

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Monday, October 19, 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 3:04 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Brian Banker, Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper and Nita Kincaid present. First Selectman Nick Mullane briefly attended the meeting to provide information about a Harvest Festival expense.

1) Approve 09/28/2015 Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Brian seconded to approve the 09/28/2015 Meeting Minutes as amended. The motion carried.

2) Approve 10/05/2015 Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Brian seconded to approve the 10/05/2015 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried.

3) Installation of Bat Houses

Coop stated that he had been remiss by forgetting to obtain information on the proper placement of the three bat houses donated to Hewitt Farm by the North Stonington Grange. Jack stated that it might not matter because the bats have gone south for the winter. Nita said that she saw one in her courtyard just the other day. The group suggested that perhaps it was a straggler. Coop will try to remember his assignment before the next meeting, but also be sure to ask if this is the proper time for bat house installation.

4) Parking Area for Horse Trailers

Brian described what he and Ellie had found in the area where horse trailers are sometimes parked just off Cemetery Road. He noted that by observing tracks made by the trailer wheels, it appears the trailers require a turning space of approximately 60 by 200 feet. Brian noted that because the area is perceived as quite large, the drivers were probably not attempting to make a tight turn. He also stated that a large horse trailer had probably made the tracks and that smaller "tag along" trailers would require considerably less space.

The group discussed other possible locations for turning and parking horse trailers, and agreed that The Green or the parking area at the rear entrance Welcome Sign would be much more acceptable. Ellie stressed the importance of not driving on The Green when it is soft. Nita will ask the trailer operators to inspect these two sites to determine if either seems appropriate.

5) Garden Club Proposed Project

The North Stonington Garden Club has suggested that they would like to do a 3-year project at the Hewitt Farm. This would involve planning and developing a "Nature Trail", and then providing informational materials, which would be educational for our visitors. Although this project is now only in the idea stage, the committee agreed that there were still many possible locations for such on the farm. For example, the area behind Greene Gables all the way down to the river would be appropriate. The committee liked the idea but will wait for a Project Application Form from the Garden Club before any further discussion.

6) Harvest Festival Expenditures

First Selectman Mullane informed the group of the bill for an electrical hook-up, which was used by the band. He and the committee agreed that the expense would be charged to the Hewitt Farm's Town Budget Line Item, which is \$5,000 for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. The electrical expense included materials that have now been removed from the site but will be stored for future use.

Nita reported that there were a few other charges incurred for the Harvest Festival: money to pay the LoPresti Band and the rental of three portajohns. She suggested that these be paid from the Hewitt Farm Committee's Concentration Account.

7) Member Updates on Projects & Additional Items for Discussion

Jack asked that "Clean Up the Pine Tree Grove" be added to the Work List as a future project for volunteers.

Jack has agreed to accept responsibility for maintaining the Oak Tree donated by the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut. The group also discussed trimming or possible removal of the Forsythia and other bushes in the Butterfly Garden area. There was no decision.

Jack suggested that the trails along the banks of the pond be named "**Dew Drop Inn Trail**" (on the west bank) and "**That 'Dam' Trail**" (on the east bank.) Coop will erect temporary signs at the trail heads until such time as permanent signs can be obtained. He will also investigate to determine if "Dew Drop Inn" was the way the Moussies spelled it.

Nita reported that she had received an email from an EB employee who described their “Employees” Day of Caring Program” and suggested that a one-day work project at the farm might be eligible to receive support. The committee discussed possible projects that would benefit visitors to Hewitt Farm. Nita will respond with a suggestion to clear vegetation from a point of land at the northern end of the pond that provides a spectacular view of the pond and dam. Such clearing would produce an easily accessible, very scenic picnic grove.

Jack requested a “name and terminology” list that contains the names of notable features and locations on Hewitt Farm. Coop will update the existing list for distribution and discussion at the next meeting. The group agreed there should be a better name for the “Greene Gables Meadow” and the “Farm House Meadow.”

The group briefly discussed an email cc’d to Nita, which appeared to be seeking other funding to create an Environmental Learning Center at the Farm (a project idea previously submitted in the *Letz Grant Letter of Intent*). Nita will make sure that the committee is consulted before any further actions are taken.

8) Priorities for November 2, 2015

- Installation of bat houses
- Parking area for horse trailers
- Names of Hewitt Farm features and locations
- Other festival-related business, if any

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper