



TRUSTEES OF CEMETERIES

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 21, 2018, 7pm

Gilmanton Academy

503 Province Road

Present: Trustees Candace Daigle, Leonard (JR) Stockwell, Jr. and John Dickey.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: On a motion by J. Dickey, seconded by JR Stockwell, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of August 14, 2018, as written. (3-0)

2019 Budget Appropriation

The Trustees discussed a cemetery budget appropriation request for 2019; requests due to the Selectmen's office by September 14, 2018.

Of primary concern to the Trustees this year is the retention of quality employees to protect and maintain the sites under their care. It seems many other communities have had to hire landscaping firms for the work. That is an extremely expensive alternative and does not result in the sites being cared for in a consistent manner by someone who has a long-term interest and investment in the site conditions. Employees are also responsible for so much more than mowing. They clear trees, open sites for burials, repair fences and gates and work closely with the Trustees on any unusual conditions or in making site improvements. Workers are paid an hourly wage for their labor; however, as importantly to the Trustees, they are paid a stipend to provide their own transportation, all their own equipment (mowers, rakes, shovels, chainsaws, trimmers, loppers, etc.). They pay for all the maintenance, repairs, oil, disposables (trimmer string, blades, etc.) and replacement of their own equipment. The Town provides only gas for the mowers, trimmers, etc.

All of this could not be provided by the Trustees in a cost-effective manner due to the minimal annual hours required. The Trustees reviewed their history of employment. Prior to 2016, workers were paid as subcontractors at a rate of \$16/hr (2003), \$18/hr (2007), \$22/hr (2008), \$24/hr (2009). In 2016 compensation was split into an hourly wage and a stipend (\$15/hr and \$9/hr). There has been no increase for employees' wages or stipend in the last 9 years.

In addition, both the NH Municipal Association and former Town Administrator have supported the idea of the Trustees appointing a Sexton to oversee and coordinate the work to be done. A sexton is permitted under RSA 289:7,II "who shall not be a trustee and who shall be responsible to the cemetery trustees for supervising work done in the cemeteries." This provides a consistency, in both work and employee management as well as retention of the history of the maintenance program as Trustees are elected positions.

As a result of the above discussions, the Trustees will put forward a budget to reflect \$18/hr pay rate for one employee who will assume the duties of sexton. Pay rate for any remaining employees will remain \$15/hr at this time. In addition, they will increase the hourly stipend to employees to

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MINUTES ISSUED IN DRAFT-SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT/ADOPTION AT SUBSEQUENT MEETING-MINUTES AVAILABLE August 26, 2018

\$15/hr to better reflect actual costs incurred by the employee. Minimal increases will result in FICA and Medicare costs, but no additional line items will be increased in this proposal.

MOTION: On a motion by J. Dickey, seconded by JR Stockwell, it was voted unanimously to request a total 2019 budget appropriation of \$13,548. (3-0)

C. Daigle will draft up a job description for sexton for the members to review.

Other Business

1. **Orphan grave stones**

On tax lot 414-085, 805 Province Road, now owned by the Town of Gilmanton, workers found five flush markers. They have been turned over to the Cemetery Trustees. Currently the names do not match any known burials or lot owners in Gilmanton. The stones are:

- a. Fletcher E. Griffin, Oct. 22, 1895-May 2, 1968 and Ethel V. Ham, Aug 4, 1909-
- b. Ethel
- c. Baby Son Richard Kenneth Perkins, Jr., 1960 1960
- d. Dawn Reid, Mar. 2, 1971
- e. Catherine M. Doherty, 1886-1969

Inquiries have been sent out across the state. One stone has been matched to an existing stone in Boscawen. If not claimed, the stones will be placed with other orphan stones held by the Trustees.

2. **Elections**

2019 will be JR Stockwell's term to renew.

Adjournment

MOTION: On a motion by J. Dickey, seconded by JR Stockwell, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:49pm. (3-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Candace L. Daigle, Trustee