

Ridgefield Commemorates America at 250 (RCA250)

Meeting Minutes

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August 21, 2024, 8 am - Town Hall Annex

The meeting was called to order at 8:08 am

In attendance: Co-chairs Geoffrey Morris, Pamme Jones; members Stephanie Heering, Renee Brown-Cheng, Elizabeth Ellis

Sara Champion, Louzette Dovaras (via phone)

Guest: Hilde Grob (via phone)

Absent: James Carone, Dawn Fawcett, Deborah Rundlett, Daniela Sikora

Agenda items

- Approve Mission and Vision statement

Geoffrey Morris motioned, and Pamme Jones seconded the Mission and Vision statement, unanimously approved as follows:

Mission: Ridgefield Commemorates America at 250

Ridgefield Commemorates America at 250 will organize and coordinate locally appropriate events and activities between July 2025 and July 2026 to honor the 250th anniversary of the signing of The Declaration of Independence and the birth of the United States of America.

Vision: About Us

The committee will carry out its mission for the benefit of Ridgefield residents and its many visitors by coordinating efforts with the town's cultural, historic, and artistic organizations to produce entertaining and enriching events focused on The Declaration of Independence and how the principles of that powerful document establishing the United States endure more than 250 years after being written and signed.

The board of selectpersons for the town of Ridgefield created this 11-member Ridgefield Commemorates America at 250 Committee to do the following:

- Coordinate the official town of Ridgefield activities commemorating America declaring independence in 1776
- Organize or assist in organizing townwide celebrations between July 2025 and July 2026
- Maintain the official calendar to capture event planning by all town groups
- Be the liaison between Ridgefield citizens, organizations in Ridgefield, the state of Connecticut, and the U.S. government
- Establish a logo and motto
- Develop and maintain an official website

- Discuss name of committee effort: Ridgefield-USA 250

Geoffrey Morris motioned, and Stephanie Heering seconded, the Committee name of **RidgefieldCT250**, which was unanimously approved

- July 4, 2025, pillar event update

Hilde Grob explained our plan to expand on what has been done at Keeler Tavern on July 4s in the past, including use of multiple voices for the Declaration's reading and the hiring of professional historical representatives for both July 4, 2025 and 2026

- July 4, 2026, pillar event update

Geoffrey Morris explained that the Town has fireworks set for Saturday night, July 4, 2026.

Other events:

Themed parade of floats Friday, July 3

Ticketed, formal Liberty Ball Friday, July 3 [Sell tickets in January 2026 for fundraising needs]

Big event at Ballard Park with presenters, games, performances

- Fine-tune the brainstorming of ideas: events, activities, programs, fund-raisers...

Adapting Town Hall to resemble Independence Hall

Creation of a walking mystery story based on the Declaration

Home and business swag kits to festoon one's home or business

Horses competition, incl Musical Chairs

Pet Parade

- Discuss branding look and designer proposals (Morris)

Proposals were presented. After discussion, Geoffrey Morris motioned, Louzette Dovaras seconded, hiring Maida: Design. The motion carried unanimously

A finance committee will be established to organize a budget and request start-up money

- Website look and manager (Brown-Cheng)

Renee Brown-Cheng will set up WordPress' premium package; she will work with the designer to set up the landing page. We will organize as a 501(c)(3) non-profit

- September 19 evening social/brainstorming event at Keeler Tavern

Invitations have been e-mailed

- Next meeting: **September 18, 2024**, 8 am, Town Hall Annex

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Ellis