

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Monday, December 7, 2015 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 3:10 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Brian Banker, Ellie Banker, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Nita Kincaid and Ed Harasimowitz present. Jack Brown arrived at 3:35 p.m.

1) Approve 11/16/2015 Meeting Minutes

Brian motioned and Ed seconded to approve the 11/16/2015 Meeting Minutes. In discussing the approval of these Minutes, some committee members questioned whether we had reached any decision at the previous meeting as to allowing hay rolls to be stored on the Hewitt Farm property any time, only for a given period, or not at all. Rolls had been stored this year for most of the summer months. The committee concluded that we had decided to discuss hay storage with the farmers in our January annual meeting before reaching any decision. This had been correctly recorded in the Draft minutes. The committee then voted to approve the minutes.

2) Committee Appointments

Nita distributed and read aloud a memorandum requesting the Board of Selectmen to re-appoint Hewitt Farm Committee members for another one-year period. It noted that Ellie Banker would move to an Alternate position and Brian Banker would become a regular member. The Selectmen will review this at their next meeting.

3) Rental Renewal Notice and Inspection of 1750 Farm House

Nita reported that an annual letter had been sent to the 1750 Farm House tenants asking them if they wished to renew their lease for 2016. Their reply was in the affirmative. The date of December 17, 2015 has been set for the annual inspection of the structure. First Selectman Shawn Murphy will join Nita and Ed when the inspection is done.

4) Next Steps Relating to Animal Control

During the preceding weeks since the last meeting, Ed researched dog control laws and regulations for the State of Connecticut and emailed his findings to committee members. The group thanked him for his work and after considerable discussion concluded that, while allowing dogs to run off-leash is permissible, there still exists the

requirement that dogs be kept under control at all times and not allowed to approach people or other animals in an aggressive or threatening manner.

Coop proposed attaching a small sign to the post of each existing Rules Sign. It would state, "DOGS MUST BE UNDER CONTROL AT ALL TIMES." The committee agreed to see if this solves the problem. If not, additional or different signs may be necessary.

5) Description of Hewitt Farm Features

Nita distributed a final copy of *Hewitt Farm Features: Names and Places* for use by the committee in its communications.

6) Annual Report

To assist her in writing *Hewitt Farm's Annual Report*, Nita asked individual members to name the accomplishments on the farm over the past year for which they were most proud. Items included **(a)** the Harvest Festival, **(b)** the Community Garden shed, **(c)** the commendable appearance and operation of the Community Garden by the Community Garden Association, **(d)** construction of the new bridge and dam, **(e)** construction of two new hiking trails around the pond, **(f)** improvement of the appearance of the area surrounding the Community Garden Meadow, **(g)** control of invasive plants in various areas throughout the farm, **(h)** replacement of 15 temporary Trail Signs with permanent ones, **(i)** installation of bollards and rails to delineate the parking areas, and **(j)** installation of the Route 2 Entrance Sign.

Nita will write a draft *Annual Report* for the committee's review.

7) Goals for 2016

The group next discussed the goals it hopes to achieve during 2016.

Goals suggested included **(a)** removal of brush and overhanging trees circling the meadows, **(b)** construction of a pavilion on The Green and/or over The Pad, **(c)** labeling trees and other plants for education purposes, **(d)** supporting the Garden Club in the design and construction of a "Nature Trail," **(e)** resolving the maintenance or disposition of the Butterfly Garden and forsythia clump, **(f)** addressing improvements to the 1750 Farm House (antique fence, porch entry facing the Green, landscaping) **(g)** researching the possibility of creating a website or Facebook posting, **(h)** establishing a Friends of Hewitt Farm group, **(i)** replacing six temporary trail signs with permanent ones, **(j)** cleaning the grove opposite The Green, **(k)** working with other non-profits to host another activity/event on the farm, and **(l)** resolving the Greene Gables and Cabin issues.

8) Priorities for December 21, 2015

- Parking area for horse trailers
- Results of the 1750 Farm House inspection
- 2016 Annual Report and Goals for 2016
- Animal control issues

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper