

Morristown Cemetery Association Fall Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 8th, 2013 ~ 6:00 pm ~ Morristown Centennial Library

Present: Dennis Smith, Anne Shackett, Jane Paine, Annette Smith, Priscilla Draper, Sondra & Dave Sanborn, Irene Wilkins
ABSENT: Francis & Irene Huard, Brian Kellogg and Cherie Lefevre

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm by Dennis Smith
- II. Minutes of July Meeting
 - a. Minutes were hand-delivered to members would have a chance to review prior to the meeting.
 - b. Motion made by David Sanborn to approve minutes as written, seconded by Irene Wilkins, passed.
- III. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Jane distributed Financial Statements for the period ending September 30, 2013.
 1. Town Funds of \$9000 received for the contract period July13-Jun14.
 2. \$450 still due to Association from Mark Faith for 9 burials to date.
 3. Returns on investment income & interest = 2% average
 4. Refund of \$300 received from the IRS for our 501©13 application – they said it was “transitional” and fee was only \$100. (nice surprise ☺)
 5. Two CD's are maturing – one in Oct13 and one in Nov13 – discussion later in the meeting about where to reinvest the funds.
 6. Motion by Anne Shackett to accept Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Priscilla Draper. Passed.
- III. Endowment Secretary's Report
 - a. Annette Smith reported that the current balance in the endowment savings is \$439.02 ~ \$300.00 added for two Lakeview lots and one Mountain View lot. There was still some remaining confusion around the \$1000 that was transferred in the spring to the Operating Account. Further explanation that the largest Union Bank CD had not originally been setup to have the interest deposited to Operating account for use. It has been rolling upon maturity, thus compounding the principal amount and growing in value. Because the Association should have been able to use this interest for maintenance and beautification, it was voted to move \$1000 out of the Endowment savings.
 - b. Motion by Irene Wilkins to accept the Endowment Secretary's Report. Seconded by Dave Sanborn. Passed.
- IV. Special Presentation
 - a. The members recognized and honored Irene Wilkins for her 30+ years of service to the Association as Secretary/Treasurer, Wheeler Cemetery trustee and member. She was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation signed by all members and a bouquet of flowers. Her commitment continues to be highly valued. ☺
- V. Trustee Reports
 - a. Lakeview
 1. Although absent, Cherie reported to Dennis she is pleased with the look of the cemetery.
 2. Post at the entrance still needs painting. Jane will take some paint over from the Wheeler project and take care of this.
 3. One stone (Smith) is beginning to slide off its base. She would like someone to look at it. Maybe it is something Brian Shackett can fix.
 - b. Laporte
 1. Brian S. is working on clearing the bank on the left side (away from the Bailey side) One stone had begun to be hidden, but is cleared now. David Sanborn reported that from his past experience, there is a lot of sand on that side which could cause erosion if too much clearing.
 2. Mowing crew is now reaching under the vinyl fence.
 3. Big pine tree still a problem – believe it will have to be handled by the Town crew.
 - c. Mountain View
 1. In regard to our ad in the paper about cleaning stones, Anne received a call from Polly Cote that she wanted her stone cleaned. But then her daughter (Sanders) from Florida called to say they did not want the stone cleaned. None of the Godfrey/Hadlock stones should be cleaned. They will do it themselves. Anne may need more flags.
 2. Photos were shown of the town doing work in the spring and also of the huge cement truck that arrived to build a very small foundation.
 3. There is a “Bohannon” stone that may need to be repaired – Anne will check and report to Jane.
 - d. Plains
 1. No report from the Huards in their absence.

