

Hartford 250th Commemoration Committee

Approved Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

1. Hybrid Meeting Script, Call to order 5:30 pm,
Present: Gwen Tuson, Patti Crimmin-Grenan, Linda Miller, Dennis Brown and Cathy Melocik (our newest Committee member). Non-Committee present: Staff Matt Osborn, Hartford Chamber representative Scott Davison. Online: Hartford Historical Society member Pat Stark.
2. Public Comments – none
3. Minutes from the April 23, 2025, meeting. Gwen had one correction on 2nd page. Should be listed as the “Vermont State 250th Commission Calendar and not “Vermont Historical Society State Calendar.” Scott Davison’s last name was misspelled. Unanimously accepted minutes as corrected.
4. Items to add to the agenda: Linda asked to have the Northern Stage presentation of *Lost Nation* on Tuesday, June 10 at 7 pm added. Add discussion of Poster for Abenaki Garden. Add Mascoma Bank checking account set up. Dennis asked to present his after-action Memorial Day Commemoration report.
5. **Announcements**
 - a. The Hartford Community Coalition Block Party is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25th from 5-8pm. Linda and Patti volunteered to be at the table, perhaps in costume. Patti wondered if the Hartford Library Bingo could be used as a handout. The group discussed Scott’s suggestion that we ask people to write down what the 250th Commemoration means and how it is relevant to them on a 5 x 7 card to meaningfully engage people. Scott mentioned that we should have a table set up at the Chamber Visitor Center for this same purpose. **ACTION:** Pat Stark will print name tags at the Hartford Historical Society to include the color 250 America logo for this event. **ACTION:** Scott will work on creating a hands-on display and visitor activity for his idea.
 - b. Juneteenth Celebration June 21st hosted by Hartford Committee Racial Equity & Inclusion. Gwen mentioned that we may wish to be a part of this event next year thinking how slavery impacted the Revolutionary Era. **ACTION:** Add this to the 2026 Timeline with a question mark.
 - c. Wednesday, June 11th 7pm Hartford Historical Society presentation "Interpreting Historical Interpreting: The Evolution of Revolutionary War Reenacting." by Izzy Provoncha at the Hartford Church 7pm.
 - d. Saturday, June 7 2pm Hartford Historical Society Annual Meeting. Hoping to show the film clip of the 1961 Hartford 200th anniversary. Ice cream social at 3pm.
 - e. Monday, June 23rd 6:30 pm is the Colonial Fashion Program sponsored by the Hartford Library and will be held at the Cornerstone Community Center next door.

6. Reports:

Publicity

- Posters:
Lively discussion that the poster was too busy with three logos for the Abenaki Garden Open House scheduled for Saturday, August 30th. The consensus was that the bean pole is fine for the Abenaki Garden event but should not be on all future posters. **ACTION:** Gwen has the template and will reduce the size of the “250 America” logo to match the size of the “Vermont 250th Anniversary” logo. She will reduce the words in the header “Hartford – Vermont – Commemorates America’s 250th” as well reduce the size of the bean pole logo. Gwen will also reformat the information in the “Sponsored by and Directions.”
We talked about color printing and Gnomon Copy was suggested. Patti also volunteered her printer.
We discussed distribution of posters. Posters need to go to the Libraries, Co-Ops about two weeks prior to an event. **ACTION:** Scott will ask Havah Walther-Armstrong, Chamber Executive Director,

if she can distribute the finished poster to Board members for their establishments. Scott will also check with the Chamber for a list of public bulletin boards. Gwen will work via email to assist with our group covering locations for posterage.

Gwen reminded us that if we use our Grant money, we need to use the Vermont Cover logo. **ACTION:** Gwen and Matt will check with the Town to see if there is an issue with using any business logo for any sponsorship or have logos been posted on the town webpages or publicity materials previously for town events with business sponsorships such as Mascoma Bank?

- Banners **SEE Attachment 6.a.i**

Dennis attended Selectboard meeting last night regarding putting up banners in Wilder on the GMP owned poles. There appears to be a bit of resistance on the part of the Selectboard even though GMP was highly supportive of this use. GMP grants access only to municipalities which the 250 Committee is. The Quechee Gorge Visitor's Center needs permission from Army Corp of Engineering. Cathy suggested using the poles on Depot Street in Wilder that may not be GMP poles. Cathy also suggested a local printer for more banners in the future.

- General email for public use. **ACTION:** Matt will work on this for the next meeting.
- J. D Hawks has been adding items to the Town Calendar on the Town website.
- Liz Sauchelli has not contacted Gwen directly, but she did update with our Memorial Day event.

