

Cemetery Committee Meeting Minutes

December 18th, 2019

Present: Andy Tolman, Grace Keene, Brenda Lake, Deb Doten, Pam Osborn, Marianne Perry, Warren Norris, Ben Rodriguez

Meeting Minutes for November 20th, 2019: Motion made to accept minutes with proposed changes and seconded, discussion pursuant and minutes were approved unanimously.

Sexton's Report by Ben Rodriguez

New Business

Flags were ordered for the coming year. Cost approximately \$600.

Water accumulation along Readfield Corner west entrance is still causing settlement issues with the rock wall. This may require further ditching. Committee suggested that Ben investigate if the Road Committee has some suggestions as to what may be done. Deb will photo this water issue at nearest opportunity.

Old Business

Our first Software subcommittee meeting took place on December 11th where goals were discussed and an action plan based on the Town's needs was formulated. Most of the actions were related to investigation of the various offerings in the public domain. The meeting established criteria for this investigation with the following as paramount:

- Responsiveness
- Modularization
- Scalability
- Cost effective
- Incorporation of Town's resources
- Vendor longevity (financial wherewithal)

Ben brought up additional progress made on contacting software suppliers.

Inputs from different sources (Town, Historical Society):

- Assorted PC data bases (Excel spreadsheets)
- Paper files
- Photos
- Burial cards

Outputs (to be prioritized):

- Administration and cemetery maintenance
- Historical

- Public facing

Ben was further directed to determine what other cemeteries are doing, i.e., those using software. Ben will set up “interviews” with the respondent vendors to ascertain features, benefits and compatibility with Town needs with a reminder that the committee’s charter has not changed and our primary role is cemetery maintenance and preservation not performing genealogy. Ben will contact subcommittee members for future meetings in January.

Whittier’s ground hadn’t frozen but quotes have been obtained to remove the fallen trees. Eric hasn’t had an opportunity to speak to the parties about the tree removal. Discussion pursuant about using perpetual care funds for this purpose. No vote made but generally agreed that this might be an acceptable use.

New Business:

Committee address and contact list was updated and provided to the town clerk.

Andy discussed the budget process and showed that he had consolidated some of the budget accounting categories. We discussed the intended use of perpetual care funds and properly weighing their use versus taxpayer funds. Reviewing the spreadsheet entitled “Distribution of Income in Trust Fund Accounts” we decided to use some of the allowed funds to offset appropriate costs in care of the physical upkeep. This will be reflected in Andy’s submission to the Budget Committee.

Marianne brought up that as a Town we should replace downed and removed trees with new trees that are indigenous, hardy that are low maintenance and long lived. Ben agreed and indicated that vision is necessary and should be in keeping with traditional planting. And asked for direction.

- Deb pointed out the need to consider climate change.
- Pam mentioned that an arborist should be consulted.
- Brenda suggested starting with Dudley.

Discussion of wreaths and how good they looked generated suggestions for next year. Mentioned was Wreaths Across America. Warren volunteered to ask fellow church members, Deb and Greg Couture of West Gardiner about their experience. They are active in the American Legion, Lions Club and WAA.

Motion made to close meeting (M/S/V). Adjourned 2:25 pm.

Next scheduled full committee meeting is scheduled for January 15th, 2020.

Warren Norris
Cemetery Committee