



TRUSTEES OF CEMETERIES

Post Office Box 119

Town of Gilmanton, New Hampshire 03237-0119

cemeteries@gilmantonnh.org

www.gilmantonnh.org/cemetery-trustees



Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 9, 2022 – 7pm

Gilmanton Academy, Town Offices

503 Province Road, Gilmanton, NH

Present: Trustees Candace Daigle, Leonard (JR) Stockwell, Jr. and John Dickey; staff Sexton Paul Lines.

Approval of Minutes – August 9, 2021

MOTION: On a motion by John, seconded by JR, it was voted unanimously to accept the minutes of August 9, 2021, as written. (3-0)

Site Reports

A. **Ayers Crypt** – JR met with John Reifsnyder, Mr. & Mrs. Spooner and Arbor Tech to determine the best access to the Crypt for a small machine. Mr. Reifsnyder and JR agreed the easiest access, due to slope, would be over Mr. Reifsnyder's lot along an old road that cuts off the discontinued Edgerly Road and onto the Spooner lot where the crypt is located. Mr. Spooner burns wood so there won't be a problem getting rid of the wood. Arbor Tech's quote to clear the access is \$1,315. Candace also spoke with the new property owners, Bertrand and Pennie Spooner. They are very interested and accommodating to this project and asked about the history of the crypt. At the meeting for the original subdivision of the Reifsnyder's lot, Mr. Reifsnyder said his research showed that Hannah Ayers drowned when she was young, and her father built the crypt for her remains. Mr. Spooner is interested and will do some additional research. JR has also talked to Kevin Fife who gave a quote of \$3,000-\$3,500 for the stonework. Kevin thought he could do it this fall.

MOTION: On a motion by JR Stockwell, seconded by John Dickey, it was voted unanimously to accept the \$1,315 quote of Arbor Tech to clear an equipment access from Edgerly Road to the Crypt; to be paid from the Repairs & Maintenance budget account. (3-0)

Candace will send signed quote to Arbor Tech and suggest they meet on site with JR to finalize the access.

B. **Beech Grove**

1. Paul will check whether Laconia Monument has sealed the Hodgdon stone. If not he'll pickup the necessary sealer to do the job.
2. Paul reports there are two granite stones that have fallen out of the wall in the rear section of Beech Grove where there is a raised plot area. He and JR will view to see if it can be repaired by staff.
3. The 2021 project to remove diseased/failing Ash trees along the driveway was completed at a cost of \$5,800.
4. The members reviewed the quote from Arbor Tech to clear the interior cemetery of failing/diseased/overhanging trees for \$5,200. Voters approved a \$5,000 deposit into the

Candace L. Daigle
(603) 267-8274

Leonard Stockwell, Jr.
(603) 267-7502

John Dickey
(603) 267-6098

MINUTES ISSUED IN DRAFT-SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT/ADOPTION AT SUBSEQUENT MEETING-MINUTES AVAILABLE May 11, 2022

cemetery Expendable Trust Fund for this project. Paul noted that Karen Stockwell has cleared a lot of the interior wall and the crypt access last fall. Candace will ask Arbor Tech to meet again with JR on site to see if there should be an adjustment in the quote.

MOTION: On a motion by JR Stockwell, seconded by J. Dickey, it was voted unanimously to accept the \$5,200 quote of Arbor Tech to clear the entire interior cemetery of failing/diseased trees with the understanding that the site will be walked again to see if the quote should be reduced due to additional work completed by staff; to be paid from the Expendable Trust Fund. (3-0)

5. Interments:

- a. Lee Dugal cremains (Lot17 Horsman/Springer lot) scheduled for 6/17/22, 10am. Initial interment into grave. Paul will cover opening and closing review.
- b. Adrienne Dugal – the family has prepaid the \$100 interment fee.
- c. Sellin-future unknown number of cremains proposed, Lot F23b, family is checking with Probate Court to determine ownership.

