

BARRE TOWN CEMETERY COMMISSION  
MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 27, 2023 MEETING  
6:30 P.M., BARRE TOWN MUNICIPAL OFFICE

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CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Commission members: Angela Labrador, Alan Garceau, Kent Barcomb, Brian Littlefield, and Dwight Harrington were present. Sexton Dwight Coffrin attended but town manager Chris Violette was absent.

AGENDA CHANGES - ADDITIONS

None this meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Labrador made a motion to approve the agenda as written; seconded by Mr. Garceau. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Garceau made a motion to approve the minutes of August 23, 2023 as printed, seconded by Mr. Littlefield. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT

Year-end FY 2022 – 2023. With Mr. Violette absent, no updates were available. Mr. Garceau questioned the phone bill for the cemetery as it was shown at twice the budgeted amount and Mr. Coffrin said he does most of the cemetery business over his cell phone. Also, Mr. Garceau asked about the amount of money transferred into the columbarium reserve fund. Ms. Lunt suggested a meeting with the town budget manager to research the answers for the October meeting.

RECEIVE GUESTS

Tina Lunt, Barre Town clerk.

SEXTON REPORT

Mr. Coffrin presented a detailed report of the cemetery activities up to the date of the meeting. He summarized the number of lots sold and interments made. The crew has been working on grounds' maintenance between rain storms. They also assisted in the placement of a granite bench in front of the town offices on Websterville Road. Fall trimming of the shrubbery has begun, and once trimmed, the shrubs can be wrapped with snow fence for the winter. Seven concrete monument foundations have been poured. The broken waterline has been repaired and the water turned on again. Mr. Coffrin noted the assistance of two Public Works employees and one Rec Department employee and thanked them for their work. Hydrangea trees have been purchased, but the promised shrubbery at the nursery turned out to be unavailable and will be re-ordered next year.

Mr. Coffrin is scheduled to be on vacation between October 4 and October 9. He asked that Mr. Harrington be available to locate graves in the field should it become necessary for a burial. Mr. Harrington would locate the grave based on the schematics and the cemetery crew would probe the site and do any excavation necessary. Mr. Coffrin has notified local funeral directors of his absence and does not expect any grave location would be necessary. Mr. Harrington agreed to be available and the cemetery commissioners agreed that he could locate any graves as necessary.

APPROVAL OF DEEDS AND MONUMENTS

A. Deeds:

-- Jerry Kirk; Wilson Cemetery, Section New B, Lot 200, 10 x 8

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- B. Niche reservation:  
-- Joanne T. Roberts; Columbarium 4, Side A, Niche 10
- C. Monuments:  
-- Cecile Couture; Wilson Cemetery, Old Yard 2, Lot 342b
- D. Niche covers:  
-- Darrell and Anna Martin; Columbarium 2, Side B, Niche 13

OLD BUSINESS

A. Maplewood fence. Mr. Coffrin met with Mr. Senecal at the cemetery to discuss the work. Mr. Senecal would take down the arch from the gate and sandblast and paint in by hand. He would also sandblast and paint the entire fence including portions already done as some rust can be seen bleeding through in places previously painted. Mr. Senecal has a type of paint he prefers to use. Cemetery workers would have to remove the sod growing up into the fence along Nichols Road. There will not be a need to construct a barrier to catch the sandblast media nor clean it up from the ground after use as the fence is far enough away from the road so traffic cones could keep passing traffic far enough away and after use the sandblast media disappears into the ground. Mr. Senecal estimated the work to cost between \$18,500 and \$20,000, and he would like to do the work this fall. Funding is not currently available and a budget request for \$20,000 would require a bid process.

Ms. Labrador asked that the estimate be re-submitted so a budget request could be made for either the full amount or for the full amount less any funds remaining in the budget from previous fiscal years. She would also check with the State of Vermont for any possible grants for historic preservation and the town budget manager will be asked for the amount of any remaining budgeted funding.

B. Columbarium 3 Status. Mr. Garceau consulted with Buttura and Gherardi and learned work has begun on the structure for an October delivery to the site at Wilson Cemetery.

