

9.30.2020

Bellingham Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 1, 2020
Arcand Meeting Room – 10 Mechanic St

Members:

Francis Cartier (FC)	Chairman
Alan Bogan (AB)	Vice-Chairman
James Haughey (JH)	Member at Large via Zoom

Attendee:

Donald F. DiMartino (DD)	DPW Director (Ex. Sec. to Cem Com)
Barbara Sooklal (BS)	DPW Clerk – Recording Secretary

FC opens the meeting at 2:00 pm, welcoming the public and announcing JH is joining the meeting via Zoom. FC asks for a moment of silence for all in our state, town & country that has been affected by Covid-19 and aspects of the pandemic and the unrest in our country.

Annual Reorganization

FC turns the meeting over to DD who opened for nominations for position of Chairman of the Bellingham Cemetery Committee and Sextons.

AB nominated Mr. Frank Cartier. JH seconded. DD asked FC if he is willing to accept the position. FC gratefully accepted the position, thanking all for their vote of confidence. DD asked for a vote for this appointment. JH requested a vote for Francis Cartier as Chairman of the cemetery committee for 2020-2021. Vote passes 2-0.

FC asked for a motion to appoint a vice chairman. JH motioned to appoint Al Bogan for the position of Vice Chairman of the Cemetery Committee for 2020-2021. FC seconded. FC called for a vote.
Vote passed 2-0.

FC motioned to appoint JH as Member at Large. AB seconded. FC called for a vote.
Motion passed 2-0.

FC thanked AB & JH for taking on the positions and thanked DD & BS for the continued work done for the committee.

Accept Minutes of December 26, 2019

The committee members thanks BS for the work done on the meeting minutes. FC called for a vote to accept the minutes of December 26, 2019 as presented.

Vote passed 3-0.

Budget 2021 – Town Meeting Approved

FC turned the meeting over to DD who was present on behalf of the committee. DD reported that the budget was submitted with Level funded Expenses and Stipends Increased, that was discussed although never finalized as a vote of the committee. The increase went Through Finance Committee Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator & Finance Office review and were voted on at Town meeting. The stipends were increased in the amount discussed. FC commented that the increase will take effect today, July 1.

Cemetery Maintenance (All tabled from 12/26/2019 meeting)

Flat Marker Cleaning and Raising – Continued Info and discussion

There was a lengthy discussion regarding raising flat markers that had settled and were hard to read and see. It was decided to proceed with offering overtime to DPW staff to raise the markers. AB will manage the work and assist the crew. FC will assist as well depending on his availability. AB and FC will contact DD to provide a time and date to begin the work.

Decoration Regulatory & Control

The Committee continued the discussion of modifications to our regulations, realizing that decoration of the grave site is an important acknowledgement and mean a lot to the loved ones of the interred individuals.

The rules and regulations from a few other cemeteries were reviewed, none of which had been revised recently.

St. Jean the Baptist, *“...no plantings curbing hedging boarders or enclosures of any kind are allowed around the plot. The mangers reserve the right to remove same if erected planted or placed...”*

Union, *“...lot owners are permitted to have natural flowers at the base of the headstone, flower beds must conform to the width of the headstone and extend not more than 12 inches from the face the of the headstone, no planting of any kind are allowed behind the headstone or monument, only natural flowers or plants are permitted, artificial ones are absolutely not permitted, further more shrubs bushes baskets potted plant and flowers are not permitted. The cemetery reserves the right to remove without notice any plantings in violation of the same. No enclosures of any nature: fence, hedges, curbing, bricks, or stones are allowed. So they disallow any curb but do have allowance for flower beds...”* _____

DD noted that our regulations are more closely synced up with St Jean the Baptist. Expressing concern about allowing decorations outside of the limit of the rules. People will compare their decorations to others and ask why theirs were removed and others allow to remain. DD recommends deciding what will be allowed. Put it in the rules and regulation and enforcing universally.

FC mentioned the sign found at St Francis, Walpole stating it provided a lot of information and guidance. DD agreed that whatever the committee decides to allow should be posted with signage, more than the existing billboard.

FC commented that the St Francis sign could be used as a baseline to develop the new regulations, suggesting that it be discussed at the September meeting and put into place. JH agreed to review the sign and compile regulations at the next meeting. AB added that at the next meeting the committee should agree upon text for the sign that can be installed in the Spring of 2021. The committee agreed to place the signs in several in key places.

Scott Cemetery

Cemetery Commission Agenda

DD discussed the Civil War Vet (Cooks) Monument Repairs by Jay Rowe (JR). The monument is broken up into several pieces and a piece is missing however JR will look around in the woods hoping to find it prior to repairing it. He will try to get it repaired although gave no timeline. JR will repair it when he can, and the funds will come out of the Cemetery budget or the Veterans funds.

North & Oak Hill Cemetery

The committee discussed the removal of a fallen tree that in the back of North Cemetery. Part of the tree is in the cemetery, part of it is on the fence and the biggest part of the tree is over the fence. It was decided that DD will try to get the DPW crew to remove the tree and get the fence repaired sometime in the fall.

Tree Removal and Columbarium Planning

The committee discussed adding an additional columbarium. DD suggested that the dying Cedar tree (at Oak Hill Cemetery) be left until a columbarium plan is set. FC suggested that the committee will have to have a deeper conversation regarding putting in a columbarium into Oak Hill Cemetery. AB commented that a columbarium wouldn't fit at Oak Hill Cemetery and suggested adding an additional one at Scott. FC commented that when the interchange was done the access to Oak Hill/North cemeteries was not (considered) and there is only one way in and one way out. DD agreed that due to the limited access a columbarium should not go into Oak Hill.

FC noted the Center/Union cemetery might be a more prominent cemetery to put in a columbarium. He suggested we wait to see about the long-term existence of the Union Cemetery Association. He added that if Center and Union cemeteries are ever combined there are flat sections in that area. From conversations he has had it may be another private cemetery that the Committee would take over in the future.

FC commented that (the issue) of adding a future columbarium be put aside for now and the committee move forward on getting cemeteries resolved first then make plans for a columbarium in a different location. JH and AB agreed.

Possible Improvements at of Scott Cemetery (Center Street)

Road behind Columbarium

FC highly suggested that get a road built behind the columbariums to make people aware of the available niches. DD added that ground penetrating radar is needed in order to be sure the road does not go in over interred remains. There hasn't been an opportunity bring it in and split the cost (with the DPW) and suggested that it be brought up at Town meeting to ask for the funds. FC agreed that if it (the ground penetrating radar) can be done this year, we could have it done before we open the cemeteries next year. DD will start the process. He believes there are other accounts to transfer funds from without major impact to other department's budgets. JH and AB agree. DD added that the DPW has more than enough fill for the project.

Opening Southeast Wooded Area for Grave

Cemetery Commission Agenda

FC stated he and AB walked through the area near the first gate next to Newland Avenue. FC suggested that the committee look into opening that area up, utilizing that gate with a road and expanding to allow 100 plus graves. JH agreed that this is a direction to take for the future.

AB asked if a public hearing is required to cut down the trees on public property. DD replied that cutting down any shade tree on public land requires a public hearing with the Tree Warden. FC speculated that the residents on Newland Ave would say it was the protection for their yards. He added that the area would not go up to the fence however nearest the gate is heavily inundated with pines. DD added that the brush can be removed but a removing a tree must go through due process.

AB asked if (the project of cutting trees) would have to go out for bid. DD answered that in that area with no wires the DPW could do it. AB countered that some of the trees are big and may need a crane to get them down. DD stated that it would depend on the skill of the guys and if there is room to fell a tree without hitting anything and suggested that the committee consult with the Tree Warden. FC requested that a meeting be set up. DD stated that any trees intended to be removed re need to be clearly marked and a written notice must be (published).

JH shared his concern that removing trees too close to the road would open the area up to dumping. FC commented that he would like to keep a line of trees for privacy for the residents adding that the gate would be chained off and not open to the public.

Wilcox Cemetery Lake Street – Ownership Discussion

DD stated that Brian Rhodes is not the contact for Wilcox cemetery. Roland (Arcand) met with someone and was informed that Mrs. Crooks is no longer in a nursing home and is living on The Cape. He is hoping to get some good information regarding the future of the cemetery soon. DD stated that the Parks Department mows Wilcox Cemetery and will continue. FC agreed to open and close the gates. He added that there are 80 to 100 graves available. FC will ask members from Wilcox and Union cemeteries to discuss the future of their cemeteries in terms of continued control versus the Town taking them over.

Gravesite & Niche Sales, Activities, and Monuments Report

FC read the activity of sales and interment as stated below:

• Niche Purchases	1 (Benoit)
• Niche Interment	1 (Benoit)
• Grave Purchase	6 (SC) (Siravo-Lunt)
• Burials (Urn)	
• Burials (Casket)	3 -(SC) – Mancini, Borden, Lunt
• Monuments	

The committee discussed scheduling the next meeting. JH motioned that the next meeting be held on Wednesday, September 30 at 1:00 pm in the Arcand Meeting Room. AB seconded. The motion passed 3-0.