C. **Buzzell**

1. Plans still need updating regarding installation of additional pins in 2021. There is a possibility to contract for site maps of the cemeteries based on GPS location of everything above ground. Would provide both map and inventory. No further discussion on purchasing metal locator and pins to facilitate future grave layouts.
2. Candace will check to see if the weed control was done last year. No bill has been received. Paul noted the poor soil condition in that area and that he had seen the typical plastic flag on site that is used when soil has been treated. Candace will also check will Bill Price to see what should be done and if hydroseeding would be the way to go.
3. The large gates, both front and side, are not accessible because the granite posts have shifted slightly. Last year Paul chained open the pedestrian gate, so access was available. JR will check to see if we need to contact someone to adjust the granite uprights and Paul will make sure the access gate is open.
4. The Trustees discussed the wording for the sign to be used in cremains area of cemetery to display “orphan” stones (those given to the Trustees or found in Gilmanton outside of a burial setting and for which there is no indication the person is buried in Gilmanton. The Trustees were able to transfer several such stones to other towns by finding the burial location of those named on stones. However, they have several stones where no information has been found. The proposed sign wording is “This section contains headstones discovered in Gilmanton for which no death or burial was recorded. They are displayed for genealogical value only. Gilmanton Cemetery Trustees”. Similar signs were previously obtained from the State. The Trustees discussed where in the cemetery the stones should be located. A decision was made to not use our cremation area for the stones, but instead to run them parallel to the left side wall in the old section of the cemetery. Along with the stones Candace has, JR has one and Mr. Wilson would like Mrs. Jones’ stone removed from his basement.

MOTION: On a motion by Candace Daigle, seconded by JR Stockwell, it was voted unanimously to adopt the above wording and order one smaller-sized sign. (3-0)

- D. **Carr** – Candace inquired whether goats would be a solution to the poison ivy problem. The Trustees thought it was a novel idea. Paul will check with the Sanborns, property owners, and see if that is something they would be willing to accommodate on the property. If so, Candace will try

- to locate someone that provides that service. The goal would be to have it “trimmed out” every couple of years to would keep it from completely growing in.
- E. **Copp** – there are two gravestones among the “orphan” stones that need to be placed on the appropriate graves in Copp (John Marstin & Mary Copp). In the past when we have obtained a duplicate stone, we have installed it back-to-back with the current stone. Paul has located Mary Copp’s grave but is unable to located John Marstin’s. Candace will check the record and provide any more available information to him. It may be a problem with spelling. Paul will set the stones back-to-back with the existing stones.
- F. **Edgerly 1-Stage Road** – The Trustees have an easement from Stage Road to this cemetery which was granted during a subdivision of the property. JR has marked the path with Cemetery Easement plaques. Paul noted that an adjacent abutter has heavily marked his property with “No Trespassing” signs. JR did not think there was a conflict as that owner did not disturb the easement plaques and his signs seem to stay uphill from our path. The Trustees are always appreciative to property owners for having access to cemeteries that are not on the roadside.
- G. **Guinea Ridge**
1. The new site sign was installed last year. Looks great!
 2. There will be an interment for Kore Coleman on June 5th. Ownership rights for this grave were previously determined. Paul has it on his schedule.
 3. There are two large dead trees that need to come down. Because of adjacent stones it is something that we’ll have Arbor Tech look at. JR will talk to Arbor Tech. It was noted that the Town now has on its Highway staff an experienced tree cutter. Paul will talk to Road Agent Paul Perkins to see if he is someone that could assist the Trustees occasionally when we have a tree too large for staff but not really something to contract out. We would, of course, compensate the Highway budget for his time.
- H. **Hillside**
1. The surveyor of the abutting lot has not been able to provide a copy of that survey to date.
 2. In answer to a question at the last meeting, Edgerly Road status was recently reviewed. It was discontinued 1928; however, property owners (such as the Town) may continue to use the road as access.
 3. Two recent interments occurred; Cheryl True (full burial) and William A Roberts (cremains); both interred on April 29th. As a courtesy, the abutter was notified due to the narrow access. It was a large gathering with 17 vehicles on site. Paul was in attendance to accept the burial paperwork and to view that the graves were opened in the correct location and closed properly. Dignified Services provided grave opening/closing services. It was found that the two rear corner posts were not far enough from the front posts to accommodate all the graves. They were 5 feet short. Paul permitted the adjustment to accommodate the burials. Paul and Karen will adjust the rear corner posts so that the full 12 graves are available. In addition, Paul cautioned that the empty gravestone base cannot be used where it is as it encroaches on William H. Roger’s grave. Candace will add that into the close out letter on the True burial. In addition, Dignified left two tie-down straps behind. Candace will notify.
- I. **Lougee** – the trees previously discussed have not been taken down by the abutter. They do not appear to pose a danger to our stones. One did fall and Paul cut that up.
- J. **Merrill** – stone and gate work still outstanding. Paul suggests leaving the gate off. Candace contacted Dignified to see if they would be interested in the stonework, we have but they did not respond. John will try Mr. Beede again after his busy springtime.
- K. **Sawyer Lake** - The new site sign was installed last year. Also looks great!

