

BARRE TOWN CEMETERY COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR MAY 23, 2018 MEETING
6:30 P.M., BARRE TOWN MUNICIPAL OFFICE

CALL TO ORDER

Call to order at the town offices at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commission members: Alan Garceau, Norman Coates, Merle Miller, Robert Benoit, and Dwight Harrington attended. Carl Rogers, town manager attended, but sexton Dwight Coffrin did not.

AGENDA CHANGES - ADDITIONS

Details: Mr. Rogers added an item to ask for a cemetery commissioner to sit on a board of discussion to work out a conflict of interest policy for the town of Barre.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Coates made a motion, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the agenda as presented. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Garceau made a motion, seconded by Mr. Coates, to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2018 meeting as written. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT

None this month.

RECEIVE GUESTS

None this meeting.

SEXTON REPORT

Mr. Coffrin submitted notes concerning cemetery operations to date. They had done eight interments and have two more pending. The crew did one foundation and have two markers to set. There is also a lot sale pending. The crew has been mowing and trimming in anticipation of the Memorial Day weekend. During the review of Mr. Coffrin's notes, a discussion took place concerning the two granite posts at an old driveway in the cemetery that are tipped. The posts hold a cable guard rail, they will either be set upright in their current location or moved farther into the cemetery where the ground is substantial enough to adequately support them. Pete Aldrich has joined the fulltime work crew.

APPROVAL OF DEEDS AND MONUMENTS

- A. Deeds: none this meeting.
- B. Niche reservation: none this meeting.
- C. Monuments: none this meeting.
- D. Niche covers: none this meeting.

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OLD BUSINESS

- A. The adoption of the Maplewood Cemetery schematic maps: Mr. Harrington said there are no updates as the submission and adoption of the schematics rely on the adoption of the special rules for 8ft x 8ft lots.
- B. Special rules for 8ft x 8ft at Maplewood. The commission suggested to Mr. Harrington the rules for private columbaria be placed in a separate section of the rules, perhaps a section 18a and 18b, both for columbaria, one for the town's units, the other for privately owned units. Also, rather than limit the number of niches and the total number of cremains interments per lot, the commission should limit the total number per lot without specifying how many per monument and how many in the ground. Mr. Harrington will revisit the proposed rules and make changes for further consideration of the commission.
- C. Adoption of Wilson Cemetery schematics. Mr. Miller made a motion to adopt the Wilson Cemetery schematics as drawn and presented by Mr. Harrington, Mr. Coates seconded the motion. Without further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote. Mr. Harrington had two sets of full sized schematics, one set to be placed in the town engineer's files, the other for use by the cemetery sexton. He will prepare and submit an electronic file of the schematics that can be printed by the town, and the electronic CAD files for the town's future use.
- D. 2018 gravestone replacements, Mr. Harrington noted the cemetery budget passed during the recent town meeting vote. He asked commission members to make suggestions for stone replacements in any of the town cemeteries. Once a stone had been flagged for possible replacement, he would be able to take the photographs and do the genealogical research necessary to complete the replacement process.
- E. Niche reservation fees, Mr. Rogers distributed a handout showing the status of the columbarium reserve fund. He based his numbers on the previous sale of 32 niches and the probable sale of one more before the end of this fiscal year. He noted that currently, \$520 from each sale goes into the reserve fund for future construction. When the sale of 48 niches have been made, the reserve fund would be used to build the next columbaria unit and the reserve fund begun again. The current price of a niche is \$1,200 for residents and \$1,475 for non-residents.

Mr. Rogers discussed the town code and noted the section determining the price for a cemetery lot is set by the select board while the cemetery commission sets the fees for other cemetery services. The town code does not specifically address the sale of niches, the cemetery commission could take on that responsibility. The cemetery regulations state that 40% of the money collected from lot sales be placed in the cemetery trust fund for perpetual care expenses. The commission decided to set a percentage of the price for niche sales rather than the current flat fee of \$520.

Mr. Garceau said the current price for a unit like the two in Wilson would be about \$21,100. The current flat fee probably would not keep up with the rising prices. The commission ran an analysis and determined each niche sale should generate about \$583 per niche. Mr. Miller made a motion to collect 47.5% of each niche sale to be placed in the reserve fund, Mr. Coates seconded the motion. The percentage would generate \$570 from current sales to residents going forward. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

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- F. Lighting of cemetery flags. Mr. Coffrin was unable to attend the meeting, information on lighting the flags at Wilson and Maplewood cemeteries is forthcoming.
- G. Bulk trash day money. Mr. Rogers discussed using the money collected on bulk trash day for special projects in the cemeteries. The handout distributed on bulk trash day last fall highlighted special projects such as gravestone replacement or monument cleaning.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Mr. Rogers opened a discussion on the mandated requirement that towns have a conflict of interest policy in place by July 1, 2019, to include members appointed to any board under the control of the town. He distributed a handout obtained from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns containing a suggested format and content for such a policy. He discussed various examples of the day-to-day conflicts that come up during town operations and how they are currently handled. Mr. Rogers said a work group would be created to discuss, modify, and adopt a policy based on the league's guidance along with input from the town's attorney. Each board needed to supply a representative to the work group, he anticipated a few work sessions before final adoption of the policy. Mr. Garceau would be the representative for the cemetery commission.

AROUND THE TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Miller praised the manager of the town's website for the timely and professional updates for the cemetery page. He found the site to be interesting, a quality not normally associated with cemetery webpages. Mr. Rogers told the commission Elaine Wang does the webpage. Many thanks, Elaine!

Mr. Garceau inquired about the safety of cemetery documents such as the card file or maps kept in the garage/cemetery office during an emergency event such as a fire. Mr. Miller suggested the town look into buying a fireproof file cabinet from the Vermont state surplus agency. As a town government, they could easily obtain a cabinet if one was available.

Mr. Rogers invited commission members to a "Respect in the Workplace" seminar on June 18, a mandatory workshop for town employees, voluntary for commission members.

Mr. Miller announced the end of his term of service to the cemetery commission. His knowledge, expertise, and his friendship will be missed by the other commission members, many thanks to Merle for his service and dedication to the town and to the commission.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting set for: 27 June 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Place: Room 3, Barre Town Municipal Office, Websterville.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Coates made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Benoit. The motion carried on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Alan Garceau, Chairman
by Dwight D. Harrington, recorder