

Bellingham Cemetery Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2015

Municipal Center Arcand Meeting Room

Members:

James Haughey (JH)	Chairman
Francis Cartier (FC)	Vice-Chairman
William Spear (WS)	Member (ABSENT)

Attendee:

Donald F. DiMartino (DD)	DPW Director (Ex. Sec. to Cem Com)
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The meeting was called to order at 2:07 PM.

There were no minutes to accept as there was no quorum or meeting for the last planned meeting (12/23/2014).

DD reported that in December we received all existing Oak Hill Cemetery records. Plans are proceeding for an eminent domain taking of land that is cemetery property due to the lack of a clear title. Land Planning, Inc. is the professional land surveying firm that we have hired for this project. They are in the process of preparing the plans requested by Town Counsel. There was some question regarding the northern limit of the cemetery. The fence that is in place is not on the property line. It extends well beyond what appears to be the limit and beyond what shows on the assessors maps. The eminent domain plan will show to the limit of the active cemetery only, not the fence limit. Article 24 of the May Town Meeting warrant will ask the town to vote to take the land. In the interim, we have a signed Right of Entry and can sell graves or inter remains using our current rate structure and all revenue will go into the Town cemetery accounts. We have a proposal from Legacy Mark of \$3,500, for them to add Oak Hill to our mapping and database.

DD continued to report that the proposed Eversource flood light installation is in the works.

There was discussion on adding lighting at Scott Cemetery. National Grid prices were reviewed:

- Lease new pole \$54/month = \$648/year,
- 250 Watt light was \$380 per year, with the Pole Lease totaled \$1029 per year.
- 400 Watt light was \$450 per year, with the Pole Lease totaled \$1,098 per year.

The potential for solar powered street lighting in the cemetery was briefly discussed.

DD indicated that other DPW capital would require that we postpone the purchase of a Mini-Excavator this year. A mini-excavator capital improvement committee equipment form will be submitted this summer to get the purchase of this unit in the queue. A mini-excavator will have many uses beyond grave excavation and is fully supported by the DPW managers.

DD reported the fiscal 2016 budget submittals were level funded. (Salaries Elected officials \$3,600 and Expenses \$4,300)

DD reported on Gravesite & Niche Sales, Activities, and Monuments

- Niche Purchases – Chambers
- Niche Interment – None (Chambers & Prescott scheduled for 4/25/2015 weekend OT charges will be waived as FC will perform the interments)
- Grave Purchase – None
- Burials – None

DD suggested a procedure be established for verbal reservation of niches that are for sale. After a brief discussion, on a FC motion, seconded by JH it was voted unanimously to limit verbal reservation of niches to six months.

DD lead the discussion regarding decorations in and around the columbariums. The Paulhus decorations and memorial discussed at previous meeting were not the only ones. Any action to remove decorations should be fair and equitable.

FC led the discussion regarding the need for winter closure, especially during severe winters as the one we just experienced. The Union Cemetery committee did not plow the road in Union or Center Cemetery and with the level of frost experience this year interment would have been impossible. Winter closure of the cemeteries will be discussed before the next winter season arrives.

The next meeting was scheduled for July 23rd at 2 PM.

FC made motion to adjourn regular session; JH seconded and it was voted unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned and reconvened at the Center Cemetery to identify gravestones for rehabilitation. Six grave markers along the Center Cemetery access road were identified for rehabilitation. DD will contact the certified conservator Jay Rowe to perform the work.

The meeting was adjourned and reconvened at the Scott Cemetery to review decorations near the columbariums. The decorations were reviewed and some removed. DD was directed to ask the Parks department staff to remove all decorations as part Memorial Day annual spring cleanup. Discussion included the installation of a street light to be placed on the pole across the street, pointed towards the cemetery. DD will pursue the street light installation with options of using the existing pole and new pole rental requirement.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by Donald DiMartino

11/19/2015

Bellingham Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 30, 2015
Municipal Center Arcand Meeting Room

Members:

James Haughey (JH)	Chairman
Francis Cartier (FC)	Vice-Chairman
William Spear (WS)	Member

Attendee:

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

JH called the meeting to order at 2 PM

*FC Motioned to Accept December 2014 Cemetery Committee meeting minutes
JH seconded the motion. The motion carried.*

JH and FC noted the need to reorganization of the Board as this is the first meeting of 2015.
*WS motioned to approve JH as Chairman of Cemetery Committee, Francis Cartier as Vice
Chairman, and William Speare as Board Member
FC - Seconded the motion. The motion carried.*

JH read the cemetery account status spreadsheet (Attached)

DD noted Scott Columbarium Phase 2 has a balance of approximately \$1,930.00, which was proposed that these funds be used to start work on Phase 3. The Finance Office may disapprove the use of Phase 2 funds for Phase 3 as the account has been stagnant for over two years. If it is decided to move forward immediately with Columbarium 3, he will attempt to obtain funding for Columbarium Phase 3 at the October town meeting, and the remaining Phase 2 funds may be transferred to Phase 3.