- L. **Tibbetts** – stonework outstanding. Candace contacted Dignified Services last year to see if they would be able to assist. They did not respond at that time. John will again try Mr. Beede.
- M. **Town Farm** – JR reported on his and Karen's location of the identified Town-Farm related "burying ground" on November 14, 2021. Records had previously been searched including surveys, histories, deeds, town reports, etc. It seemed clear that there was a burying ground related to the Town Farm on Town Farm Road. They spent several hours and cleared the debris from within the walls and JR does feel it served to bury individuals. He located 3 two-stone gatherings where the stones are definitely buried vertically in the ground and in the position of head/foot stones. Candace reported that Mr. Wilson has started his research of the history of the Town Farm, she has provided him with much background, and she will be trying to answer a couple of additional questions from him. JR reminded the members that there is also a list in the back of the Town History. Karen has been back in this spring and reports it looks pretty good and won't need a clean out again this year until fall.
- N. **Town Pound** – There is one gate strap missing. JR will check to see what can be done.

Other Project Reports

- A. Burials process – Candace noted that there are more interments completed/scheduled for this spring than ever before. For those where the lots were created prior to adoption of the Cemetery Regulations, ownership of the burial rights can be difficult to determine. An Interment Application form is used to obtain the necessary information and owner authorization. It is also important that the Town has a representative present at the opening and closing of the grave as well as to receive the necessary paperwork for the burial. She has been working with families on the paperwork and Paul has been representing the Trustees on site. This is working great, and she is very grateful for Paul's involvement.
- B. Trees – Inventory of all other sites needing tree work. This is something the Trustees have discussed before. The Town now also has an DPW employee with extensive tree work background. The Trustees want to take advantage of that for projects that are more than out staff should handle, but don't need a tree contractor. Paul will check with Road Agent Paul Perkins.
- C. Candace explained an opportunity to contract with an individual who has GPS equipment to create detailed maps locating anything above ground in our cemeteries (gravestones, footstones, monuments, granite posts, gates, walls, trees, etc.). This would create precise cemetery maps and an inventory. She asked if the Trustees would be willing to start with one cemetery such as Copp or Friends. The Trustees agreed that Friends would make a good start. She will contact the contractor for a quote.
- D. Candace has updated the town-wide map with cemetery locations. It is also on the website.
- E. Do the Trustees want to continue the process of purchasing site signs this year? (Lougee, Sawyer Lake, Guinea Ridge, Sleeper & Beech Grove have been done at \$490 per sign). Trustees had previously talked about Leavitt, Hatch Road, and Hattie Smith. Trustees talked further about their intention and agreed that every cemetery should have one of the clearly recognizable, consistently designed signs. It is not only their due, but it reinforces the fact that the sites are regulated and maintained. They agreed to continue with road-side locations although some unmarked sites such as Emerson are also on their minds. Candace spoke with Adel Signs who would be glad to do more at the same price. The Trustees agreed to order signs this year for Tibbetts, Copp, Buzzell, Friends and Page.
- F. Candace broached the subject of what happens as the current Trustees retire or are not reelected. Her experience with other Committees and Boards acknowledges the difficulty in finding new members who want to continue with the detail work to maintain the work and details of the statutory duties and projects underway. Her inquiry reflects the current split in duties shared by