Cemetery Commission Agenda

FC mentioned that the bottom row of Columbarium I is held for people not able to afford (interments). A family would like to purchase one of those niches to mirror the niche of their family member. Considering that there are now 2 other columbariums with ample room and not to lose the sale of a niche, FC would like to sell to the family and asked the board for their input. JH and AB agreed to the sale.

AB motioned to adjourn the meeting until September 30.
JH seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

FC adjourned the meeting.

12/16/2020

Bellingham Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 30, 2020
Arcand Meeting Room – 10 Mechanic St

Members:

Francis Cartier (FC)	Chairman
Alan Bogan (AB)	Vice-Chairman
James Haughey (JH)	Not in attendance

Attendee:

Donald F. DiMartino (DD)	DPW Director (Ex. Sec. to Cem Com)
Barbara Sooklal (BS)	DPW Clerk – Recording Secretary

FC opened the meeting 1:12 pm

BS announced the roll call

Accept Minutes of July 1, 2020

AB motioned to accept the minutes of our last meeting FC seconded

The motioned passed 2-0

Private Cemetery Discussion

FC asked for a moment of silence to honor the passing of Marica Crooks (Wilcox Cemetery)

The Committee discussed the Wilcox Cemetery. DD has spoken to the new caretaker of the Wilcox cemetery, Brian Rhodes (BR) of 40 Locust. He has his phone number and email. BR said their cemetery committee is still active. Moving forward, the Parks department will continue to mow the lawn before Memorial Day. Roland Arcand has reported that the cemetery hadn't been mowed since the passing of Ms. Crooks, so he continued to mow it. BR was not aware of this but took over the responsibility. FC questioned if (Bellingham Committee) should open the gate for Memorial Day. DD replied that although we will continue to mow the cemetery once a year, Wilcox Cemetery Committee will control the gate. DD will verify this in the Spring.

Union Cemetery – Invite Member?

FC discussed with Dave Brown (DB), Chairman of the Union Cemetery Committee, regarding the future control of the cemetery. DB will discuss with his board at their November meeting the possibility of relinquishing control of the cemetery to the Bellingham Cemetery Committee for control, sales, and maintenance. The Union cemetery, which is on the same parcel of land as the Center Cemetery, has remaining lots for sale. FC will invite DB to the December meeting to continue this discussion.

Cemetery Maintenance

The committee continued the discussion on raising the flat markers. DD reiterated that this (project) needs to be coordinated with one of the committee members to work with the DPW crew. He speculated that DPW staff would probably agree to work 4 hours on a Saturday for overtime as opposed to a continuation of the (week) day, which could be offered as well. DD stated that this is a good time for the project, at least for the next couple of weeks to perhaps a couple of months. Estimated cost would be \$240 a day for 2 men at approximately \$40 OT rate for 4 hours. DD believe there will be enough interest among the crew. The committee decided to offer the overtime on Friday (10/2) to work Saturday (10/3).

Decoration Regulatory & Control

The Committee drafted changes to the regulations. DD displayed and read the text of a sign used in the Walpole Cemeteries for the purpose of drafting a sign to be posted in the cemeteries regarding the allowable decorations. DD stated with the acceptance of the draft, the current regulations will need to be modified, which was also displayed. The committee discussed the editing of both the sign and the regulations. FC commented that he would like to see small decorative stones added to the allowable decorations. DD cautioned that the size of less than 1-inch stone should be specified to avoid problems. AB agreed. The discussion over how to define which decorations to allow. FC recalled a discussion he had with members of Walpole and St Jean the Baptist

Cemetery Commission Agenda

cemeteries in which it was stated that when a decoration becomes an issue the family is contacted and informed that it is unacceptable due to interference or a liability. The committee decided due to the small amount of questionable decorations, the regulations will not have specifications as to what decorations can or cannot be used. If a problem arises the committee will bring up the discussion again. FC stated that as long as the decorations are maintained there should not be an issue. DD concluded that signs will be made and installed in the Spring and at the next meeting a hearing will be held to modify the regulations.

DD displayed and read the draft text for the markers to be placed at a grave when decorations are unacceptable and need to be removed. The committee discussed and edited the draft. FC and AB accepted the edits.

