

## **Cemetery Committee minutes for December 16, 2020**

Present: Andrews Tolman, chair; Grace Keene; Brenda Lake; Marianne Perry; Pam Osborn; Ben Rodriguez, Sexton. Absent: Deb Doten, Warren Norris, Sandra Rourke.

The meeting started at 1:05 p.m. and was conducted via Zoom due to distancing requirements of the Coronavirus pandemic, now in its 40th week. Vaccines are first offered in the US today.

**Minutes for the previous meeting** on November 18 were accepted. Move to approve by Marianne Perry and seconded by Brenda Lake.

**Sexton's Report:** Ben's report included photos, was sent separately, and should be included with these minutes. He noted damage to trees at Huntoon Cemetery due to the recent storm, but fortunately, no damage to stones occurred. He will be visiting some cemeteries soon with bidding RFP arborists and will discuss damage and clean-up with them.

Holiday wreaths are displayed on cemetery entrances and look very festive. Ben is examining possibilities of partnering with Wreaths Across America for next year. He estimates we have gravesites for ca 100 veterans.

Mapping and record-keeping software details for several vendors have been sent to Andrews and Deb. They will meet with Ben to discuss the most appropriate for Readfield, demonstrate them to the Cemetery Committee, and when we select the best, will present our choice to the Select Board.

Ben's winter focus includes gathering and adding documents and photos of our cemeteries to the TofR web page. He asks for photos any of us can lend; Brenda and Marianne have already offered some to add to Ben's.

Tree work RFP: The treemap for Huntoon Cemetery is completed. Ben will accompany interested arborists to East Readfield, Readfield Corner, Huntoon, and Kents Hill (branch removal) Cemeteries. The RFP will be sent out soon.

**Budget:** Andrews presented our committee's updated budget for 2021. It is relatively conservative, a little smaller than 2020's. We want to take good care of our trees, find a good cemetery digitation software vendor, recognize our veterans' lots with appropriate markers and flags, and provide upkeep for the planted berms at East Readfield. Useable are some unspent 2020 funds for wall repair.

Grace asked about \$6,000 for stone repair/instruction with Joe Ferrannini who worked here last summer. Ben explained \$3,500 is for Ferrannini stone repair and \$2,500 for Collette Monuments in Lewiston who will work with us this spring 2021.

Marianne asked about \$10,000 for crypt repair. This need was mentioned in Helen Watts' report of five years ago. The Readfield Corner crypt near the road has been repaired and looks good, the crypt in the back still needs work. A water supply to Readfield Corner Cemetery might cost

\$5,000. Possibilities are to somehow connect to the Town water supply to Readfield Corner which would entail going under the road or drilling a new well. A source of water in that cemetery would be helpful to visitors watering plantings.

The East Readfield drilled well pump has been disabled for winter to prevent freezing and subsequent damage.

Grace asked about the expense of computer mapping software: \$5,000 in 2020, \$8,000 in 2021. Andrews is trying to elicit a response from Town Manager Eric Dyer on this item, and in particular information on ARC GIS. Discussion: if this is an important project, this is probably the time to do it and afford the expense. A reduction in our budget, due perhaps to coronavirus circumstances, might occur regarding this line but we will plow ahead and cut it if need be. Ben will ask Eric his opinion on our software project and its expense, and about his thoughts on ARC GIS.

The Perpetual Care Fund on October 31, 2020, held \$157,141.06. Of that, available to this committee is \$77,791.06. Funds are increased through earned interest and on a portion of lot sales.

**Other Business:** Eva Smith of the South Road asked Grace to relay to our committee that "our cemeteries are absolutely beautiful".

Thank you, Eva, we agree and we thank you for conveying your appreciation of them.

The meeting ended at 1:52 p.m.

Our next meeting will be held by zoom, January 20, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. Ben will invite us.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Riley Osborn

Secretary pro tem