

**HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE REVIEW**  
**Town of North Stonington Budget**  
**Fiscal Year July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014**

**The establishment of the Hewitt Farm property as self-sustaining is the Hewitt Farm Committee's long-term financial goal.**

**The existing 2012/2013 Budget provides this Hewitt Farm information:**

- (A 5.25) Revenue: Rent for Hewitt Property \$41,290.00**
  
- (B27.14) Expense: Public Works/Highway/Hewitt Farm \$5,000.00**  
*(existing line item to track Hewitt Farm expenses)*

**We request the Hewitt Farm Expense line in the 2013/2014 Budget remain at \$5000.00.**

## **BACKGROUND**

The Town incurred \$500,000 of debt to purchase the property on October 8th, 2008. The cost of the property, estimated initial expenses and the planned management of the associated capital expenditure were presented at a town meeting prior to the August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008 referendum. The town approved the purchase by a vote of **430-262**.

Purchase price	\$622,890
Estimate for Dam repair	\$180,500
First year borrowing & maintenance	<u>\$11,000</u>
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>\$814,390</b>
Funds from town capital accounts (for 2008 down payment)	<u>(\$314,390)</u>
<b>Amount borrowed</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

Debt payments are scheduled to be completed in **fiscal year 2013/2014**:

**Prior payments: October, 2008 - June 30, 2012**

\$333,333 in principal paid                      \$31,397 interest & fees paid

**Already budgeted payment: Fiscal year 2012/2013**

\$83,333 principal                                      \$10,598 interest

**Proposed final payment: Fiscal year 2013/2014**

\$83,333 principal                                      \$5071 interest

## **How are we doing in 2012/2013?**

**To build toward self-sustainability for Hewitt Farm, the committee has**

- **tracked current income and expenses associated with the property**
- **identified work that requires the support of the Town Highway Department**
- **focused on projects that can be accomplished by volunteers**
- **explored additional sources of funds and labor**

## CURRENT RENTAL INCOME AND EXPENSES

### Residential Rentals

In 2012 HFC inspected the two rented residences, revised expired leases, and began any necessary maintenance work.

#### 1750 Farm House

**Income:** monthly rent of \$950

Annual **\$11,400.00**

#### **Expenses**

July 1<sup>st</sup> – January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013

Water heater repairs \$312.00

Electrical repairs \$831.14

Pest control treatment \$1,200.00

Planned expenses prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013

Close main chimney for safety reasons \$1,005.00

Install updated smoke & carbon monoxide detectors est. \$160.00

Septic system cleaning est. \$300.00

Total estimated expenses **\$3808.14**

***Town Crew Support: Tree removal & trimming as damage deterrent***

## CURRENT RENTAL INCOME AND EXPENSES (cont'd)

### The Cabin

**Income:** monthly rent of \$275

Annual **\$3,300.00**

### **Expenses**

Planned expenses prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013

Clean chimney	est.	\$165.00
Install updated smoke & carbon monoxide detectors	est.	\$60.00
Septic system cleaning	est.	\$300.00
Exterminate borer bees	est.	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total estimated expenses		<b>\$625.00</b>

***Town Crew Support: Removal of climbing vines & invasives on the cabin exterior.  
Removal & trimming of trees as damage deterrent***

## CURRENT RENTAL INCOME AND EXPENSES (cont'd)

### Commercial Rentals

#### Buon Appetito

**Income:** monthly rent of \$1650 Annual **\$19,800.00**

#### **Expenses**

Year-to-date and planned expenses prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 \$0.00

#### SE CT Water Authority

(provides water to schools, village, Kingswood/Meadow Wood and some Rte. 2 businesses)

**Income:** quarterly rent of \$1553.73 **\$6,214.92**

#### **Expenses**

Year-to-date and planned expenses prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 \$0.00

### RENTAL SUMMARY FOR FISCAL 2012/2013

**Estimated Income from Rentals \$40,714.92**

**Estimated Expenses for Rentals \$4,433.14**

(does not include Town crew support)

## OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME, EXPENSES AND SUPPORT

### Hewitt Farm Hayfield Agreement

In 2012 the committee issued an RFP and negotiated a five-year hayfield agreement with two local farmers. The agreement defines the agricultural use, care and improvement of the 21+ acres of hayfields. It also provides for the development of additional trails for public use at no cost to the Town.

