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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**\$25,000 National Endowment for the Humanities Federal Grant  
Terminated for Weston Historical Society in Weston, CT**

WESTON, CT - On December 19, 2024, the Weston Historical Society, now known as the Weston History & Culture Center (WHCC), in Weston, CT was awarded a \$25,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The funds were to support the implementation of WHCC's forthcoming permanent exhibition in the historic Coley Barn titled "Weston at Work". However, the \$25,000 grant from the NEH was terminated on April 2, 2025.

On Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 11:31pm, the WHCC received an email with the subject line: "Notice of Grant Termination – Effective April 2, 2025." The email did not come from an official government address but instead from a generic email domain. "When I noticed that the email was not sent from an official government address, I became very suspicious," said Samantha Fargione, Executive Director of WHCC. "I thought this was a phishing email and still had my doubts even after reading the attached letter." Attached to the email was a letter on NEH letterhead dated April 2, 2025. An excerpt from the letter states, "NEH has reasonable cause to terminate your grant in light of the fact that the NEH is repurposing its funding allocations in a new direction in furtherance of the President's agenda."

Executive Director Fargione called the NEH at 8:30am the following morning to confirm the communication was valid. An employee of the NEH verified it was, however the email was not sent from the NEH but instead sent by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

The termination of the NEH grant award and the loss of \$25,000 are devastating for the WHCC – a small, independent, 501c3 non-profit cultural organization. WHCC does not receive town funding and is not a line-item in the state of Connecticut's budget. It is funded by grants, donations, membership, business sponsorships, and programs.

The \$25,000 NEH grant was going to help WHCC make the first phase of the exhibit, "Weston at Work", a reality. "WHCC has been planning and developing 'Weston at Work' for over two years," said Executive Director Fargione. "We still hope that 'Weston at Work' will open in October 2025, but that's now in doubt."

The exhibit will explore the theme of industry in the areas of manufacturing, agriculture and domestic textile production and the people who played roles in these three sectors from the 18th through the early 20th century in Weston. This holistic exhibit, which will include interactive experiences for all ages, will



educate the fact that Weston’s story of industry did not take place in isolation. Instead, it was influenced by and contributed to the national and global story. “Weston at Work” will highlight the people behind the tools, explore stories of struggle, experience, and success, and weave voices of underrepresented groups into each section. The exhibit will be a multifaceted exploration of Weston’s contribution to labor and industry.

Without the NEH grant of \$25,000, WHCC now needs to raise a total of \$75,000 to bring this first phase of “Weston at Work” to life for the community. WHCC is asking for help in any way possible. Ways to help include: making a donation on the WHCC’s website <https://westoncthistory.org> or mailing a donation to Weston History & Culture Center PO Box 1092 Weston, CT 06883, becoming a member of WHCC, attending WHCC programs and exhibits, liking and sharing its social media posts, and alerting state elected officials to the importance of sustaining local history and humanities non-profits.

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The Weston Historical Society, now known as the Weston History & Culture Center (WHCC), is a small, independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, dedicated to its mission to discover, collect, and preserve Weston's heritage, promoting understanding of and context to local, regional and world events. WHCC engages over 2,000 people annually, additionally serving 300 school-aged children through field trips, in-school presentations, and internships. Situated on a former farm once owned by the Coley family, WHCC houses over 4,000 objects, is home to the historic house museum, Coley House, and features rotating exhibits and community programs. “Weston at Work” will be a vital component of WHCC’s goal to become a center for history, education, and culture for the community. WHCC is located at 104 Weston Road in Weston, CT. It would like to thank its annual sponsors: Fairfield County Bank and Pullman & Comley as well as the Daniel E. Offutt, III Charitable Trust and the Twenty-Seven Foundation. For more information and how to donate, visit [www.WestonCTHistory.org](http://www.WestonCTHistory.org) or email: [info@westoncthistory.org](mailto:info@westoncthistory.org) or call: 203-226-1804.

**Image:** Weston Historic – 104.jpg

**Image Credit:** Capture One Visual Marketing

**Image Caption:** The historic Coley Barn is slated to be the site of a new, permanent exhibit titled, “Weston at Work”, at Weston History & Culture Center in Weston, CT. On April 2, 2025, WHCC’s \$25,000 National Endowment for the Humanities grant was terminated by DOGE.

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