

BARRE TOWN CEMETERY COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 27, 2021 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, Robert Benoit, and Dwight Harrington were present; and town manager Carl Rogers and sexton Dwight Coffrin also attended the meeting.

AGENDA CHANGES - ADDITIONS

None this meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Garceau made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve the agenda as printed. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Labrador made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2021 meeting as written. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote.

QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT

Mr. Rogers presented the end of the first quarter report. He said the budget issues were on track for this point in the cemetery year. Mr. Rogers also pointed out a few changes being made in budget allocations such as interest payments and town equipment charges which are now reported quarterly. With 64% of the budget remaining, the cemetery accounts are on target.

RECEIVE GUESTS

None this meeting.

SEXTON REPORT

Mr. Coffrin presented his summary as of July 1st of this year. He has sold six lots, made one niche reservation, and had 19 interments with two more on the schedule. The cemetery crew has finished mowing and trimming as well as shrub trimming for the season and have wrapped shrubbery to protect them from damage caused by feeding deer. Leaves have been removed from the cemeteries and they will be checked again as necessary. As for plantings, Mr. Coffrin said the new shrubbery has arrived at the nursery and he will be bringing enough into the cemetery to plant one row. The remainder of what is not brought in can be stored by the nursery until spring. Mr. Coffrin estimated the cemeteries will be completely closed by Thanksgiving when all the projects are completed and there are no more burials pending. Services could continue after that if the access to the cemeteries is still available. He said he had received many compliments this season about the quality of maintenance and the overall appearance of the cemeteries in town.

As an aside, Mr. Coffrin told the commission of an upcoming interment using a cremation urn epoxied to a base about the size of the standard grass marker. He had not seen this done before and asked the commission's opinion. During discussions, it was noted the base would be a piece of granite of 2 ft. by 1 ft. by 4 in. thick and the urn would stick up no more than 8 inches. He said the design and

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placement would not interfere with mowing or other maintenance functions nor have any more possibility for theft or damage than any other cemetery marker or monument. There would be the standard charges for installing the marker and for interring the cremains. The commission offered no objections to this type of monument and no motions made.

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.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Definition of a resident. The state of Vermont defines a resident as someone who spends one day more than one half the year in the state. The commission discussed various ways to show proof of residency including furnishing a Barre Town address, inclusion of the voter check list, or where a person files their income tax return. The Vermont Tax Department says you must be domiciled or have a residence for 183 days or more to be a resident. The commission decided to make a similar definition and put it on the fee schedules along with a statement that an individual may need to show proof of residency by showing a town address, be on the voter checklist, or show where they file their taxes. The claim of residency is an honesty issue, and the sexton may bring questionable claims before the board for a final ruling.
- B. Maplewood fence. It has been suggested to resume sandblasting and painting the Maplewood Cemetery fence in July of 2022 as the cemetery crew is coming out of its "busy season" including the opening of the cemeteries and Memorial Day. Mr. Matt Peake called Town Manager Rogers to discuss the lack of progress on the project; he said the days in July being longer and with warm weather would allow him to do more in a day. He also said if the town could furnish extra help on the paint crew, he could do twice as much during the day. [The town furnishes the paint crew for immediate priming of the freshly sandblasted areas.] Mr. Rogers suggested putting the fence painting on the agenda for April 2022 to begin planning for the work earlier for July.
- C. Planting of trees and shrubs. Mr. Coffrin outlined the plantings in his report above.
- D. Replacement monuments. The replacement monuments will be picked up from Spruce Mountain Granites next week for storage in town facilities.
- E. Washington County Mental Health letter, Gould Cemetery. Mr. Garceau suggested he could work on a draft letter to the Washington County Mental Health with inputs from Ms. Labrador and Mr. Harrington to inform the organization of the abandoned cemetery within their property lines and what the Barre Town Cemetery Commission would do to restore and preserve the site. State rules allow for the town to do the preservation work in abandoned cemeteries, but the cooperation and permission from the land owner would be necessary.

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NEW BUSINESS

- A. Klienfelter tree replacement. Ms. Suzanne Klinefelter recently purchased Lot 123 in Section New B at Wilson cemetery and commented on the condition of the evergreen shrub nearby. The shrub had been heavily damaged by deer in the past but is now growing well again. She offered to replace the shrub along with another in the row with hydrangea trees. Mr. Coffrin would like to leave the shrubs in place as they are growing well again and the new procedure of wrapping them with plastic snow fence over the winter has proven to eliminate damage from feeding deer. The shrubs also fit within the current landscape design of the cemetery. The commission decided replacing them would set a precedent that would allow for any lot owner to call for the replacement of any cemetery plantings at any time. The commission has charge of the landscaping design and usually deferred to the sexton's judgment. As no written request had been made on the subject, the topic was addressed by the commission without issuing a formal motion for any actions.
- B. Budget item suggestions. Previous budget discussions included repairs to the water system, the commission added items concerning crack filling and road repair, survey pins for lot layout, and insect control at the Maplewood Cemetery. The town has a small milling machine that could be used to open up some of the larger cracks in the driveway that could be refilled with pavement. The town engineer will be consulted on such work. The areas with substantial heaves in the pavement are indications of a poor subbase and would require road removal, subbase replacement, and new pavement. The use of an annual funding accrual for paving such as had been used in the past was also suggested.

The commission would also like to look into the purchase of the third columbaria unit. The trigger for the next purchase had been set at the sale of 48 niches. There have been 42 sales so far and current trends could push the total to 48 in the next cemetery season. With rising prices, commissioners felt next season would be the time to have the next structure built and set on an existing foundation. The new unit would match the same specifications used to build and set the first two, including an all granite construction of the individual niches. Mr. Rogers will verify the amount of money set aside through each purchase to finance the future purchase and an estimate obtained for the cost of the next unit.

AROUND THE TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Garceau expressed his thanks to the commission members for their work and attendance and to the cemetery crew for their work this cemetery season. He also said he has heard many positive comments concerning the appearance of the town cemeteries.

Mr. Garceau stated the veterans' flags had been removed and the main cemetery flag will be taken down at the conclusion of the cemetery season.

Mr. Rogers said finding cemetery workers was becoming difficult and asked the commission members to assist should they know or hear of anyone looking for work.

Mr. Harrington passed out a photo array contrasting the columbaria structure located at the Resurrection Park Cemetery in South Burlington with the columbaria structures in Wilson Cemetery. He pointed out the elegance of the South Burlington facility and the very plain niche covers with uniform text heights and lack of symbols. In contrast, Barre Town rules allow for variations in text and the use of symbols which results in a much more artistic interpretation of the niche holders interred there.

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Mr. Harrington recently submitted a written article concerning the Ross family interred at West Hill Cemetery to the Vermont Old Cemetery Association. They will be placing the article on their webpage in January as part of the re-design of their site currently being done. Ms. Elaine Wang also posted the article on the Barre Town website.

The members of the commission will gather on Thursday, November 4th at the Wilson Cemetery maintenance garage to further honor Mr. Ray Brown for his service to the town.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting set for: April 27, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
Location: Room 3, Barre Town Municipal Office.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Garceau made a motion to adjourn for the season, seconded by Ms. Labrador. With no further discussion, the motion carried on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

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