JH commented on the appearance of the cemeteries. Center looks excellent, Scott needs the lawn cut. The columbariums look fantastic and are filling up quickly. The Columbariums are a great endeavor for the town and thanks Frank Cartier for presenting the project to the board.

JH asked for confirmation that the Union Cemetery Maintenance annual invoice was delivered and payment received. DD confirmed and states the funds go into the Cemetery Maintenance Gift Fund annually. These funds (\$ 9,265.00) can be used immediately, at any time, without Town Meeting appropriation.

DD noted typical expenditures from the annual budget. We have paid for Legacy Mark for fiscal year 2016. The FY2016 annual budget is \$2,000.00 lower as funds once used to by Park Department equipment have now been moved to the Parks Department budget in the zero based budgeting process initiated for this fiscal year. Also the lighting installed at Scott and North Cemeteries will be paid from the Town street lighting account, not the cemetery account.

DD updated the board in regards to the land acquisition at Oak Hill Cemetery. At the May town meeting Article 24 was approved a key step in accept the land that is the cemetery. The town counsel is hoping we can prove sufficient title and ownership to resolve the transfer by drafting three deeds: two for Varney entities and one to the Oak Hill Cemetery Association. It appears believed that all parties will sign without funds being distributed. If this plan does not work, the town will need to proceed with the eminent domain process, which will take longer. Eminent domain would be used only if necessary and clears title to the parcel.

DD noted that we had received quote of \$3,500.00 from Legacy Mark to add Oak Hill Cemetery to our Legacy Mark database and mapping system. Funds should be available from the annual budget and other accounts.

FC highly recommends having a Legacy Mark add Oak Hill. We have very limited info on the cemetery; this will give us control needed to manage the cemetery and not pass a mess of margin information to future committee members.

FC motioned, with the suggestion of the board and Mr. DiMartino, to go forward with the Legacy Mark Database Mapping for Oak Hill Cemetery, not to exceed \$4000 without authorization of the board.

WS seconded, the motion carried.

DD suggested we delay the mapping until the ownership of the cemetery is transferred to the Town.

FC Amended motion to go forwarded with Legacy Mark cemetery mapping proposal until after the acquisition of parcel at Oak Hill.

WS seconded the motion. Amendment carried.

FC questioned if Oak Hill cemetery is ready to open for all purposes or if it should be closed for resale until the above mentioned parcel is resolved, can still operate for burials. DD suggested that we do not open the cemetery until the Town owns it and Legacy Mark database is in place.

DD discussed the fence on the property at Oak Hill. There is a fence that extends beyond the limit of the cemetery. It fences in a flat area abutting the cemetery and appears to be viable for gravesite expansion or columbarium construction. Property owner is the developer of the Market Basket Plaza. If they have no plan for this land, the Town may be able to get them donate it for Town cemetery expansion. DD will pursue the possible acquisition after the Oak Hill transfer is completed.

There was discussion of the plan to adjourn to the Oak Hill Cemetery after the agenda is completed for general discussion and planning, but this site visit will be postpone until the next committee meeting due to extremely hot and humid weather conditions.

DD reported on projects that have been completed. JH stated the lights at Scott Cemetery were installed light on pole across the street by National Grid. Also the lighting at North and Oak Hill were installed by Eversource. DD stated, at Center Cemetery, Jay Rowe, certified conservator,

completed rehab of six gravestones, and can look forward to additional work for the upcoming year. JH commented that Jay Rowe is a resource for the town and thanks for his work.

FC formally proposed that we move forward with a project to construct the third columbarium at Scott Cemetery. There are only two niches left on the front side of Phase 2 and he will be presenting back side of Phase 2 to families for purchase.

