

Hartford 250th Commemoration Committee
Approved Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 23, 2025

1. Gwen called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m., read the Hybrid Meeting Script followed by a roll call. Present remotely: Jonathan Schechtman, Arlene Betigole, Israel “Izzy” Provencha, Committee Members present: Gwen Tuson, Patti Crimmin-Greenan, Dennis Brown, Linda Miller. Also present: Mike Hoyt, Selectboard Liaison, Matt Osborn, Planner, Marge Brown, volunteer.
2. **Public Comments:** None
3. **Minutes:** Minutes from the 3/26/25 meeting were approved as written.
4. **Changes or Additions to the Agenda:** No items were added to the agenda
5. **Announcements:** .
 - “Two Lights for Tomorrow” Events April 18th & 19th
 - Many events during weekends of May 2nd to 4th and May 9th to 11th in Commemoration of America’s First Battle Victory May 10, 1775 in Castleton, Bennington, and others.
 - Memorial Day Ceremony May 26th starts 10 am or 10:30 am in Hartford.
 - St. Johnsbury History and Heritage Center hosts Revolutionary exhibit May 26-Jun5.
 - Izzy participated in 250th anniversary of the Lexington and Concord battles.

6. Reports:

Publicity

- Banners (SEE Attachment 6.a.i): Dennis and Gwen suggested the “Beautification Grant” might be used to put up the brackets. Potentially this committee could do the labor otherwise we need to pay the cost for staff to put them up. Discussed proposed locations and timeline when each should be installed by village. Since the Chamber of Commerce may offer to pay for one banner, Gwen thought perhaps other organizations might do so as well. Dennis has contacted Lori Hirshfield to ask if the Beautification Grant (unclear how much is available) could be used. **ACTION:** Dennis will follow up how much is available. Dennis has also contacted Green Mountain Power regarding use of their poles, but has not received a response. Former brackets most likely cannot be reused as many were broken. The Committee voted by thumbs up to wait until we get the specifics of the brackets worked out before we order the banners. Dennis asked Scott Hausler if we could use the 12’ tall ladder, and he agreed, however, Gwen thinks she has one at home. **ACTION:** Gwen will check with her husband if he has one to use. **ACTION:** Dennis will reach out to find out banner delivery time.
- Gwen’s opinion editorial was published in the Valley News on Sunday, April 19th in the Perspectives Section. **ACTION:** Gwen will follow up on her initial contact with Liz Sauchelli to write about current planned events.

- Gwen met with J.D. Hawks, Communications and Media Specialist. He has this Committee listed on the town website and included many ideas from the Hartford Historical Society site. He wondered about hosting the calendar on both sites. He has a link to the State Calendar already. Gwen reminded everyone to look at the Vermont State 250th Commission Calendar as well as the Hartford Historical Society calendar. We decided to have the calendar on both the town and Historical Society websites. **ACTION:** Gwen will ask J.D. to add the calendar.
- We need to have an email address for communicating with the public. **ACTION:** Matt Osborn will work on this.
- Gwen will talk with J.D. about hosting our events on the electric board in front of Town Hall. Discussed having the Hartford Tech Center to make posters that are consistent for all events. Perhaps use what we will have on the banner as a header. **ACTION:** We need someone to contact the Tech Center with this request.

b. P&R/Youth

- The Youth Abenaki Garden and Bugbee Seniors visits were discussed. May need to go into September for Bugbee. The Youth event is set for Aug 14th.
- Encampment - Izzy reported that he has met with the Superintendent. If this is done in May during school year, all schools will be able to attend on a Friday. Then the next day on Saturday would be a public event. For the school event Kids would all need to be bused to Kilowatt Park North. If the School Department does not commit to this activity in May 2026, then we want to schedule the activity in August 2026. Although not historically accurate, Kilowatt is better for parking and has no issue about guns on the property. Gwen will let other communities such as Lebanon and Woodstock know about the encampment since it will be a unique experience for this area.
- The superintendent suggested having a book available to engage all levels of students across the schools.

