

**BOARD/COMMITTEE:** Steele Farm Committee

**MEETING DATE:** April 10, 2025

**TIME:** 7:00 pm

**PLACE:** Steele Farm Barn

**ATTENDEES:** Christopher Hydak (Chair), Fred Waugh, Catie Coyne, Joe Ferguson, Andy Bauer, Melissa MacGillvray

**Non-Board Member Attendees:** David McKiernan (Select Board Liaison), John Fallon

**1. Approve minutes of February 20, 2024**

Catie made a motion to approve, Andy seconded. All approved.

**2. Finance**

After all bids and change orders, currently \$24k remains in the Phase III account. A discrepancy of \$3k was found; after this is corrected there should be \$27k. This should be sufficient to cover current Phase III plans, although there is a possibility of further change orders that may increase costs. No changes to other accounts.

**3. Farm Maintenance**

**a. ABRHS Maintenance Day - Thursday April 17 from 9:30-12:30**

Melissa, Catie, and Fred, Christopher, and possibly Joe will attend. Tasks that students can work on: plant Christmas trees, pull grasses around Christmas trees, remove dead Christmas trees, clean up area behind barn (remove old wood, cut vines under pine tree), clean up butterfly garden area, remove brush from under other trees around the property.

**b. Burning brush piles**

Fred burned two of three piles in the vicinity of the pine grove since the last meeting and is planning to burn the final pile prior to the end of the 2025 burn season.

**c. Haying Contract**

The town is still in the process of creating a contract, which will include Flerra Field as well as Steele Farm. There may be an early mowing and fertilizing this year in order to create a higher quality hay crop.

**d. Old Milk House concrete removal**

Melissa contacted DPW about garbage, concrete, and two dead pine trees on left side of path in the pine grove. Garbage has been cleared but other tasks have not yet been addressed.

**e. Pollinator Garden**

Catie would like to spread wildflower seeds. Melissa offered to help. Other appropriate plants include bee balm, echinacea, aster, and butterfly weed. Other options for the garden including mulching and creating a border were discussed.

**f. Trail Walk**

Christopher suggested a trail walk before the Hidden Treasures event in May, in order to ensure that there are no large trees or branches blocking the trails. Most trails appear to clear.

#### **4. Building Maintenance**

##### **a. Open Farmhouse after winter**

Probably can wait another month given the cold weather and ongoing work on the Farmhouse.

##### **b. Ice House Painting**

Still too early given the cold and wet weather. Susan DiLorenzo has offered to provide paint and to help with the painting.

##### **c. Barn Organization**

- i. Theatre props disposal: Fred sent email to Blanchard administration on 4/10/2025. No reply yet.

##### **d. Steele Farm House Phase III Status**

Work started today. Contractor found that there were no frames around some windows. The contractor recommended installing frames and the building inspector indicated that frames are required. Frames will lead to additional cost, and their installation may damage adjacent walls. This may lead to a change order for any windows that need framing. The contractor also noted there may be insufficient structural support in some walls. The contractor expects work to be done by early May.

#### **5. Old business**

##### **a. Capital Plan**

- i. Parking lot status: No progress since last meeting.

##### **b. Handbook**

Christopher discussed recording decisions made in renovating the Farmhouse. This could be part of the handbook or a separate document. John noted that recording this information would be useful for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Farmhouse in 9 years.

##### **c. Camping policy**

No update since last meeting.

##### **d. Garbage cans**

Melissa brought up the possibility of a solar dog waste station. Next steps are to conduct research and/or to reach out to the sustainability committee.

##### **e. Steele Farm - Hidden Treasures - May 12-18**

The Farmhouse and Barn will be open 2-4 pm on May 18 for viewing and discussion of the history of Steele Farm. The BHS will support the event.

##### **f. Trail mowing**

We should ask DPW to check the mower and conduct any needed maintenance.

**6. New business**

**a. Farmhouse Renovations - Phase IV**

It would be good to have public input into the next phase of renovations, with SFC providing suggestions and guidance. Joe suggested an online survey, followed by a meeting with presentation of results. This could lead to several ideas, which could then be further investigated. At some point the Town may have to vote on it. Joe noted that the Town Planning Board recently conducted a survey.

**7. Next meeting date**

Next meeting will be 7 pm Thursday May 8<sup>th</sup> at the Barn.

**8. Adjournment**

Fred motioned to adjourn, Andy seconded. Motion passed; meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.