FC made an additional edit to the sign text stating that holiday decorations will be removed by March 20 prior to the cemetery opening. AB suggested to change the text to "must be removed" so to put the responsibility on the owner. The committee continued to edit the sign to clarify the use of stone, specifying the allowable size. The committee accepted the sign text.

Bench Engraving (How to Obtain Right to Engrave)

FC stated that a family wishing to engrave a bench they would pay the cost of the bench at \$800 and pay for the engraving. The committee would approve the engraving and get a quote from the committee's engraver. AB asked if the families would purchase one of the benches already on site, to which FC confirmed stating that the purpose of putting the benches at the cemetery was so families could dedicate them to a loved one. AB commented that the benches the purchasing family cannot move the bench. The committee discussed the allowable area to be engraved. DD cautioned that the top surface (seat) should not be engraved to avoid moisture damage. The committee agreed to allow engraving on the side only. DD edited the regulations with this information.

Scott Cemetery Civil War Vet

The committee discussed the repair of a civil war veteran's monument which had been found damaged. DD displayed pieces of the Cook monument. He commented that one piece is appears to be missing. The name on the monument is Captain Duty Cook. Jay Rowe (JR) and DD met at the cemetery. JR dug around the area but didn't find any other pieces. This person does not appear in Town records compiled by Frank Haley. If more information can be found on this person a better stone can be put in. A temporary marker will be installed stating the monument is being repaired. JR will pick up the pieces and work on it over the Winter and hope to have it back early in the Spring. FC stated that it is the committee's responsibility to allow the stone to be removed.

Possible Improvements at of Scott Cemetery (Center Street)

The committee discussed putting a road behind Columbarium to improve the sale of the back side of the columbariums. DD reconfirmed the price of a day's work of ground penetrating radar (GPR) to be \$3,900 adding he has less than one hour of work from the DPW (projects). Available (monies) are in the cemetery Gift Fund 6770, which can be used by vote of the committee. The fund holds \$12,621 which will also be used to pay JR. DD displayed a map of the area in Scott Cemetery for discussion of where the GPR will be used for the potential of cutting in an additional road and placement of a fourth columbarium. FC suggested the area in the front near the stone wall also be covered.

AB questioned if the area in front of the columbariums will ever be open for sale. FC replied that the plan was for this area to be opened and sold as lots of 4 or more when adjacent section of four or more is sold out.

Tree Removal in Southeast area

DD displayed a picture of a dead Oak tree in North cemetery that he will be asking Mike Burr (MB - tree warden) to add to the bid project for tree removal. DD suggested that the dead tree on the fence could be cut up and allowed to remain into the woods on either side of the fence. He disagreed with bringing in any heavy equipment stating the main goal is to remove the pieces so the fence can be repaired. DD will continue the

Cemetery Commission Agenda

conversation with MB. DD explained that the funds for this project cannot come out of the Perpetual Care so will also come out of Gift Fund. AB mentioned a discussion he had with DPW Foreman and MB and it was suggested that the committee bring in a tree removal company to clean up several trees. It was estimated that a day of work to clean up along the fences line, down some trees and limbs would be about \$3200.

FC motioned to utilize the Cemetery Gift Fund for the ground penetrating radar expense at Scott Cemetery at \$3900 and \$3500 to have tree removal in North and Oak Hill Cemeteries on Hartford Ave. AB seconded. The motion passed 2-0.

AB mentioned that it would be about a month before a tree company would be available. FC asked if the ground penetrating radar be done before the Winter. DD will call the company for availability. FC and AB will be present when the company is working.

Gravesite & Niche Sales, Activities, and Monuments Report

BS read the sales and activities stats as recorded.

• Niche Purchases	4 (van de Wal-2, Gilboy, Lacroix)
• Niche Interment	
• Grave Purchase	3 (Sawyer – 2, McCarter)
• Burials (Urn)	
• Burials (Casket)	Paradise (OH), Canesi (CC), Smith (SC)
• Monuments	

AB mentioned that the back of the green sign at the North Cemetery has painted with graffiti. DD will have the crew remove the graffiti or paint over it.

Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2020 at 1:00 pm in the Arcand meeting room.

AB motioned to adjourn the meeting. FC seconded

The motioned passed 2-0.

Meeting adjourned.