the current Trustees (the identification of previously unknown sites and major maintenance projects, the investigation of the history of sites and burials, and the recordkeeping and finances). As a type of legacy planning should the Trustees be thinking about that future transition? Candace has recently had the town establish a generic e-mail address for the Trustees instead of using her name. The new Trustee public e-mail is cemeteries@gilmantonnh.org. That allowed her to update the website and all the forms to reflect this change. This will not have to be done again as Trustees change. The Trustees agreed that it may be unlikely that any new Trustee coming in would be able and/or willing to do especially the recordkeeping and finances. Candace asked if the straightforward bookkeeping might be something to talk to the Selectmen about. Could it be absorbed into the Town offices who currently do the Town's side of those functions along with the Trustees of Trust Funds who provide investment and bookkeeping for funds. The Statutes are clear that only the Trustees can authorize expenditures and are responsible for managing the finances, but some of the work is simple bookkeeping and might take little time to transfer to the Town Offices. Truthfully, it's not only the Cemetery Trustees who may need help with this in the future, and it may be wise for the Selectmen to consider those needs in other committees in their future Town personnel decisions. The Trustees agreed and suggested that something be provided at the mid-year meeting with the Selectmen.

Budget

A. Year-end Reports 2021

The Trustees reviewed the 2021 year-end report for the:

1. **Town Budget** – Highlights included an increase in the staff stipend for equipment, a 4-grave plot sale in Beech Grove, 262.5 wage hours, and two donations into the McIntyre Fund. Site signs were purchased for Sawyer Lake and Guinea Ridge. The balance of the unexpended town budget was moved to the Expendable Trust Fund.
2. **General/Perpetual Care Funds** - \$2,910 of the total cost of cemetery maintenance stipend was funded by the income from General and Perpetual Care funds.
3. **Expendable Trust Fund** - \$7,970 of the total cost of cemetery repairs, maintenance and beautification was funded by the ETF. Trees were removed along the Beech Grove driveway (the bulk of that expense funded by a \$5,000 warrant article) and a portion of the reclamation of the Indian Cemetery came from this fund. The fund consists of the unexpended balance of prior years' town budgets.
4. **McIntyre Fund** – received two donations in memory of Marion McIntyre who passed in February.

- B. **2022 Town Budget** – Town meeting did not adopt the proposed 2022 municipal budget. Therefore, the Trustees' budget is a default budget, the same as for 2021, \$15,936. However, the Selectmen did award a 3% raise for all town employees. As the permanent, part-time, seasonal cemetery employees had not previously been on the town's wage scale, they each received a 3+% increase to fit them onto the schedule. The Trustees' budget will absorb the wage increases without any increase to our bottom line in keeping with the voters' action.

- C. **2022 - Encumbered** – The remaining tree work in Beech Grove is estimated to cost \$5,200; most of which will be funded by a second \$5,000 warrant article passed in 2022. In addition are two contracts with Beede stonework for Tibbets and Merrill. The initial phase of clearing for Ayer's Crypt is quoted at \$1,315.

- D. **2022 – Additionally under consideration** – Ayer's Crypt stonework \$3,000-\$3,500, additional site signs \$2,450, commence GPS site project.

Other Business

Candace L. Daigle
(603) 267-8274

Leonard Stockwell, Jr.
(603) 267-7502

John Dickey
(603) 267-6098

- A. **Cemetery Tour** – This year the Gilmanton Historical Society will be holding a tour of the Pine Grove Cemetery. Candace will send John the info she has on that cemetery.
- B. **Adjournment** – Next meeting to be called by the Chair as necessary.
- MOTION:** On a motion by John, seconded by JR, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:06pm. (3-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Candace L Daigle, Trustee