

Received 9/17/25

8:46 AM Jodi Moore, ATC

Town of Durham

America 250 Committee

Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Room 1, Community Center, and Remote via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Recording

Passcode: 5%3zMZ*=

1. Call to order and roll call

Sarah Atwell called the America 250 Committee meeting of Tuesday, August 19, 2025, to order at 6:30 p.m.

Also present: Brendan Rea Jr., Bob Booz, Carolyn Havrda, Brendan Rea, Jonathan Field.

Others: Becky Anderson and Maggie Petersen.

2. Approval of the agenda

MOTION BY JONATHAN FIELD, SECONDED BY BOB BOOZ, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. VOTE: ALL AYE

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes: July 15, 2025

MOTION BY BOB BOOZ, SECONDED BY BRENDAN REA JR., TO APPROVE WITH A MINOR CORRECTION. VOTE: ALL AYE

4. Presentation from Coginchaug Valley Education Foundation (CVEF)

Becky Anderson and Maggie Petersen from CVEF were present to discuss possible collaboration with America 250 and CVEF.

The group discussed the idea of a spelling bee. CVEF previously hosted this type of event for the community. Although it was widely popular, it was a huge undertaking (from scheduling, set-up, volunteers, recruiting teams, etc.) They noted it took about 6 months advance notice to plan and they felt they did not have the resources within CVEF to accomplish this. The members discussed the idea of bringing in an independent group to run a trivia/spelling bee.

Alternatively, the idea of a treasure hunt was presented. Aimed at all ages and could ask any community group to be involved (library, cemetery company, fire house, community center, historic homes on Main St, historic locations in town, local farms, scouts, etc.). Saturday from 10-12 noon and participants could go from location to location or one location, for example at the fairgrounds. History and education could be tied in and ending with a large celebration at one location. Other ideas discussed:

- Local businesses for prizes/gift cards
- Applying for a grant with CVEF to help fund/sponsor the event, deadline May 1st
- How to market the event

- School liaison, getting information sent home to students
- Booklet idea/stickers for participants

The committee thanked Maggie and Becky for their attendance tonight and ideas. The committee will focus on creating a calendar at their next meeting.

5. Fundraising and checking account discussion

First Selectman Rea explained a banking account was set up for America 250 donations. The committee discussed approving invoices at their meeting as well for budget line items. First Selectman Rea is still in the process of getting clarity on how Venmo/GoFundme would work. Discussion on using a QR code to have ready at future events and approaching local businesses. Publishing a booklet to broadcast events and acknowledge donors/sponsors.

Members discussed future potential for grant money and funds that are currently earmarked for specific events that the committee has already received. It was noted that the calendar will play a big part in moving forward.

Middlesex Chamber of Commerce meeting will take place at the Durham Community Center on October 8th at 8am, which involves local Durham/Middlefield businesses.

The fair has been contacted regarding the dates for the encampment in October, waiting to hear back. S. Atwell mentioned inquiring about some booths, if they are willing to open (like how the tractor cruise event operated). Pros and cons of admission fee vs. parking fee or both.

6. Committee member comments

First Selectman Rea noted explained some documents were found in the vault at Town Hall, including the Bicentennial Committee from 1974 and shared with members. This information will also be published on the A250 webpage. He felt that the time capsule buried in 1932 and opened in 1982, was so close to the 1976 "capsule" there was confusion especially with the name being so similar. He believes there is no missing capsule.

Other:

- America 250 Committee has the display case at the library reserved for January.
- CT250 banner parade information sent out.
- Possibility of reading of the Declaration of independence by several students
- Summer picnic: alternative idea of closing Town House Road and putting fence around town green area
- Upcoming town events to hand out flyers/information: Halloween Trunk or Treat, 4k road race at Thanksgiving time, holiday tree lighting

Next meeting: committee need to focus on creation of the 2026 calendar, fundraising, solicitation letters and a January kickoff event.

7. Public Comment

None.

8. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned 8:12 p.m.,

Respectfully submitted,
Jaclyn Lehet