Bellingham Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2020
Arcand Meeting Room – 10 Mechanic St

Members:

Francis Cartier (FC)	Chairman
Alan Bogan (AB)	Vice-Chairman
James Haughey (JH)	Member at Large via Zoom

Attendee:

Donald F. DiMartino (DD)	DPW Director (Ex. Sec. to Cem Com)
Barbara Sooklal (BS)	DPW Clerk – Recording Secretary

FC opens the meeting at 1:00 pm; BS called roll

FC asks the committee to review the minutes. FC motions to accept the minutes of September 30, 2020 meeting as presented. AB seconded. Motion passed 3 -0

Public Hearing

Public Hearing on the Revise Decoration Regulations discussed at the September 30, 2020 meeting. DD read the Public Hearing notice posted on November 30, 2020. FC asked for comments and concerns on the new regulations. JH and AB concur with the regulations and FC motions to accept the revisions to the regulations as presented by DD. AB seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Cemetery Maintenance (Report by A Bogan)

AB reported that the Flat Marker Raising was completed at Scott and Center Cemetery, work to be completed at Oak Hill and Depot Street Cemetery in the Spring. Two (2) crews of DPW staff worked at two (2) different times. AB commented the crews did a great job. FC added that AB supervised the crews thanking him for his extra work.

Tree & Branch Cutting (North and Oak Hill)

FC, AB, and Mike Burr (MB) removed trees that had fallen due to a storm. FC acknowledged AB and MB for their work giving a special thanks to MB for supervising the project. FC also thanked the crew of Charron Tree for the respect and dignity they showed while working on blessed cemetery grounds. The committee discussed the (billing) statement from the project. FC noted that an additional piece of equipment was needed that was not on the original quote. FC informed MB to include it on the statement adding an additional \$300.00. FC read the statement full day of service of three (3) men, a bucket truck, a chipper and the additional equipment, a Dingo, used for log movement. The original quote was for \$3000.00; the total project cost \$ 3500.00; well within budget. The Committee commented that the additional equipment was well worth the cost adding that the project could not have been completed without it. FC commented that the last part of the project would be to have the fence company to do repairs in the Spring; adding that as tree were removed more sections of fencing were found damaged. FC commented the cost should not be a big expense because the chain link fence was separated, and it can be (linked) back together. DD commented that MB will (submit) the statement for payment which will be charged off to the Cemetery Committee.

FC asked for questions or comments. JH asked how many stones were lifted. FC approximated more than 50. JH offered a special thank you for raising the stones as it was his concerns.

Cemetery Commission Agenda

Possible Improvements at of Scott Cemetery (Center Street)

Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) project was completed with AB overseeing. AB reported there is nothing behind or to the left of the columbariums. The area is clear for a road which will encourage sales in the back of the columbariums and allow additional parking for visitors. In the area of the Fenoff grave, remains were found in unmarked graves. Markers with the words "Unknown Remains Detected Date October 2018" were placed. The committee discussed the future road project to be started in the Springs using the DPW staff. JH questioned where the road will be placed. DD showed on the map that the road will extend the existing road next to the Ukrainian Cemetery, go behind the columbariums and back to the parallel road. JH thanked all for his work on this project.

Scott Cemetery Civil War Vet (Cooks) Monument Repairs by Jay Rowe

DD stated that he doesn't have an update from Jay Rowe. FC reminded the audience the gates will be chained off on December 1 until April 1.

Gravesite & Niche Sales, Activities, and Monuments Report

BS read the sales and interment information as presented below:

• Niche Purchases	4 (Lefort, Brissette)
• Niche Interment	3 (Daley, Comtois, Lacroix)
• Grave Purchase	8 (Gannon)
• Burials (Urn)	
• Burials (Casket)	
• Monuments	

FC asked if the question regarding the placement of a monument on Gannon graves had been answered to which BS confirmed. FC explained that 4 grave lots will have one center stone instead of individual stones. JH questioned if the 4 gravestone is larger (than those on a single grave). FC answered it would be to the maximum size listed in (regulations). The Committee discussed areas that will be opened for future sales. AB stated that there is only one place left in the section (of 4 grave lots). The next area will need to be marked out for sale. The front section closest to Center St will be opened before the area left of the West gate is developed. The area nearest Newland Ave was part of the GPR to be developed.

AB motioned to hold the next meeting on April 14 at 1:00 pm in the Arcand Meeting room. JH seconded. The motion passed 3-0.

FC thanked everyone for the hard work this year.

AB suggested the 4 flags at Scott Cemetery be removed to avoid them being destroyed during the Winter. The Committee agreed to take down all but the American flag.

FC wished everyone Happy Holidays.

JH motioned to close the meeting. AB seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

FC adjourned the meeting at 1:30 pm.