JH questions if there is a price difference between back vs front of columbariums. FC stated there is no difference in price; neither side is more desirable, back side offers privacy, front side is seen first. Discussed in last meeting lighting the flag poles to light up the behind the columbariums.

DD plans to request \$40,000 from Finance committee for Phase 3. JH states this money will come back to the town from the sales of the niches.

FC motioned to go forward with the request for funding of approximately \$40K for Columbarium Phase 3 project at Scott Cemetery, included pad, landscaping, benches, flagpoles for continuity.

WS – seconded the motion. The motion carried.

FC would like to let families know that benches in front of Columbarium 2 can be engraved in memorial. Benches, in front of Columbarium 1, were paid for by the Fetter family. The benches in front of Phase 2 were paid for by us, the engraving would be paid for by the family as a donation.

Gravesite & Niche Sales, Activity and Monuments

JH read the agenda ten niche sold. No grave sales, interments in the columbarium, or burials occurred since the last meeting.

FC presented his concerns about winter operations. A few years it was decided to put in place winter charges and keep the cemeteries open during the winter. This past winter it would not have been able to inter any remains. The winter charges would not have been sufficient and burial close to impossible. In addition, even though it was plowed there is no safe place for mourners to park their cars if a service was to be held. He suggested we close the cemeteries December 1 to April 1 to keep it fair to everyone regardless of actual weather.

DD noted that the DPW would support a closure of the cemetery during the winter.

FC suggested involving the Union Cemetery to coincide to avoid discrepancies. JH suggests sending correspondence to Mr. Brown & the Cemetery Board.

DD noted that winter charges are in the regulation; therefore, a public hearing should be held if we are making this change. FC would like to address this at the next meeting to have the changes in place for this winter.

FC motioned to address the closing of the cemetery time frame for winter usage from December 1 to April 1 of the following year, cemetery will be closed, to include all cemeteries of which we have control.

WS seconded the motion. The motion carried.

WS motioned to hold next meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2015, 2:00pm, at Arcand Meeting Room

FC seconded the motion. The motion carried

FC motioned to adjourn, WS seconded the motion, the motion carried.

JH adjourns meeting at 2:40 PM.

4/14/2016

Bellingham Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2015
Municipal Center Arcand Meeting Room

Members:

James Haughey (JH)	Chairman
Francis Cartier (FC)	Vice-Chairman
William Spear (WS)	Member

Attendee:

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

JH called the meeting to order at 2 PM

JH calls for a Moment of Silence to honor tragedy in Paris

Public Hearing to Modify Regulations: Close the cemeteries to all burials December 1st to April 1st and delete references to winter charges.

JH read the modifications. Let it be noted that no person from the public attended to comment and no comments were received by the DPW office. FC commented the past few years have shown it was a hazard for families and staff, to have the cemeteries open during the winter. Opening the cemeteries during the winter was changed by the Committee. Closing the cemetery was in the original plan. Notices on the website and at the cemeteries will be changed.

*FC motioned to close the Public Hearing, WS – seconded motion
Motion carried, Public Hearing is closed.*

*FC motioned to accept the modifications of the regulations, WS seconded the motion.
The motion carried.*

*FC motions to accept the Minutes of the July 30, 2015 Cemetery Committee meeting at presented, WS seconded the motion.
The motion carried.*

DD discussed the Scott Columbarium Panels, stating that panels are different between the two columbariums and the orientation of the panel is important. These differences were not realized until recently causing some unsightly spaces between panels.

On the front of C1 there are 4 correct panels, and 2 rotated; the inconsistent spaces are minimally noticeable.

On the back of C1 there are 2 correct panels, 2 in wrong columbarium, and one is blank and 2 rotated; the inconsistent spaces are noticeable and should be corrected.

On the front of C2 there are 2 incorrect panels, the remaining 6 are correct: the inconsistent spaces are extremely noticeable.

FC commented that on the front of C1, one of the panels isn't fitting properly. DD stated the issue is the 2 bottom engraved panels are at the wrong orientation, creating 1/8" difference. The panels have to be placed the way they were originally installed because of this slight difference.

FC asked if the lower two panels on C1 will be changed. DD states only if we want to proceed; visually C1 front is not but terrible, but the back of C1 is unsightly and the front of C2 front is very unsightly.