2. Jane received a call from Martha Alexander NOT to clean her husband's monument - names on the stone are Harold R. Alexander and Martha Smith
- e. Randolph
 1. Dennis reports that a couple of times the grass was a little long, but overall satisfied.
 2. The work crew has cleaned up the brush on the Draper side - can now go behind and keep cleaned out. They would like to do the North side, but we don't own that far.
 3. Dennis met with Mark Faith at the cemetery- Mark had previously thought there was only 6 lots remaining, but they determined that in the rows M and in the Draper section, there are actually about 20 lots left.
 4. Culvert seems to be plugged at the entrance - message has been left for Roland Boivin
- f. Riverside
 1. Dennis discussed with Brian S. and Jason about maintenance near the fence on the Richmond St. side. Town had to cut the brush, so now the mowing/clearing can be done correctly going forward.
 2. We believe there may be 3 - 4 broken stones. Dave S will visit soon and let Jane know how many need repairing.
- g. Wheeler
 1. Photos of the fence, now completely sanded down to the bare wood. Trying 3 different products on sample areas to determine in the Spring which one seems to hold up the best (hoping to use stain). Then completion to take place next summer.
 2. Photos were shown of the broken main gate. Family and friends of Jane's son are beginning to send in donations toward the replacement of the gate.
 3. Photos were shown of some of the older stones in the left front corner that had been recently cleaned by the work crew. Will be wonderful to see when all completed.
 4. Photos were shown of a large cedar bush that seems to be impeding on two - three monuments. Family is cutting out a section of the back to get to their stones. It was determined that Herb Emerson might be a relative to call about our desire to remove this bush. Jane will attempt to contact him.
- h. General Discussion
 1. Jane and Dennis met with Brian Shackett and Jason about our concerns with the timeliness of the mowing this summer and contract terms.
 2. It was agreed that the work crew would provide 21 trips at no charge (the month of Sept). Then the Association would pay a per visit fee for the remainder of the work in October & November.
 3. We will try to "think outside the box" and come up with a contract design that will protect our financial liability next year, but still maintain the desired mowing results.

IV. Unfinished Business

- a. Extra Signs - Irene located the two missing signs and brought to the meeting. Dennis to take and will get one to Brian S. to replace bent one at the Lakeview Cemetery.
- b. Locking VFW Gate - VFW informed Dennis that they had tried this awhile ago, but felt it did not work as kids still climbed the fence and they were afraid someone would get caught/hurt on the fence.
 1. Motion made by Anne Shackett to ask the VFW to again try locking the gate on the North end of the VFW side. Seconded by David Sanborn. Passed.
- c. Green Burials - hardest part of this concept is that there are no clear definitions, but in general, it means no embalming, no vault. According to Mark Faith, in most cemeteries, there are either separate sections for this type of burial or even separate cemeteries.
 1. Dennis, Anne, Jane and Lee Sturtevant (Pleasant View) attended a Select Board meeting to explain our position on not allowing green burials in the town cemeteries. The Select Board agreed to give us a one year moratorium (not to allow) thus giving us time to correct the language in our Rules & Regulations.
- d. Flag Pole -It was determined that the VFW was the donor in memory of Joe Yacovone. Jane brought a Thank You card for all the members to sign.
- e. Communication with Mark Faith on notification of burials - Dennis spoke with Mark about our desire to make sure the work crew knew when a burial was to occur so they could prioritize their mowing schedule. Mark explained that he does make visits to the cemeteries prior to burials and notifies someone if there are issues that should be addressed. As we did have one complaint this summer, we will discuss again in the Spring with Mark and make sure we have a good communication line set up.

f. Other Unfinished Business –

1. Jane reviewed a listing of the current interest rates at local banks (ie Union, TD Bank, Peoples United, Community National and Merchants Trust) and surrounding credit unions (Vermont State Employees CU and New England Federal Credit Union). The best interest rate was at the VSECU for 1.75% for 5 year term. Funds in the credit union are insured by the NACU (comparable to FDIC) up to \$250,000. Jane recommended that we move the October & November maturing CD's into a CD at the VSECU (branch in Montpelier) as one lump sum of \$12204.00. We would also be required to open either a checking or savings account in the amount of \$100.00 to establish membership.
Motion made by Anne Shackett to become a member of the VSECU and move these funds upon maturity at the end of November. Seconded by Priscilla Draper. Passed.
2. Repairing Stones – it was decided that we will determine how many stones need to be repaired. Will contact John Clegg and Brian Shackett to get estimates of cost for Spring/Summer 2014 completion. It has been two years since any repairs have been done. Potential sites are Wheeler (1), Mountain View (1), Riverside (3-4)... Other trustees should contact Jane as soon as possible with requests/details.

