

BARRE TOWN CEMETERY COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR MAY 25, 2022 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, Angela Labrador, Kent Barcomb, and Dwight Harrington were present; Robert Benoit has asked not to be re-appointed to the commission; and town manager Carl Rogers and sexton Dwight Coffrin also attended the meeting.

AGENDA CHANGES - ADDITIONS

Mr. Rogers added an item to address cleaning the columbaria units. Mr. Garceau added an item to discuss the use of the COVID relief fund to construct the next columbaria unit.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Labrador made a motion, seconded by Mr. Garceau, to approve the agenda as written and with the two additional items included. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Garceau made a motion, seconded by Ms. Labrador, to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2022 meeting as written. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT

None this meeting.

RECEIVE GUESTS

None this meeting.

SEXTON REPORT

Mr. Coffrin reported a total of 26 interments made for the year so far. Five full interments are on the schedule for the month of May 2022 and there are ten pre-scheduled interments remaining to be completed. He also discussed several individuals who began work at the cemetery but for various reasons did not continue as crew members. Mr. Gary Munson has returned as a full time employee and commission member Kent Barcomb has been donating a number of hours as a volunteer. The Maplewood and West Hill Cemeteries have been mowed and trimmed, Mr. Coffrin noted several broken and tipping monuments in those cemeteries. The cemeteries might be fully ready for Memorial Day, Mr. Coffrin and one part time employee will be at Wilson on Saturday morning to try and finish up if needed. Some areas of Wilson Cemetery have received an application of fertilizer and grub control will need to be applied very soon. There are several foundations to be constructed, Mr. Coffrin will be doing one the week of May 30 in anticipation of a service scheduled for June 4th.

Mr. Doug Fuller has purchased a lot at Maplewood Cemetery. He owns another at Maplewood and would like to swap his current lot for one that would be adjacent to the one just purchased. No further details were presented.

APPROVAL OF DEEDS AND MONUMENTS

- A. Deeds: None this meeting.
- Cynthia Schaefer, Wilson, New A, Lot 7a, 10 x 4
 - Cynthia Wade, Wilson, New B, Lot 128, 10 x 8
 - Marlene Kran, Wilson, New B, Lot 161, 10 x 8
 - Katherine Bingham, Wilson, New B, Lot 448-b, 10 x 5
 - Leslie Newton, Wilson, New C, Lot 222, 10 x 12 [*should read 10 x 8*]
 - Jeff Newton, Wilson, New C, Lot 223, 10 x 12
 - Jeff Newton, Wilson, New C, Lot 224, 10 x 8

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B. Niche reservation: None this meeting.

C. Monuments:

- Murphy, Robert and Lynda, West Hill Cemetery: approved at the April 27, 2022 meeting on condition the missing base dimension information be verified, Mr. Garceau contacted the manufacturer and said a base of 4'-0" x 1'-4" x 0'-10" would satisfy the regulations, those dimensions are now specified on the shop drawing.
- Katherine Bingham, Wilson, New B, Lot 448-b, approved
- Randall Edwards, Wilson, New B, Lot 137, approved
- Theresa Lang, Wilson, Old Yard 5, Lot 172d. The shop drawing showed an oversized base versus the regulations of a four foot wide lot. The regulations call for a 2/3 lot width maximum, 2'-8" (32") in this case. The plans called for a 3'-2" base instead. The lot is located in an older section of the cemetery where there is a mix of styles; in the opinion of the sexton, the extra width would not impact any other lots. After a discussion, Mr. Garceau made a motion to accept the oversized base as presented on the drawing, and Mr. Barcomb seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion passed on a voice vote.

D. Niche covers: None this meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Washington County Mental Health letter, Gould Cemetery. Ms. Labrador has prepared a draft letter on behalf of Alan Garceau, Chair of the Barre Town Cemetery Commission, to be sent to Washington County Mental Health Services, landowners of the site of the Gould Cemetery. In the letter, she described the property, described the existing stone markers, and gave some background information on Mr. John Gould, Jr. Ms. Labrador also described some of the care needed by historic gravestones and made suggestions as to what might be done to carefully preserve the site. The remainder of the letter asks for permission to allow the town's cemetery sexton access to the site and determine if the stones could be reset in the original locations.