DD reported that each replacement panel has cost us \$400; engraving is \$1,000 per panel (\$250 per niche). FC comments that this is a structure that will be here forever and he would like it fixed now while they are still on the board, so in the future no one can say it doesn't look right. Suggests the board addresses making the investment now. Costs are estimated at \$2,000 to fix the front and \$3,000 to fix the back on C1. JH suggests changing the center panel on C1 because of the spacing. DD states fixing that panel may possible look better, leaving only one panel incorrect. FC suggests going forward with replacing this center panel.

JH asked if a solution could be to fill in the bottom. FC explains that is not possible due to the construction of the columbariums.

JH asked if DD reached out to company who made the columbarium, asking if anyone had encountered this problem in the past. DD was told most engraving is done on site, which could be considered, but now the panels are marked on top to avoid this problem. FC states having it on site may not give the same results and highly suggest having the panels taken down to be engraved.

FC questioned coloring on C 2. DD stated the spare panels were ordered after C1 was built, and although the granite is the same, it may be from a different lot/area which could result in a color variance. Spare panels for C2 were ordered when it was built.

FC asked if the right side up and down panels on the backside of C1 will be changed. DD suggested changing those 2 panels and Hazelton panel. Because these panels are not fully engraved, the cost will be less. On C2, there are 2 blanks so costs would only encompass engraving at \$1800 approx., which will complete C2 quickly.

DD will inquire with Ackerman's in regards to refinishing the used panels (polishing the back) for reuse, and the cost of refinishing compared to purchasing new panels. DD will also get a quote from Watertown for new panels, which may be discounted if delivered along with C3.

JH questioned how to pay for modifications, but suggested discussing it at the next meeting when quotes are available. DD stated the cemetery gift maintenance fund has \$ 9200.00 and annual expense budget is \$3500, which should cover costs, but needs to be weighed with the cost of moving forward with Legacy Mark.

JH started an open discussion asking if the niche panels can be engraved on site to avoid the orientation problem? FC stated this problem will not happen again now that the panels will be marked on the top. DD is confident the problem will be avoided.

FC – Motions to table the discussion until next meeting requesting quotes are presented to address the complete resolution of C1 and C2. WS seconds the motion.

The motion carried.

DD updated the committee on the Oak Hill Cemetery acquisition. The town is waiting to get final signature and notarization on one deed and a Mylar of the plan, which will be sent to registry to be recorded. Anticipates it will be done before end of 2015 to obtain clear title and ownership of the Oak Hill Cemetery.

DD updated the committee on the Legacy Mark Database Map stating the price is \$3500. \$4000 was authorized at the previous meeting. The mapping will be ordered once recorded and is Town property. DD discussed the priority of projects: mapping vs columbarium. FC comments that the columbarium should take the priority. FH agrees. DD states the database can be completed in July when the new budget is available. FC asked if there funding left in the expenses of Oak Hill. DD explained it was all transferred into the gift fund. FC stated the committee needs to reallocate our expense to accommodate another cemetery in the future.

DD discussed the Cemetery Expansion stating the fenced in area looks like it is part of the cemetery. It isn't known who erected the fence. Once the cemetery land is owned by the Town, W/S Development will be asked if they are willing to grant the Town an easement or sell the land.

DD stated the bids for Columbarium 3 at Scott Cemetery will be opened 12-3-2015. The concrete foundation is marked for DPW excavation, which may be poured this fall, weather permitting.

JH read the agenda for Gravesite & Niche Sales, Activities, and Monuments. There were no Niche purchases or Niche interments. There were seven (7) Grave Purchase – Sawyer(2), Burr (3), Sutton (2), one (1) burials – Burr (urn) and two (2) monuments – Daniel & Susan Carlisle (Center Cem), Lanctot/Bonin (Scott Cem)

FC commented that next to the 4-grave section, the first plot has a head stone, the second one doesn't have a headstone, but has two bushes, which were recently planted. FC suggests after the holiday, a general statement be issued that all decorations, flowers and shrubs will be removed per Rules and Regulations as of April 1. General notice will be posted on the sign board. FC suggests using Cablevision also.

FC commented on a niche that had some duct taped on C1 attached a vase & flower by hook. FC commented on having been speaking to the people at the Cape cemetery. He would like to have future discussion about changing the hardware on the columbariums to avoid having the niches opened by anyone other than staff.

FC requested that a temporary marker be used on all niches when the order is placed to open the niche, as previously discussed with DD. DD agreed to this practice.

*FC motions to set our next meeting to April 14, 2016 2:00pm
WS seconds the motion. The motion carried.*

JH adjourns the meeting.