

Hartford 250th Commemoration Committee
Approved Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 26, 2025

1. Gwen called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm. Hybrid Meeting Script read. Present: Gwen Tuson, Scott Davison, Patti Crimmin-Greenan, Cathy Melocik, Dennis Brown, Linda Miller, Laura Abrahamson representing Quechee Library. Attending remotely: Earl Hatley, Marge Brown
2. Public Comments. None
3. Reviewed minutes from May 28, 2025. One correction was the date for the Abenaki Garden Open House is Saturday, August 30th.
4. Items to add to the agenda:
 - 4.1 Gwen made a request to our Selectboard liaison, Mike Hoyt, regarding the need for Committee members to pay for the use of computers and printing in Town Clerk's office. Since Mike was not present, this was tabled until the next meeting.
 - 4.2 Parks and Rec fiscal year FY 26 vs. FY 27 requests
5. Announcements:
 - 5.1. New format for agenda bullets. Gwen will appreciate any feedback if attendees prefer this format.
 - 5.2. Moving order of agenda items to put priority items early in meeting. Gwen asked attendees if there is a meeting when someone needs to leave early and there is something s/he wants to be present for discussion to let her know. We can change the order so the item is not missed.
 - 5.3. Gwen asked for volunteers to help day campers with reading on their trip to the Hartford Historical Society on June 30th from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Linda Miller can help.
 - 5.4 (Moved Item 8.1 up in order) Voting. On the issue of voting for virtual attendees using Martha's rules of order the consensus was: virtual attendees with their camera on can use hand signals as those attending in person. Virtual attendees with no camera on will need to make oral votes. Gwen spoke about the importance that all attendees know they are welcome to vote in many of our decisions since we are planning community events. The consensus was any attendee can vote even if not an official committee member on most meeting issues. Voting required by only official members will be fairly evident. Gwen suggested any committee member should this request to the chairperson on a particular issue.

6. Reports:

6.1. Financial – Report attached showing earmarked total as of 6/18/25. We can compare the expense of hiring a band to that of a portable toilet needed for an activity we have already planned. **See Attachment 6.1.** Gwen asked the group what type of expenses need approval or not. We did not come to a dollar figure, but incidental office supplies and printing do not require approval.

Cathy mentioned that Tuck ordered 16 banners for far less (she will look up the actual price) so we may get the banners for less if we use a company in Enfield, NH. Gwen also stated that we may need more than the two porta-potties quoted in the report for the encampment.

6.1.1. Gwen spoke with Scott Hausler about the Parks and Recreation Department (P&R) budget. If P&R sponsored event expenses occur before June 30, 2026, then Scott is willing to seek sponsors. Alternatively, the expenses would come from our budget or we will need to ask for donations since such expenses are in the P&R FY26 budget. July 4, 2026, falls in FY27. Gwen pointed out that the encampment and July 4th are our most expensive budget items.

6.2. Publicity

6.2.1. Banners **SEE Attachment 6.2.1 Financial Report.** Dennis stated that he is interested in considering a different vendor to save money. Gwen reported that Scott Hausler suggested he could put requests such as banners for next summer or a teen trip into the FY27 budget. Dennis suggested that having banners after July 1, 2026, is too late thus the expense will be this committee's expense. Dennis has contacted the banner company and asked for a sample, but they don't do free samples on seasonal banners. He asked about buying just one copy, but there is a \$200 surcharge for less than 5 copies. **ACTION:** Cathy and Dennis will discuss this offline and report next month. Discussed ordering 25 banners, and the group agreed to order ASAP. See 6.1 for more on banners.

6.2.2. General email for public use. Matt has not had time to work on this yet. TABLED

6.2.3. Block Party June 25 wrap up. Dennis reported it was well attended. Our table was busy as we shared with the Hartford Historical Society (HHS) and the Hartford Monument Fund. Gwen observed people taking pictures of the Abenaki Garden poster as well as the Memorial QR codes. Scott collected 6 cards about what the 250th means to people personally as well as why it is important. Scott Davison read the cards. Laura suggested having the cards on display at the libraries, banks, etc. **ACTION:** Gwen will check with JD to see if we can add the comments to our page. We discussed potentially having them as a Google form, but we would need to ensure that they are only completed by a human. We must ensure that it is not some type of rant. Following this

discussion, it was felt that having them as a handwritten card to be displayed had a greater impact.

6.2.4. Abenaki Open House poster and other poster issues follow-up from May meeting. **see Attachment Abenaki Poster.** It was decided that the beanstalk was fine for the Abenaki Garden Poster, but that it is best to leave off other posters. **ACTION:** Gwen will order 25 copies to be placed in the Libraries, Town Hall, Chamber, etc. Scott Davison will find out if a digital copy can be distributed to HCC for posting.

