

# **Cemetery Committee Meeting Minutes**

**December 20th, 2021**

**Present:** Andy Tolman, Grace Keene, Marianne Perry, Warren Norris, Ben Rodriguez, Tom Molokie, Brenda Lake, Karen Peterson. Pam Osborn excused.

**Meeting Minutes for Prior Meeting:** Minutes for November were reviewed. Tom made motion to accept minutes with approved changes, Brenda seconded, no further discussion and there was unanimous approval of October minutes with prior changes. Approved minutes will be submitted to Town Clerk.

## **Sexton's Report by Ben Rodriguez**

Ben reported that Eric and Eunice have been very helpful in helping the town in achieving the town's work goals for fall and winter clean up. The annual leaf clean up is ended with completion of East Readfield and Dudley. Kents Hill and Readfield Corner are mostly completed.

Ben remarked that he received a call from Tom Jacobs, the living relative of Marjorie Jacobs. Mr. Jacobs noted some damage on Marjorie's flat stone. Ben remarked it was likely he damaged the stone during summer mowing season. Forthrightly, Ben accepted the responsibility for the damage. After discussion the committee will support him with his endeavor to repair the damage. He will contact Hugh to initiate repairs when weather allows. It is estimated that the repair should be \$450 for stone. Ben will perform the stone replacement himself.

Eric Dyer, Town Manager, has hired a replacement maintenance position to replace Anna who has accepted a new position elsewhere. The new manager is Matt Seems. Eric envisions collaboration between the sexton and the new manager to achieve the town's maintenance objectives.

## **Old Business**

Ben will complete the ordering of new flags and markers for the coming seasons.

Ben is continuing to look at costs to install a tank for sourcing water near the Readfield Corner cemetery. Earlier committee-persons reviewed the needs with a well driller who recommended that a new well wouldn't make financial sense. A possible avenue would be placement of a 250 to 500 gallon tank and fill it locally with the town's firetruck pumping equipment.

There has been little response from a solicitation from contractors to provide rock wall repair. Ben will redouble efforts to get a positive response. Discussion followed about the funds for the drainage. It was agreed that there were sufficient funds in the current budget to support the drainage repairs at Readfield Corner. Ben and Karen have noted the drainage must be addressed prior to a wall repair. This is per the Limited Structural Evaluation prepared by Helen C. Watts, P.E. in 2015 for the town. New observations by the sexton and the committee reveal the wall is canting severely which will stress the rocks.

Discussion occurred re: the budget. Last meeting, we agreed that the budget fulfilled the needs of the committee and the sexton and the committee was asked by Andy to review for any further additions or subtractions. Tom moved that the committee accept the budget and present it to the Town's budget committee. Grace seconded. Minor questions were posited but no changes were made. The budget was approved and the motion passed. Andy will submit the budget to the budget committee.

## **New Business**

Ben recommended that chains be extended across cemetery road entries due to the potential of damage after closing hours and when traffic should be discouraged during off season months. In past there have been near misses that could have resulted in damage.

Grace made a motion that the chains be put up during these times by the Sexton. Tom seconded the motion and discussion ensued:

- It was noted that during the off season this will enhance enjoyment of our cemeteries by encouraging walking
- Liability issues would be avoided
- Damage likelihood would be reduced
- Stuck cars would be avoided
- There would be adherence to the already established rules found on the Town's website
- Chains are used elsewhere and are available

The committee agreed unanimously. Andy instructed Ben to immediately use the chains at the appropriate times.

During the last meeting the Cemetery Committee recommended the removal of Sandra O'Rourke from serving on the committee. This was submitted to the Select Board who approved the dismissal. With the dismissal there is an opening on the committee. Andy asked the committee members for recommendations for Sandra's replacement. Tom came forward with a name of an interested neighbor. Andy encouraged him to reach out to the neighbor and to have him complete an application for the opening. Tom will do so.

## **Updates and Projects for Consideration**

- Considering approaching Wreaths Across America for laying wreaths on our veterans' gravesites.
- Getting more information about our veterans from their families.
- Collaborating with Readfield Historical Society to gather information for information database
- Assisting sexton with planning additional plantings or replacing trees, plants and flowers according to this plan.
- Dale Potter and Readfield Historical Society meeting next month to discuss Cemetery Committee request for additional information

Warren made motion to skip January meeting. Next meeting will be February 14, 2022. Marianne seconded. Motion passed unanimously with no discussion.

Chair moved for adjournment. Unanimously agreed. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays all.

Respectfully submitted,

Warren Norris  
Cemetery Committee