules. Initially and at least for the foreseeable future, it was decided to meet twice a month.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Before the next meeting, **every committee member** will review the items listed on the "Proposed 'To Do' List" supplied by the BOS, and will rank each item according to urgency and anticipated cost. At the meeting, individual items will be rearranged on the list with the most urgent - lowest cost items at the top and least urgent - highest cost items at the bottom. The committee will then finalize the list to become a "Tentative Work Schedule."
2. Before the next meeting, **every committee member** will review the "List of Names and Terminology" and key map that was distributed at the meeting so that it can discuss and arrive at agreement on names and terminology to be used in the future.
3. **Nita Kincaid** and **Dick Cooper** will be Karen Leiper's point-of-contact in pursuit of her Butterfly Garden project.
4. **Dick Cooper** and Jack **Brown** will be Tom Kane's point-of-contact in pursuit of his Footbridge project.
5. **Ellie Banker** and **Jack Brown** will review the wording, map, logo and general design of the proposed Hewitt Farm site sign for possible approval at a subsequent meeting. Nita Kincaid will communicate this to the Conservation Commission.
6. **Dick Cooper** will brief **Eddie McGowan** on what was discussed at this meeting and will make arrangements for the location of the next meeting. Priorities are 1st-Town Hall, 2nd-Wheeler HS Media Center, 3rd-Wheeler Library.
7. The committee will identify a date to walk the Hewitt Farm together.
8. **Dick Cooper** will draft the Minutes of this meeting and forward it to **Nita Kincaid** for editing and distribution to the full committee.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, June 22, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.** Dick Cooper will telephone members to inform them of the location.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper