

Town of Reading, Vermont
Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes
29 April 2015
Approved

In attendance: commissioners, Kevin Kaija, Susan Goodhouse, Adam Kozlowski. Guests: Junior Sanderson, Calista Brennan, Esther Allen
Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Adam. Adam asked if there were any additions to the posted agenda; there were none.

Note: Saturday, 4/25, Kevin and Adam did a walkthrough of the cemeteries and Adam documented through pictures and notes what actions are needed in the cemeteries. Copies of this report were handed out.

Summary of 2014 work completed: Kevin and Susan

Lawns were mowed by Tammy Allen, repairs to boards at Bailey's Mills Cemetery were done, some split rails were replaced; Susan bought one set at Springfield Fence. Need to have 5 to 8 more on hand for replacement at Bailey's Mills and Amsden. Junior has a contact that might have some split rails that they would donate. Must be 10' long. **ACTION:** Junior to contact person and let Susan know if they are available, otherwise she will purchase some more. Repair work was done to reset some stones by Paul Hut and Junior, at no charge, in the South Reading Cemetery.

2014 Burials:

- Ruth Mathews in South Reading Cemetery
- Pat Barton in Amsden Cemetery - no Lot Letter completed and filed with Town Office. **ACTION:** this needs to be confirmed and resolved. Also her death certificate states that she was buried in Woodstock. **Action:** Town office contact undertaker to have them re-file the document with the Town and State.
- William Bijlefeld - person buried in wrong lot; bought lot 125; buried in #127. **ACTION:** After some discussion on this it was determined that Kevin will write a letter about the error to Mrs. Bijlefeld and Susan and Kevin will visit her directly to explain the situation. The hope is we can just switch the lot numbers by issuing a new Lot Letter. It does not appear that lot #127 has been sold but confirmation is needed on this.

Junior asked if burial transit documents had been filed with the Town Office on the full burials; there have not been any. **ACTION:** contact with the appropriate funeral director's needs to be made to find out why and get these up-to-date. [Jr. followed up on this with Calista on 4/30 and found only 3 that need to be received. Calista has e-mailed funeral homes and requested them.]

Right-of ways issued - this is a function of the commissioners.

Kevin reported that none had been requested.

Report of deeds conveyed/plots sold

5 lots have been sold to Matteson's but no Lot Letters have been completed and filed with Town Office. It appears that we are unclear on other possible sales.

ACTION: we need to get this resolved by determining what lots have been sold and to whom. Esther will review the Amsden Cemetery noting who has stones there and what cornerstones are noted for lots. We will go through the files in the Town Office cabinet and sort out any notes of sales in the files comparing this to income to the Cemetery Accounts.

Review of 2014 expenses

Total spent for 2013-2014 was \$4,197.50; basically all expenses were for the mowing and trimming of the cemeteries.

2014-2015 Budget has \$7,210 left in it that needs to be spent before 6/30/2015. **Action:** Calista will see if the Selectboard will allow any of these unused funds to be "rolled" into the 2015-2016 budget of \$9,000 so that more work can be done.

In the meantime projects were outlined to be done. Kevin made a motion that we get a bid from Dave Appleton to identify hazard trees and set a price for removal by each location in the following:

- Weld Cemetery - removal of all small brush
- Spear Cemetery - large maple tree
- Bailey's Mills Cemetery - backside of west wall trees
- Amsden Old Cemetery - trees dying along wall
- South Reading Cemetery - any dying trees

Adam seconded the motion. Motion carried. **ACTION:** Kevin will call Dave tonight.

Budget Note: a proposed budget for the next fiscal year should be prepared and presented to the Selectboard no later than January 1 of each year by the commissioners.

2015 Maintenance: Commissioners agreed to stay with utilizing Tammy Allen's lawn services to mow and trim the cemeteries. Calista will notify her that we want her services. Calista will have Tammy send the invoices to the Town Office; she will then scan them and e-mail to Adam for his review and approval for payment to be made.

The ones that are maintained are:

- Bailey's Mills Cemetery
- Weld (Sawyer) Cemetery
- Swain Cemetery
- Spear Cemetery

Stone Repairs: Adam will contact Greg to find out who they use. Susan will contact the Vermont Cemetery Association to see if they have any recommendations. Junior believes that they sent someone to do work before. Kevin has a possibility in Rutland that he will contact. Junior mentioned that Tom Robinson from Eternal Flame Crematorium in Bellows Falls, VT might be another option for stone work. (802-254-3508) **Action:** compile a list of stone repair services and plan stone repairs per cemetery.

Fence Work: Kevin mentioned that the iron fence at Bailey's Mills is in pretty rough shape and would be great to have fixed or replaced. Susan felt that it was very delicate and was not sure much would be able to be done. Esther suggested that this is probably a big enough project that a proposal should be received from a fence company and then determine if it fits into a regular budget or should it be proposed as a special article on next year's town meeting warrant. Springfield Fence Company would probably be a good option for this project.

Plats and maps: we found maps for the Amsden Cemetery and the South Reading Ackley extension showing lot numbers. These will be updated with sales and burials. It was agreed that the "master" maps should be maintained

at the Town Office for safe record keeping. When we get these updated we can try to utilize the NEMRC software for cemeteries as a record keeping system.

Commissioner Procedures Document

ACTION: Adam will create one of these for review and approval by the commissioners.

Junior explained what the previous procedures have been.

Lot Sales: a customer would contact the chairperson; they would schedule a time to meet directly at the corresponding cemetery to review the available lots depending on full burial lot or cremation lot. Payment for the lot would be received from the customer, the commissioner creates a Lot Letter and all commissioners sign it. Two copies of the Lot Letter are kept: one for the commissioners records and one to be filed in the Town Clerk's office. The original Lot Letter is returned to the customer along with a copy of the cemetery map indicating their lot and a copy of the by-laws. The money and Lot Letter are given to the Town Office for appropriate deposit of the funds between perpetual care and general account. The Lot Letter is recorded in the cemetery records book which is kept in the Town Office vault.

Burials: the corresponding funeral home director will contact the commission chairperson when there is a burial to be done. Grave digger (Paul Hut) is usually coordinated by undertaker. Grave digger should meet with chairperson to make sure the correct Lot is being dug for the deceased. Commissioners should know details of the burial; date, time, etc. to confirm that everything is done correctly. If this is a full burial a "Burial Transit Permit" must be received from the undertaker and given to the Town Office for appropriate filing. Cremations require a certificate only that should be filed in the Town Office also.

Lot Costs Current:

Type	Total Cost	Perpetual Care	Maintenance Cost	Corner Stones
Full Burial	\$ 475	\$ 250	\$ 225	4 included
Cremation	\$ 350	\$ 150	\$ 200	4 included

Members discussed whether to raise the price or not. Junior advised that the Felchville Association just evaluated this and have found that corner stones through Austin Memorials are now approximately \$160 for 4. We may want to consider keeping the cost as is and adding on the current corner stone cost at the time of a sale. That would bring the total cost to \$635 and \$510 respectively. **Action:** Adam will survey area cemeteries for their current costs to help with the decision on pricing.

Currently sales of lots are only available in:

- Amsden New cemetery: full burial and cremations
- South Reading Cemetery: cremations only in the Ackley Extension
- Bailey's Mills Cemetery has no lots available
- Spear Cemetery is questionable because there is not a good map for where people might have been buried many years ago without any stone or the stone has disappeared.

Spear Cemetery \$5,000 gift for work to be done.

A meeting with John Gerstmayr (donor) will be scheduled to be held right at the cemetery to plan a course of action for his proposed work of a fence, gate, and stone wall repair.

Spring Burials:

Currently there is only one to be done in the Spear Cemetery; Mr. Sterling. The cemetery is way too wet to have a service at this point.

By-laws review for changes:

This was tabled for the next meeting due to the late hour.

New Business:

Kevin made a motion that Adam be chairperson of the commissioners for this year. Susan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Next meeting scheduled for **Wednesday, May 13**, 7 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Susan made a motion to adjourn; Adam seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Submitted for record,
Esther E. Allen