

Town of North Stonington, CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 20, 2013 at 3:00 p.m
New Town Hall Conference Room

The meeting of the Hewitt Farm Committee was called to order by Nita Kincaid at 3:05 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz, and Nita Kincaid present.

1) Approve 05/06/2013 Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Jack seconded to approve the 05/06/2013 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried.

2) Status of Community Garden

The “Community Garden Use” on the Hewitt Farm property was approved by the townspeople at the May 7, 2013 Town Meeting. Nita reported that the Board of Selectmen, at their May 10, 2013 meeting, approved the specific proposal to move forward and develop a community garden on Hewitt Farm.

The committee next discussed the formation of a sub-committee of two Hewitt Farm committee members to oversee the community garden and to work with the group of volunteers known as the Hewitt Farm Community Garden Association. Nita and Ellie indicated that they were willing to serve as the subcommittee.

The committee reviewed how funds for the community garden would be received and disbursed. It was determined that there would a separate account identified as “Hewitt Farm Community Garden” which would be set up in the town’s Citizen’s Bank concentration account. Nita explained that the establishment of this Hewitt Farm Community Garden account by the town enables tax-deductible contributions to be received and recognized.

All monies in this Hewitt Farm Community Garden account would be income directly related to the community garden (such as plot rentals, fees and donations) and disbursements would be made to meet garden expenses (such as fencing). Nita would be responsible for tracking and signing off on deposits and withdrawals, which would then go through the Town Treasurer.

The Hewitt Farm Committee also maintains a second, similar account, which is funded by donations that are to be used for the maintenance and improvement of the Hewitt Farm property.

First Selectman Mullane briefly joined the meeting to share a few comments related to his review of a draft Agreement that would be signed by the First Selectman, the Co-Chairs of the Hewitt Farm committee and the Leader of the Community Garden Association. This agreement describes the responsibilities of the various parties and the rules under which the garden will operate.

Jack asked when the committee will know how many members are affiliated with the Community Garden Association. Nita stated that members' applications will be available for review and a visit to the garden will show how many members are actually tending a garden plot, once it is up and running.

Coop moved and Ed seconded a motion to "form a subcommittee for the 2013 calendar year, consisting of Nita Kincaid and Ellie Banker, members of the Hewitt Farm Committee, to administer and oversee a community garden on the Hewitt Farm property." This subcommittee will interface with the officers of the Hewitt Farm Community Garden Association." Four voted in favor. Ellie abstained. The motion carried.

The group concluded that permission is granted to plow and harrow a 100' x 100' garden plot at the site and to commence operation of a community garden.

3) Results of the Recreation Commission Expo

The group briefly discussed taking part in the Rec Expo and concluded that it was a worthwhile experience. The information about Hewitt Farm which was provided was appropriate and the committee members who were able to participate covered the event well.

4) Plans for "CT Trail Day 2013"

Nita reminded the group that she and Coop will guide a walk over the Bicentennial Trail on Saturday, June 1st. Anyone else joining in is most welcome. Before then, Coop will clear the few trees that have fallen over the trail. Nita will work with the other three town groups hosting walks on that day to publicize the events...

5) Proposal for NS Garden Club Discretionary Funds

Coop will research the possibility of replacing the *temporary* trail signs with *permanent* ones.

6) Greene Gables Resolution

The committee is looking forward to a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Directors of the North Stonington Historical Society to be held sometime after the Town Budget is approved.

7) Installation of Welcome/Rules signs

Coop will set highway cones at the three locations proposed for erection of the signs. Committee members should visit these sites before the next meeting so that the Highway Department can be given the "go ahead" to install them.

8) Marking of Gallery System area behind Buon Appetite

Nita will discuss with First Selectman Mullane what type of marking is required in order to ensure there will be no damage from driving over the galleries during the haying processes. Are posts alone sufficient? If so, how many and how close together. Should they be connected by a chain or rope?

9) Horse Trailer parking

The group discussed appropriate locations for maneuvering and parking large horse (and possibly other) trailers. It was concluded that driving or parking on the hayfields anywhere during the growing months is unacceptable.

Parking and a minimum amount of driving on The Green might be acceptable for large vehicles and we should see if it could be allowed without damaging the area.

10) Public comments and questions

No members of the public were present.

11) Priorities for June 3, 2013 agenda

- Update on above items.
- Prioritize committee goals for 2013 and identify "lead" members

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard B. Cooper