The letter requires a contact person for WCMHS be added; Mr. Garceau will be the contact person on behalf of the commission. Mr. Rogers will arrange for the final letter to be printed on Barre Town letterhead. The final package to be sent to WCMHS will also include a copy of the historical research site report recently prepared and presented to the cemetery commission by Ms. Labrador on April 27, 2022.

B. Maplewood fence. Work is scheduled to begin in July this year to allow for more work being done this season per contractor conversations with Mr. Rogers.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Labor shortage and Memorial Day. Mr. Coffrin stated the work at the cemeteries is being accomplished and might be ready for Memorial Day. He thanked Mr. Barcomb for all the time he has already put in as a volunteer. The biggest need, he said, is for string trimmer operators to work later in the morning after the grass had begun to dry from overnight dew. Mr. Garceau and Ms. Labrador said they could volunteer if necessary and Mr. Barcomb stated he would be at the cemetery at the end of his workday.

B. Investigation for a new columbarium structure. Mr. Garceau gave a brief history of the construction of the current columbaria park and related costs from 2009. He highlighted the price of the units from 2009 to 2021, from \$15,000 to \$21,100 and noted the current inflationary trends. The original plan for the park called for setting aside money in a columbarium reserve fund so after 48 niches had been sold, there would be funds to build the next unit. With the

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current inflation rate, there may not be sufficient funds to do so, at this time only 44 niches have been sold. There currently is \$24,780 in the columbarium reserve fund.

As part of the discussion, the agenda item concerning COVID funds was added above for inclusion in the investigation. Mr. Garceau suggested asking the select board for some of this funding as the columbaria park is funded by niche owners and not the town tax payers. Mr. Rogers stated the funds could not be used for budgeted items, pensions, to pay down town debts, or similar uses; Ms. Labrador asked about capital expenses as construction of a columbarium might be. Mr. Rogers said the original concept of the COVID funding had 64 categories for usage, but the rules have changed and the town can declare up to \$10 million as a one-time loss of revenue and then use the money in specified categories. He suggested the commission make the request and the town's budget person could determine if the use of the COVID funds was appropriate.

Mr. Rogers suggested a commission member attend a select board meeting, perhaps the meeting of June 7th, to present the request. Mr. Garceau said he would consult with Mr. Jeff Martel, retired from the granite business, to obtain a budget estimate to build a columbarium per specifications to match the two existing units and also discuss which firms in the area would be able to do a project of this size. The request could be added to the select board agenda by Mr. Rogers, he would need the information by Friday, June 3rd, for inclusion in the select board's pre-meeting agenda package. Mr. Garceau and Ms. Labrador volunteered to attend the select board meeting and present the information to them.

- C. Cleaning the columbaria units. Mr. Rogers received a question from a niche owner concerning the cleaning of the columbaria units. Mr. Coffrin has requested the purchase of a pressure washer as part of the cemetery funding for the 2022-2023 budget year, the budget has been passed by the voters at the recent May 10 town voting. He said he could safely wash the structures once the pressure washer has been purchased.

[Not part of the minutes, but Note: the minutes of the July 27, 2016 meeting contain a discussion to allow Mr. Dennis Beaudin to clean the columbaria and related benches. Apparently, the last general cleaning of the units took place that year.]

AROUND THE TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Garceau told Mr. Coffrin the shrubs he had wrapped to protect them from deer over the winter months look great. Other, privately owned shrubs not wrapped, did not fare so well. Mr. Garceau also said the cemetery flags have been placed in the town cemeteries.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting set for: June 22, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
Location: Room 3, Barre Town Municipal Office.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Ms. Labrador made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Barcomb. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

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