C. Columbaria foundation layout. Mr. Coffrin and Mr. Harrington conferred at the site of the columbaria park to identify the locations for the next foundations but did not lay them out. Questions concerning the final park layout made for uncertain locations and further discussions would be needed to finalize the park footprint.

D. Dogwood replacement at the columbarium park. The project is on hold until the final footprint for the columbaria park is established.

E. Washington County Mental Health site inspection – Gould Cemetery. Mr. Coffrin went to the site and found it to be drying out. He recommended laying out a path to the gravesite with string trimmers. Topsoil will have to be brought in by wheel barrow over a distance of about 100 to 120 yards. There may be one property corner stakes missing from the site, but Mr. Harrington said he should still have enough tie points to relocate the monument. Mr. Coffrin recommended waiting for a frost to further reduce the vegetation in the area. The commission will schedule a date for the work at the next meeting, a weekend day would work for commission members and Mr. Coffrin.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Re-addressing the future build-out plan for the columbaria park. An approval of the columbaria park by the cemetery commission could not be found in the minutes so the current cemetery commission took up the issue. Mr. Coffrin and Mr. Harrington discussed various aspects of the park while at Wilson Cemetery and Mr. Harrington put together a proposed layout for the future of the park. He made his presentation in a slideshow. The opening slide informed the commissioners that September 27 had been declared "Ancestor Appreciation Day" and he introduced them to three of his

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own ancestors. The presentation included a footprint that had been approved in the past, but only for a numbering system of the individual columbaria units. Other slides showed possible layouts based on the existing units and sidewalk along with recommendations made by Mr. Coffrin, most of which did not adequately address unit spacing or result in a “pleasing” layout. Discussions also addressed the salability of niches based on their positions in relation to the sidewalk and visibility.

A final footprint was proposed along with questions and concerns for using the layout in the cemetery. The layout had seven columbaria units and two benches arranged radially around the existing sidewalk and two other units on each edge of the sidewalk. The resulting configuration would allow for adequate spacing between units and 528 niches, shown as 1,056 niches on the slide, the latter number would be the number of cremains that could be stored at the park. The presentation included photos of the existing park to illustrate the layout and demonstrate the visible faces of the units sold better than the niches on the “back” side of the structures. Other photos showed conditions at the Veterans Cemetery in Randolph and Barrancas National Cemetery in Pensacola, Florida.

Ms. Labrador said it would be prudent to have the approved final layout shown on a formal site plan drawing for use by future cemetery commissions. There have been 54 niches sold from the current structures, about ten percent of the total number of niches proposed, and the drawing would assist future commissions with the overall concept of the columbaria park. Mr. Harrington will prepare a final site plan sketch for the eleven-unit park to be presented to the commission during the October meeting for final approval. Mr. Coffrin could pull the dogwood shrubs from the sites of the proposed structures one and five.

#### AROUND THE TABLE DISCUSSIONS

A. Bulk Trash Day. The cemetery commission sponsored bulk trash day held on September 16. Ms. Lunt reported a lighter than normal traffic flow with 125 loads passing through. The commission will benefit from the \$475 or so donations raised. Ms. Labrador thanked commission members for their participation in the event.

B. Mr. Garceau has been researching the amount of money that goes into the columbarium reserve fund from each niche purchased. He said the amount had been set at \$520 back in 2016, but in 2018, the commission adopted the concept of putting a percentage of the sale amount rather than a fixed dollar amount. The current rate, set in 2018, is 47.5 percent. With reserve funds and other sources of money, the commission may be able to pour the next two concrete foundations in the columbaria park, although there are issues in finding a concrete contractor to do the work.

C, Mr. Harrington thanked Ms. Lunt for her assistance in the slideshow presentation.

#### NEXT MEETING

Next meeting set for: October 25, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.  
Location: Room 3, Barre Town Municipal Office.

#### MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Littlefield made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Garceau. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Angela Labrador, Commission Chair  
by Dwight D. Harrington, recorder