VI. New Business

- a. Power washing ~ has begun with few stones at Wheeler, but unsure about the other cemeteries
- b. VCA – Vt Cemetery Association Annual Meeting – 9/26/13 – St. Theresa's Parish in Orleans
 1. Jane attended this meeting (fee paid personally)
 2. Topics covered were pricing and marketing.
 - a. Jane shared a worksheet detailing how to determine how much our endowment account should be based on current investment returns, annual budget and number of monuments our Association maintains.
 - b. Based on our current number of lots (approx. 2500), our current investment return of 2%, our endowment funds of \$88,705, our annual budget for repairs and extras can only be \$1,775.00. The mowing contract is excluded from this calculation as the funds pass thru our account from town funding.
 - c. Our lot prices have not been increased since July 2005 when Pleasant View raised their prices. The VCA recommended that we review our pricing annually. It was noted that Pleasant View remains \$400 per lot (as do we) and the surrounding towns are much lower in the ranges of \$200 - \$250.00. The question remains whether we should be higher than Pleasant View? Would we lose lot sales to them if our prices were more? Further discussion needed.
 - d. Jane is investigating the option of including the cost of installation of corner markers in our lot prices. This would ensure the corner marker installation is completed timely and deeds are not piling up in the town clerk's office. Jane will contact Clegg's Memorials for more information.
 - e. VCA highly recommends that we "market" our cemeteries with mailboxes labeled "information" outside the gate of each cemetery. In the mailboxes, we should place brochures. Jane handed out a very rough draft of a booklet containing information "About Us", Board of Directors & Trustee contacts, Pricing, Donations, Directions, etc. Booklets to be reviewed by members and suggestions welcomed. Jane will continue to refine the wording & design. Would like to meet again in January to approve a final version to be ready for May distribution.
- c. Changes in Rules and Regulations ~ see attached page for approved changes
- d. No new business

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Next Meeting in January – to be determined (suggestion to hold meeting during the day)

Respectfully submitted,

Jane P. Paine

Secretary/Treasurer

~ Approved Changes to Rules and Regulations:

p 3, Section V – Cemetery Lots, 4 now reads:

Plastic flowers and other items are not permitted "After this date, the Sexton may remove these objects and discard.

Motion by David Sanborn to read as follows: "After this date, the Sexton or any Association member may remove these objects and discard." Seconded by Irene Wilkins. Passed.

p 3, Section VII, Interments, Disinterments and Removals

Recommend removing Line #5 and incorporate verbiage into current #8 to read

One full burial or up to four cremains may be buried in one 4' x 12' lot. All full body burials shall require a vault made of steel or concrete to prevent sunken graves. All cremated remains shall require a cremation urn and/or urn vault, both made of a permanent material such as steel, brass, bronze or marble. Scattering of ashes in the cemeteries is forbidden.

Then renumber the items 1 – 8.

This would meet the standard for not allowing Green Burials.

This section in red was discussed at length, but I did not have a indication in my notes that we actually made a motion to change. We will formalize this when we meet in this winter. ☺

P 4, Section IX, Monuments and Markers

Line 5 now reads:

The Association reserves the right to require that all lots have corner markers in place Such markers shall be set at the direction of the Association.

Motion by Anne Shackett to read as follows: "The Association requires that all lots have corner markers before any monument is placed upon the lot." Seconded by Priscilla Draper. Passed

P 5, Section IX, Miscellaneous

Motion by Irene Wilkins for Line #3 to read as follows: Records: Copies of the Association By-Laws, Rules & Regulations, Meeting Minutes, Articles of Association, Tax-Exempt Recognition Letter, Financial Statements and all historical records will be stored at the Morristown Town Clerk's Office.

Seconded by David Sanborn. Passed

P2, Section V. Cemetery Lots

Motion by Priscilla Draper to add to Line #1 as the second sentence: The grass on all lots will be cut regularly to provide a neat and pleasing appearance. Seconded by Anne Shackett. Passed.