6.2.5. Publicity: connecting with younger people via social media, etc. Cathy spoke with some young people she knows, and they suggested contacting JAM. **ACTION:** Cathy will contact JAM.

6.3. P&R/Youth

6.3.1. July 4th 2026, music **See Attachment 6.3.1 P&R/Youth Report: July 4th Proposal.** Dennis made a motion to go forth with Proposals #1 and #2 with the Town paying either \$1,500 or \$1,800 respectively. However, if the budget is cut, then we may not be able to go forth with either. Cathy seconded the motion. **ACTION:** Gwen will work with Scott Hausler and pay the deposit for the Street Beat Brass Band.

6.3.2. Report on P&R Youth Ventures Camp 2025 activities. Coming up next week.

6.3.3. Encampment May 2026. Phil Sargent, new Board member at HHS, is coordinating Wilder community efforts and has met Izzy Provoncha who is coordinating recruiting reenactors.

6.3.4. Update on P&R coloring contests in brief: **See Attachment 6.3.4 Coloring Contests.** P&R will see how this goes on Veterans Day. Scott Hausler said he can make copies for the campers at P&R.

6.4. Ceremonies

6.4.1. Updates on elected officials invited to Veteran's Day or either July 4th celebrations. Cathy Melocik will contact our Senators and Reps to speak on the 4th of July. Dennis stated that Memorial Day next year should be highly attended as we plan to dedicate the new post-WWII veterans monument.

6.5. Presentations/Places

6.5.1. Two recent events: 1) Hartford Historical Society Speaker by Izzy Provoncha was a delightful presentation. 2) Linda attended a great presentation put on by the Hartford Library on Colonial Dress by Ren Antoniowicz. Unfortunately, the event was poorly attended.

6.5.2. Update on Abenaki Garden tour Aug 30th. Earl stated logistics are all set.

6.5.3. Herb Garden update. Laura stated they are hoping to have an event next year at the Wilder Clubhouse. Cathy mentioned that the only issue might be parking, but using the Wilder School parking lot is always an option but we should request permission from the school principal.

6.5.4. Laura is hoping to have Erin Moulton as a speaker for several presentations. She does a Memoir Writing workshop and Cemetery Sleuthing (how to use cemeteries to complete one's own genealogy) to be held at the Wilder Clubhouse and at the Quechee Library. Linda mentioned Rich Landry wanting to do a Ghost Walk at the Center of Town Cemetery. **ACTION:** Linda will share Rich's contact information with Laura.

6.6. Community

6.6.1. Hartford Library summer events so far. Linda stated that both the Adult and Youth reading programs have started.

6.6.2. Juneteenth Hartford 2025 celebration. Dennis attended. Found it to be uplifting. Tremendous speakers. Joe Major was the M.C. Gwen wondered if the 250th Committee might have a presence next year. **ACTION:** Gwen will ask the HCOREI Committee if that might be an option.

6.6.3. Report on efforts to coordinate libraries. They were all present at the Block Party which was great to see. They are hoping to collaborate more on 250th activities in the future.

6.6.4. Report of any planning with Bugbee Senior Center. Patti had nothing to report except that the Declaration of Independence and Constitution puzzles donated by Cathy Melocik arrived. **ACTION:** Patti will take these to the Center for Cathy.

6.6.5 See 6.5.3 and 6.5.4 for more information on Quechee-Wilder Libraries events.

7. Old Business

7.1. Still one place on this Committee to fill. Dennis talked with Phil Sargent about joining the Hartford Preservation Commission.

7.2. The tabled agenda item from April's meeting was Mike Hoyt's idea to include historical events not necessarily from the Revolutionary era in our Commemoration. One idea along this line was to show Lilian Gish's movie *Way Down East*. Linda suggested removing this item from the agenda and that was the consensus.

8. New Business

8.1. Voting: the issue of including both committee members and non-committee members. **See Voting Procedures Attachment 8.1.** Discussed above. See 5.4.

8.2. Timeline:

8.2.1. Be sure we have individuals committed to organizing events TABLED until next meeting.

8.2.2. Adding Freedom Train event to the timeline. Cathy is looking into this but asked for permission to contact the Washington County Railroad (Cathy will check for the official name). Gwen explained permission from the chair is not necessary. The group gave consensus.

8.2.3. Discuss Summer 2026 goals and end of Commemoration. TABLED until next meeting.

9. Next Meeting Wednesday, July 23rd at 5:30 pm.

10. Adjourned 7:04 pm.