

Meeting Minutes

Event name	Brookside Farm Museum Commission Meeting
Time	Oct 22, 2025, 06:56 PM - 07:54 PM (EDT)
Participants	Annah Perch, Cheri Meier, Dick McDonald, Danielle Deeble

Meeting Updates and Attendance Discussion: The group discussed the absence of several members, including Bill and Emily, with Annah confirming she had received budget numbers from Bill. The conversation ended with a brief mention of voting, deciding that they could have a discussion at this meeting, but no voting.

Restarting Meeting Minutes Process

The group discussed meeting logistics, including the agenda from June 25th and minutes from March. They believed they hadn't met since March and decided to start fresh, despite having minutes from June that were never approved. Cheri and Annah clarified that they only needed to send an agenda to Town Hall for the Zoom meeting, and Annah noted that they didn't have a quorum for the current meeting.

Quorum Requirements and Meeting Planning

The meeting participants discussed the administrative restrictions on their ability to meet without a quorum, which requires a minimum of three members. Cheri clarified that while they currently have five members (Bill, Cheri, Danielle, Emily, and Dick), they still lack the required quorum. Annah suggested tabling the meeting minutes until the situation is resolved and offered to better organize them for the next meeting. The group briefly discussed a recent overhaul at Brookside and a six-page report Annah prepared for the town selectmen's meeting, which she shared with the team.

Reporter Coverage and Volunteer Recognition

Annah discussed her interaction with a reporter who covered her presentation to the town and requested additional interviews. Cheri agreed to contact the reporter the following day to provide information and clarify any questions. Annah expressed hope that the article would highlight the contributions of former commissioners and volunteers positively, while Cheri confirmed that the report was informational and not negative. Both agreed on the importance of recognizing the efforts of past volunteers and discussed plans for a new fence with a dedication to them.

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Historic House Museum Project Update

Annah reported progress on the house repair project, explaining that a simple letter from SHPO was all that was needed to move forward, despite previous confusion. They are scheduled to meet on November 13th with the finance office and Public Works to determine project management and discuss keeping the project within the \$110,000 budget. Annah also mentioned that while the architectural assessment is not yet complete, it will be finished by December and will provide valuable expert insights on alternative uses for the historic house museum.

Historic Site Events Planning Meeting

The group discussed several upcoming events and initiatives at the historic site. They planned a December 17th tea event for the Old Lyme Garden Club, which will be held in the house from 12-2pm. They also discussed decorating the house for the holidays, with Danielle offering to lead a decorating session on November 30th. There will also be a seed-propagating workshop hosted by Wild Ones on January 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The group agreed to cancel their November and December commissioners meetings due to scheduling conflicts. They discussed reorganizing the Friends group, with Danielle agreeing to serve as treasurer. Annah reported having over \$50,000 in the bank account and plans to start an annual appeal. The group also talked about potential partnerships and grant opportunities. They agreed to meet for a happy hour on November 14th at Zavala's to continue networking and recruitment efforts.

Next steps

- Cheri to call the reporter from The Day newspaper tomorrow to discuss Brookside Farm.
- Annah to send the report she presented to the selectmen to the commissioners.
- Annah to meet with the Masons on November 13th to discuss potential volunteer work on the barn.
- Annah to send her menu ideas for the December 17th Garden Club tea to the group.
- Danielle, Michelle, Emily, and Annah to meet on November 30th at 1pm to decorate the house for the holidays and discuss the menu for the December 17th tea.
- Cheri to bake items for the December 17th Garden Club tea.
- Annah to ask the Christmas tree vendor for a wreath for the barn before the Garden Club tea.
- Annah to research electric heaters for the barn for winter events.
- Annah to check with town maintenance about electrical capacity for a potential heater in the barn.
- Annah to organize a Friday happy hour at Zavala on November 14th at 4pm.
- Annah to follow up with potential Friends group members and partners.
- Annah to ask Michelle Maitland if she wants to be Secretary or Vice President of the Friends group.
- Annah to draft minutes from the meeting using Zoom's summary feature.
- Annah to work on an annual appeal fundraising letter.

The meeting adjourned at 7:53PM.