P&R/Youth

- Izzy and Gwen have tentatively scheduled the Encampment for Friday, May 29, 2026 and Saturday, May 30, 2026, at Kilowatt North. Suggested we offer a small \$20 stipend to the re-enactors.
- Gwen and Pat are working on a Scavenger Hunt at the Hartford Historical Society.
- July 4, 2026, music – Gwen is working on hiring the NYC brass band (of whom she sent the clip to 250th members and liaisons) to play patriotic and Americana music before the regular evening music. Scott Hausler plans to keep using the Conniption Fits as they have done for several years as the rock cover band. Gwen wanted to give some specific details on the band, but was not complete for the meeting. She has reserved rooms for four band members.
- The group briefly discussed inviting our elected officials (state and selectboard) to speak at either July 2025, July 2026, or Veteran's Day 2025. **ACTION:** Cathy will invite the State Senators to attend the July 4th event.
- Gwen is planning with the Parks and Recreation Department to have a coloring contest for Veterans Day featuring early Vermont militia in uniform. She recognizes that some parents will object to their children coloring people with guns, so will have other options as well. Patti suggested having coloring pages available for the Block Party. **ACTION:** Gwen will provide these

Ceremonies

Memorial Day Ceremony May 26th after action review. Dennis read his synopsis.

What went well:

- Collaboration of both Legion Posts and the 250th Committee.
- New order of starting by the geese helped.
- Having both buglers was a nice touch.
- The DAV placing wreaths worked well.
- Gwen's reading about the meaning of Memorial Day was very informative
- Joe Major reading On Flanders Fields was nice.

May need work:

- Repetition of script was too much. Dennis wondered if different scripts could help keep people engaged. Some ideas were to: describe why we have the five geese. Describe why we throw flowers off the bridge. Have some sort of acknowledgement for air services.
- Remember to assign someone to bring the flags.
- PA system was a bit weak.
- Perhaps have a practice prior to Memorial Day.
- Police didn't show up on time.
- The word is not a possessive in the name "Veterans Park".
- Remember to recognize active military service in audience.
- Veterans Day. Dennis said that the Veterans Council will meet in September to come up with a program. Patti suggested doing something at the VA Hospital at 11:11 am. Perhaps include Samuel Pingree in the program.

Community

- Linda suggested having the Constitution and Bill of Rights puzzles available from the National Archive Store for the VA Hospital, the libraries and the Senior Center. Scott suggested asking the Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Park if they might donate some of the puzzles.
- Cathy suggested we have a table at both the Wilder Library and at Kilowatt for July 4th with the "What does the 250th Commemoration Mean to You? Gwen asked Scott to lead this.
- Bugbee Senior Center - Patti will encourage Seniors to attend the public Abenaki Garden event. Gwen is still interested in presenting about the 250th at Bugbee.
- Hartford Library – well on their way. Nadine has a packet ready for the Summer Reading Program.
- Wilder Library – Cathy wondered if Lost Nation could be shown there since they have a ticket window etc. She suggested asking for a donor for the \$500 cost. Parking may need to be at the Wilder School.

Presentation/Places

- Gwen mentioned that Arlene Bettigole is interested in hosting an herb garden. Cathy mentioned that Summer Sweet Garden Nursey in East Hardwick as well as an educational plant expert may be able to help us with this. Tabled until next month.

Financial

- Checking account at the Mascoma Bank is now open.

7. Old Business

- With Cathy Melocik's appointment to the committee by the Selectboard, the group noted we still have one open position on the committee to fill.
- Selectboard liaison – Mike was not present so no update.

8. New Business

- Discussed the collection of contact information for committee members and sharing contact information with the committee and with liaisons and other consistent volunteers. The consensus was to share contact information of committee members only with other committee members.
- Packet of information for new attendees. The plan is for Gwen to send the timeline, Bylaws, copy of working groups, copy of website resources, Rules of Order to new Committee/volunteers. Matt will send the previous meeting minutes.
- Gwen added this issue to the agenda and briefly elaborated on the attachment asking that we determine 1) a method to vote by consensus remotely (even without a remote attendee using video) and 2) some clarity so that all attendees understand they are welcome to vote at meetings,

and 3) some votes must only be for committee members such as approving minutes. For voting remotely the group discussed using the “React” button on the app for remote attendees. Any decisions regarding this topic were tabled until the next meeting. Also need to ensure integrity of Committee only voting vs. everyone voting. **See Voting Procedures Attachment 8c**

- Consideration of Mike Hoyt’s idea from April meeting to include historical events not necessarily from the Revolutionary era in our Commemoration was tabled. Mike’s brainstorm along this line was showing a movie like Lilian Gish’s *Way Down East*.
- Cathy wondered if we could have a “Freedom Train” **ACTION:** Cathy will work on this.

9. Next Meeting – Thursday June 26 at 5:30 pm

10. Adjournment - 7:27 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Simon Miller