

AUG 28 2023

LUNENBURG TOWN
CLERK OFFICE

Town of Lunenburg



Cemetery Commission

Nancy Foss-Yasko, Chairperson
David Dorren, Vice-Chairperson and Clerk
Open Vacancy

Minutes

Lunenburg Cemetery Commission Meeting
Thursday, August 10, 2023
Lunenburg Public Library Conference Room
1023 Massachusetts Ave., Lunenburg, MA
9:00AM – 11:30AM

Meeting was called to order at 9:05AM by Vice-Chairperson, Nancy Foss-Yasko, other members present were David Dorren, Clerk. Also present was Bill Bernard, DPW Director.

Vice-Chairperson, Nancy Foss-Yasko, asked if there was any Public Comment? There was none.

First on the Agenda was to accept a motion on Stan Barney's letter to the Select Board stating that the Cemetery Commission is saddened to have an open vacancy on the Cemetery Commission. Stan was very dear to the Town and Cemetery Commission, and will be sadly missed. Motion accepted unanimously.

Second on the Agenda was to accept a motion with an anonymous donation/gift to the Cemetery Commission for a granite bench to be placed by the grave site of Stan Barney – for Susie and Family to sit and reflect. This bench will later be engraved and paid by the Cemetery Commission – once the Barney Family has time to process their loss. Stan had many years prior with the Cemetery Commission, and was newly appointed a few months ago. Motion to accepted unanimously.

Third on the Agenda was to accept a motion to re-organize the Cemetery Commission with Nancy Foss-Yasko, voted in as Chairperson, and David Dorren voted in as Vice-Chairperson & Clerk. Motion accepted unanimously.

Fourth on the Agenda was to accept a motion of the New Cemetery Commission Policies to take effect immediately. Motion accepted unanimously. Unfortunately, the DPW Director – Bill Bernard does not/will not recognize these policies until he is told to do so by the Town's Counsel – Adam Costa, Esq.

Chairperson, Nancy Foss-Yasko, asked if there was any updates from the DPW Director – Bill Bernard. Discussion was presented regarding the hedges and the outcome from the damage done by the Beaulac Brothers, and Cemetery Superintendent. Permission was given by the DPW Director – Bill Bernard to cut the hedges down, but no one reached out or even thought of involving the Cemetery Commission with that decision. The Cemetery Commission is still very upset that we were not informed that this project was being started; and that no other landscaping company was called in to give another opinion or

professional advise of these 200 year old hedges. The goal from the Cemetery Commission, is simply to move ahead, while working through the unsightly mess/issue that the Town is left with. Unfortunately, the DPW or Town will be forced to purchase several areas of hedges that have been cut down completely. Two companies have given quotes to replace the hedges. One quote is from Central Massachusetts Garden Center – for about \$5,000.00. Another quote is from Lakeview Landscaping/Nurseries – for about \$9,000.00. No decision was made at this time. Will re-visit when we have a few more quotes. The

Cemetery Commission has stated to the DPW Director – Bill Bernard, that nothing will be done without the prior-approval of the Cemetery Commission going forward.

Discussions were made about Dillis and Roy Land Surveying Proposal. Bill explained the process and what was going to happen. The Cemetery Commission needed to review the open field and discuss what was going to and not going to happen to the trees. We decided before we adjourned the meeting, we would move the meeting to the North Cemetery to review the plot plans for both full burial's, cremations, tree removal, and road proposals etc.

Discussions regarding Leominster Monument and future washing of gravestones. Chairperson, Nancy Foss-Yasko stated that she would look into the future cost of keeping the historical gravestones looking new. What would the cost look like? Bill was in agreement to find out future pricing.

Brief discussion on the Rainmaker Software Program that the Cemetery Superintendent – Todd Holman utilizes. The DPW Director – Bill Barnard asked a few questions regarding the process. A more in-dept discussion needs to be take place at our next Cemetery Commission Meeting. The most important issue is uniformity with all the paperwork/documentation that has to be uploaded into the software program. An audit trail needs to be established in the very near future. More discussions on what that might look like needs to be addressed.

Minutes were read from the meeting of June 15, 2023. Upon a motion by Chairperson, Nancy Foss-Yasko – to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Vice-Chairperson and Clerk, David Dorren, minutes were approved unanimously.

With further on-site business at North Cemetery, Chairperson Nancy Foss-Yasko, made a motion to continue the Cemetery Commission Meeting at the North Cemetery in the new field section area; seconded by the Vice-Chairperson and Clerk, David Dorren. Chairperson Nancy Foss-Yasko, Vice-Chair and Clerk David Dorren, and DPW Director – Bill Bernard reconvened at the North Cemetery open field.

First problem, was the trees. The Cemetery Superintendent wanted to remove most trees in the open field. Leaving a selective few close to the stonewall. This was unacceptable to the Cemetery Commission, who had recently had Mark Flagg, Professional Tree Arborist – walk through the area and discuss in his professional opinion; which trees needed to come down/removed. There were a total of three trees that were dead, and did not belong. One tree needs to be trimmed slightly from the bottom up. A few branches, that need to be cut off carefully. One tree in the open area is going to have a rock wall installed, which will surround and protect the tree. This allowing some fill to be put down in the area needed. The area where the cremation's will be located – needs to be cleaned up from previous grass cuttings that have been dumped by the Cemetery Superintendent, and will be reviewed by the Conservation Commission. Unfortunately, another area must be selected for grass cuttings in the future. (Key note, the Town of Lunenburg has an opening right now for hiring a Conversation Agent, which the Town Manager, Heather Lemieux is working on a plan to hire someone soon.) The DPW Director – Bill Bernard will contact the Cemetery Commission; once the individual has been hired to review the open area and make sure that the wetlands behind this area is protected.

Second problem, was the two roads that were requested by the Cemetery Superintendent. The Cemetery Commission explained that we do not need two roads going in on both ends, as one section will only be needed for cremation's mostly. There is parking beside the stone walls, which will allow the casket to be carried easily. This will also allow the trees to be saved in that area too. Having a turn-around opening within the one road, while give the ability for a car/hearse to turn around when needed.

Third problem, was how Dillis and Roy were going to be plotting the gravestones – the plan had them facing north. Again, the Cemetery Commission explained for religious reasons and making the North Cemetery look uniform, all gravestones needed to be faced east to west and west to east. For many religions reasons – Jesus rose in the east, and that is why the burials need to be headed in the east. This would mean in that open field, the gravestones would be facing west with the sire names facing that way.

The Cemetery Commission will review and go over the plans face-to-face with Dillis and Roy, Cemetery Superintendent – Todd Holman, and DPW Director – Bill Bernard. Nothing will be done until the Cemetery Commission gives prior approval and motion to go forward with the project plans, once they are complete. Future projects will need to be approved and discussed with the Cemetery Commission before a project can begin.

The Cemetery Commission is looking forward in working closely together with the DPW Director – Bill Bernard and Cemetery Superintendent – Todd Holman.

Motion was made to adjourn by Chairperson, Nancy Foss-Yasko, seconded by Vice-Chairperson and Clerk, David Dorren. With no further discussion, meeting was adjourned at 12:15PM.

Next meeting will take place on August 24, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Foss-Yasko, Chairperson
David Dorren, Vice-Chairperson and Clerk
Electronic Signatures