#### Hayfields

##### ***Income:***

Annual rent of \$500 from previous farmer for 2012 hay	\$500.00
Early payment of \$501 from new agreement for 2013 hay	\$501.00

No additional payment due until December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014

##### ***Expenses***

Fiscal years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014: no planned Town expenses	\$0.00
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## **OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME, EXPENSES AND SUPPORT(cont'd)**

### **Additional Hewitt Farm Expenses**

Greene Gables annual electrical bill	est. \$250
“Rules ” signs for parking areas	est. \$275
Insurance (included in overall Town property policy)	est. \$4000

### **Town Crew Support**

- Mowing of the amphitheater and parking areas during growing season
- Using the over-the-rail and sickle bar mowers on overgrown invasives and meadow areas
- Installation of Hewitt Rd. entry sign
- Use of Backhoe, Dump Truck, Dumpsters & associated skilled labor to assist volunteer projects
- Road repair

### **Committee Members And Volunteer Work**

- Improvement and maintenance of trails and water crossings
- Manual treatment and removal of invasives, brush and overgrowth near the entrances, stone walls and the Green
- Mowing the large public area (the Green) done regularly by 1750 house tenant

## **OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME, EXPENSES AND SUPPORT (cont'd)**

### **Four Hewitt Farm Improvement Projects in 2012**

- Two Shunock River footbridges with side rails, constructed by Boy Scout Tom Kane as his Eagle project
- A Butterfly Garden with seating area, created by Girl Scout Karin Leiper as her Gold Award project
- Six picnic tables, constructed by Boy Scout Grant Leiper as his Eagle project
- Hewitt Road visitors' entrance sign, funded by North Stonington Garden Club donation

### **Contributions to Hewitt Farm**

A savings account for contributions to Hewitt Farm was established in 2008. Because Hewitt Farm is a public park owned by the town, donations are tax deductible. All monies are to be used to maintain and improve Hewitt Farm.

Donations during fiscal 2012/2013 year-to-date are \$985.06. The January 31, 2013 account balance was \$2718.34.

## FOCUS FOR 2013/2014

- **The dam repair**, assumed at \$180,500 at the time of initial purchase, was not accomplished prior to the storm of March 2010. That storm compromised the dam further and significant reconstruction is required. \$47,500 of the \$180,500 has been spent on temporary repairs, engineering and design for the reconstruction. \$133,000 remains in the Capital Non-Recurring Account.

### Plans for the repair are included in the 2013/2014 Budget

Estimated cost of dam reconstruction and steel bridge	\$535,500
Source of funds:	
FEMA funds for steel bridge (approved)	\$52,500
State funds for dam repair (pending)	\$350,000
Town funds from existing CNR account	<u>\$133,000</u>
Total funds	\$535,500

- **The future of the Greene Gables structure** has been in question since the December 2010 Town Meeting voted on recommended uses of the property. Voters requested additional information on how Greene Gables would be used and on the cost of repairs.

In early 2012 the Hewitt Farm Committee focused on obtaining the information needed to allow the voters to resolve the future of Greene Gables.

Subsequently, the North Stonington Historical Society expressed a strong interest in restoring the building, because of its connections to prominent photographer and artist, Fred Stewart Greene.

In September 2012, a joint meeting of the Selectmen, the Hewitt Farm Committee and the Historical Society was held at the Greene Gables site to review the condition of the structure. The Historical Society expressed their plan to develop a report by March 2013 on how the existing building might be used and how the Historical Society will obtain funds for repair and ongoing support.

The Hewitt Farm Committee plans to work with the North Stonington Historical Society and the Board of Selectmen to bring information about Greene Gables to the townspeople during fiscal 2013/2014.