c. Ceremonies

- Dennis Brown spoke about plans for the Memorial Day ceremony on Monday, May 26th in the morning. Legion Post 26 and 84 will participate. No interest yet from VFW. The plan is to start at Town Hall and maybe have a few words about Samuel Pingree (former Governor from Hartford as well as Medal of Honor recipient), move to Veterans Park with Scouts saying the Pledge of Allegiance, then back to the Lehman Bridge to honor naval personnel – Scouts could spread flower petals off the bridge as one suggestion to involve the scouts in the ceremony. The procession would then move to the Maple Street Cemetery to see Samuel Pingree's grave. **ACTION:** Dennis will need to notify Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops about the plan. **ACTION:** Linda Miller will contact Kristen Twitchell to have students sing some patriotic songs. Patti suggested handing out a Program with short write up about Samuel Pingree.
- July 4th – Gwen has been looking for bands that would play Patriotic, old time and Jazz songs in early part of the evening. Cost is \$1,600 for two hours for a group from Northern

Vermont. There was a group from New York City that would be great, but we would have to put them up for the night, however, they will be playing in New Hampshire so a bit less at \$2,000 excluding hotel. Patti suggested a band that played at the Cornerstone.

ACTION: Patti will give contact information to Gwen. Another potential is a group from Wilder that might be able to play both the Patriotic etc. music in the first two hours as well as the rock music for the rest of the night.

d. Presentations/Places

- Theron Boyd (SEE Attachment 6.d.i) Arlene wondered if the outside might still work for a re-enactment of the gardens with portable planters. Jonathan said the State needs to confirm that it is safe. The area around the house is small since the barn and land is rented out to a local farmer. A State employee would need to be onsite during the event. Jonathan stated that the barn would need to be cleaned out. **ACTION:** Jonathan will investigate who is using barn and area and confirm if the State has deemed it safe yet. Alternatively, there may be other buildings in town available. **ACTION:** Gwen will try to work on a second location and Linda may also help only if and after Theron Boyd House be determined not an option.

e. Community

- Izzy Provoncha will do a presentation for the Hartford Historical Society at the Greater Hartford Church on Wednesday, June 11th at 7 pm entitled "Interpreting Historical Interpreting: The Evolution of Revolutionary War Reenacting."
- Quechee and Wilder Libraries are on board. Librarian Laura Abramson wrote that they are thinking along the lines of hands-on history program/programs for adults--how they can contribute to local history efforts, with possible workshops. Likely we will try to have the same program twice--during daylight hours in Quechee, and in the evening at Wilder.
- Patti Greenan – 3-hour Bennington Step On Tour may be too long in addition to travel time so she is looking into shorter options. Gwen offered for us to go to the Bugbee Center if Patti would like to present to over lunch what we are planning for the 250th and how seniors can participate and go to events.
- Hartford Community Coalition Block Party to be held on Wednesday, June 25 from 5 to 8 pm. Hartford Historical Society will have a table and offered this Committee use of half.

f. Financial

Gwen has worked with Peggy McDerment, Treasurer at the Hartford Historical Society. The \$6,636.18 available for this Committee is at the Mascoma Bank. We will move money from Savings to a Checking account. Gwen asked for a volunteer to have another signature on the account with Gwen and Peggy so Peggy would not need to be involved. We will plan to use digital banking or ask for a few checks to be printed. **ACTION:** Linda volunteered for this.

7. Old Business

Town 250th Committee Appointments. Dennis stated that Cathy Melocik expressed interest, but has not heard anything further. **ACTION:** Dennis will reach out to Cathy again.

8. New Business

Selectboard Liaison – Mike Hoyt joined the meeting tonight. Mike wondered if we might want to show the Lillian Gish movie *Way Down East*. Hartford Historical Society has a copy. Perhaps it could be shown at the Briggs Opera House even though it is not 250th anniversary based.

9. Next Meeting – Wednesday, May 28 at 5:30 pm.

10. Meeting adjourned at 7:09 pm Linda moved, Dennis seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Simon Miller, Recording Clerk