

**Town of North Stonington, CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Monday, July 10, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.
New Town Hall Conference Room**

The meeting of the Hewitt Farm Committee was called to order by Co-chair Nita Kincaid at 3:06 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Brian Banker, Ellie Banker, Dick "Coop" Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz and Nita Kincaid present.

1) Approve of 06/19/2017 Meeting Minutes

Ed motioned and Brian seconded to approve the 06/19/2017 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried.

2) Picnic Grove Project

Coop showed photos of the Picnic Grove site, which illustrated the work that was done by the Doble and Gannotti families during the previous weekend. Nita read an email from Arthur Doble offering to purchase a picnic table and erect it in the new open area.

The group expressed astonishment at the amount of clearing that the families had done in such a short period of time and were most receptive to the families' offer of the picnic table. Ed suggested that the committee offer a "contribution letter" in the event one of the families wants it for tax deduction purposes. The group agreed.

In questioning whether the work is complete or the families intend to continue, committee members agreed to notify the families that they could open up more of the shoreline if they wished. Specifically the area between the two openings, which currently exist. If the families wish, they may also remove the leaning (bent) tree and the tree with poison ivy in its branches. Coop will communicate this to Arthur Doble.

The committee is very pleased and impressed with the work the Doble and Gannotti families have done and is encouraging them to continue.

3) The 1750 Farm House

Nita distributed and read a written summary of what was spent on the Farm House in FY 2016/2017. It included a description of the work that was done and reasons why it was done. Three contractors were used. The committee agreed that it was very pleased with the results. The invoice for all work was submitted and a check for full payment made under the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year Budget.

Nita stated that the committee should consider a rental increase on the 1750 Farm House for next year's lease. The rent has not been changed for the past 10 years. Ed explained that

rent should be raised only if justified for reasons other than maintenance costs. For example it could be raised if taxes are increased, utility costs increase or market rates increase. Nita said there have been a number of improvements to the structure over the years and they should be considered. Rents in the North Stonington area have increased in recent years. This may be due to the scarcity of rental properties. The group also noted that the number of inhabitants living in a house greatly affects its wear-and-tear.

The group also acknowledged its interest in possible future renovation of the property for Town use. These are all factors that must be considered in a decision to change the rent. It was agreed that if the rent is changed, the decision would need to be made soon so that the tenants would be notified at least three months prior to lease renewal, January 1, 2017.

4) NOSTO Fest 2017 Participation

Ed showed the group plastic bags full of red LED lamps, miniature lamp sockets, and push button switches that will be used to operate the Light Map proposed for the committee's NOSTO Fest 2017 display. He and Coop will compile a list of locations to be lit up on the map, and determine the design and dimensions of the overall sign for committee approval.

5) Member updates on Projects and Items for Group Discussion

Ed remarked that the corn crib is becoming more fragile all the time and decision on what to do with it needs to be made soon.

Jack reported that the "Charter Oak," pines and apple trees that he planted have all been sprayed and are in good health.

Coop showed photos of a Bulletin Board, which he had seen that contains hinges and a padlock clasp that is not attractive. He suggested making Ethan Smith aware of this before Ethan completes his design. The group questioned if Scouts Nathan Cherenzia, Ethan Smith, and Ethan Wiggins have completed their designs and if they intend to return to the committee for additional approval before starting construction. Coop will check.

6) Priorities for July 24, 2017

- Update on progress of Scout and other volunteer projects
- Status of Picnic Grove Project

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper