

## **Cemetery Committee Meeting Minutes**

**August 15, 2022**

**Present:** Brenda Lake, Marianne Perry, Warren Norris, Ben Rodriguez, Tom Molokie, Karen Peterson, Grace Keene (Acting Chair), Lee Livingston, Pam Osborn

Excused absence: Andy Tolman

**Meeting Minutes for Prior Meeting:** Minutes for June were reviewed. Karen made a motion to accept the minutes, Brenda seconded. There were minor changes and minutes were unanimously approved with these changes. Approved minutes will be submitted to Town Clerk.

Meeting location was changed to Readfield Corner Cemetery on Church Street to accommodate Sexton's desire to show us progress on gravestone repairs and demonstrate to committee the process.

There was no July meeting.

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

Ben reported that of FY 21 money there is about \$9,000 remaining. Tree work money will be rolled over into next fiscal year.

The bare sod at the Case Cemetery has grown back. The grub and subsequent grub predator damage has healed. Ben will monitor the area and get opinions from the Turf Doctor or similar vendor. Marianne asked that we watch the application of toxic chemicals.

Ben is still trying to verify Mark Railo's status as a veteran. Town office records lean toward not a veteran, but Ben was directed to get with the Maine Veteran Registry to see if there is confirming information.

### **Old Business**

Tom mentioned that he reached out to the Karsten family to find out their intent on repairs to the Kents Hill gravestone that has fallen over due to faulty foundation and eventual failed repair by the family. He reports that the family has been contacted and that they are aware of the responsibility of the family to affect the repairs. Discussion turned toward avoiding this in the future. Lee noted that in other cemeteries where he was involved, that the town stipulated the stone foundation specifications. Ben pointed out that the town's rules require that the family employ their monument provider's best practices.

Karen proposed that we reach out to the monument companies to get their design or specifications to be used in creating a rule for the select board to review and possibly amend the current town rules. Tom asked for help in going to the monument companies to get their specifications and costs for foundations.

### **New Business**

Discussion turned to the deer damage done to the Reflecting Garden at the Readfield corner Cemetery. Marianne noted that the deer are ravenous and with the recent planting of valuable flowers and shrubs protecting them should be a priority. The Sage and Cleome seemed resistant and that resistance should be the future focus although even the deer-resistant species are not immune to the deer appetite. Discussion turned to physical methods that are not intrusive nor expensive to deter the deer. A stop gap method was proposed by Ben and Warren. Six foot fencing posts would be erected around the garden and clear high-test fishing line strung around the site. [This was installed the next week with Ben to report on its effectiveness.]

Darlene La Valley and Doug Ferris are going to check the veterans' lists and get any additional information for our town's documentation of each veteran interred.

Tom asked if first responders are flag/flag holder worthy. Karen and Ben noted that the state requires the placement of flags and flag holder for the veterans. There is no requirement for the other placements. The worthiness of other groups is not mandated and would likely be up to towns to decide. Nothing stops individuals and families from decoration of their loved ones gravesites, aside from town's rule.

Stacey Partridge asked about placing another memorial bench near the Reflecting Garden. This begged the question of was the committee interested in allowing unfettered placement of private memorials other than grave markers in the public places. Discussion was tabled.

Ben indicated that the town has let an RFP for the Church Rd. road and culvert repair which will encompass the ditch by the cemetery wall that is canted.

### **Walk-through with the Sexton**

- Ben showed us the various stone repairs that he and Collette Stone Repair made.
- Ben pointed out a mortise and tenon repair.
- He indicated Lithomax is used to make repairs.
- Ben suggested a yearly budget for replacing small flat markers with research necessary to identify the interred individual.
- Ben is developing a repair training program that would involve the committee (and possibly the Readfield Historical Society) to give them hands-on appreciation of the repairs.

Next meeting is September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022. No location specified.

Tom moved to adjourn the meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marianne, discussion waived by chair. Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:37 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Warren Norris  
Cemetery Committee