

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

Board Members Present:

Herb VanGuilder
Bob Brandt

Lou Gabranski
Brett Sanderson

Bruce Schmidt

Others Present:

Kevin McPherson

Doug Sheehan

1. Call to Order

- A. Meeting was called to order by Chairman, Herbert Van Guilder at 5:00 p.m. All members present.
- B. Herb Van Guilder said that before the board proceeds with the re-organization, he would like to ask what is expected of the chairman. In the past, the chair was responsible to post the agenda, keep track of projects, check the buildings (he had a set of the keys) and check the operations.
- C. Bruce Schmidt said that he does not think the chair should have a set of keys and is not responsible to keep track of the projects. The town manager is responsible to provide understanding and updates to the commissioners. The chair should set the agenda and the board sets policy and the budget. The chair should not run the day to day operations of the cemetery.
- D. Herb Van Guilder asked if the employees should keep the commissioners up to date on the projects and money spent.
- E. Bruce Schmidt said that would be up to the town manager. He views the cemetery as another department of the town. The commissioners are responsible for policies.
- F. Herb Van Guilder said that on two occasions, the voters voted to keep the cemetery separate and not under the town's thumb.
- G. Brett Sanderson said that when the votes were taken, there were certain issues. There were some hiccups going back to operations by the town, but, it still works better and works well. The cemetery is getting more for its money.
- H. Lou Gabranski asked if they are saving money and asked for an update on how much was spent last year and what was spent in the past.
- I. Herb Van Guilder said he would also like an update on what did they get done last year.
- J. Scott Murphy said when we get the list; we can see what was done and what needs to be done. We will look to the commissioners to prioritize the list.
- K. Herb Van Guilder said he agrees as long as they go by what the commissioners want.
- L. Lou Gabranski suggested that they get back to the election of officers.
- M. Herb Van Guilder said that the present chairman is disappointed with the agenda; it is not what he set up.
- N. Scott Murphy said this is the stuff that he and Herb Van Guilder went over last week, with handwritten instructions by Herb Van Guilder.
- O. Herb Van Guilder welcomed new board members, Bruce Schmidt and Bob Brandt.

2. Annual Board Re-Organization

- A. Elect Chair of the Board
 - i. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Bob Brandt to elect Brett Sanderson Chair of the board. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Elect Vice Chair of the Board
 - i. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt to elect Herb Van Guilder Vice Chair of the board.**
 - ii. Herb Van Guilder declined the nomination
 - iii. **Motion by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Bob Brandt to elect Bruce Schmidt Vice Chair of the board. Motion passed unanimously**
- C. Elect Clerk of the Board
 - i. **Motion by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Lou Gabranski to elect Bob Brandt of the Board. Motion passed unanimously.**
- D. Elect Signer of Deeds
 - i. Herb Van Guilder advised that in the past, the chair had been the signer of deeds.

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- ii. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Lou Gabranski to elect Brett Sanderson Signer of deeds. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - E. Appoint Recording Secretary
 - i. **Motion by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Bruce Schmidt to appoint Lisha Klaiber as secretary. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - F. Set Day and Time of Regular Meetings – Alternate Meetings
 - i. Motion by Herb Van Guilder to set the meeting at 4:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month, with alternates set as needed by the chair.
 - ii. There was no second.
 - iii. Brett Sanderson said that, at one time it was 6:00 p.m.
 - iv. Bruce Schmidt said he would prefer 5:00 p.m.
 - v. Bob Brandt said that some of the commissioners still work and he would like to see the meetings be more convenient for them. He added that there are only so many people in town willing to fill board positions.
 - vi. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Brett Sanderson to set Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m. as day and time for regular meetings. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - G. Designate Newspaper of General Circulation
 - i. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Lou Gabranski to designate THE VERMONT JOURNAL as newspaper of record. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - H. **Adopt Roberts Rules of Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Brett Sanderson to continue following Roberts Rules of Order at meetings. Motion passed unanimously.**
3. **Consideration of Changes, Additions or Removal to the Agenda**
- A. Scott Murphy said that no changes were necessary:
4. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting**
- A. Herb Van Guilder said that the minutes to be reviewed are from December 12, 2018.
 - i. **Motion by Herb Van Guilder and seconded by Brett Sanderson to accept the minutes from December 12, 2018 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**
5. **Comments from Citizens**
- A. Herb Van Guilder said that people are not happy that the cemetery was not opened sooner.
 - B. Brett Sanderson said that there was still snow.
 - C. Scott Murphy said there was also the flood. We took a beating with that. It was opened May 1, 2019.
 - D. Bruce Schmidt suggested that for next year, the town manager should look at the cemetery in April, along with the highway foreman to see how soon they can open the cemetery. He agreed, the earlier, the better. The town manager would decide.
 - E. Scott Murphy said there were branches that needed to be cleaned up.
 - F. Lou Gabranski said it should have been open for Easter. He said that Frank Heald had listed May 1st to Veteran's Day for the cemetery to be open. He thinks it should be as soon as the snow is gone. He wants the chair to have the keys.
 - G. Herb Van Guilder said, in the past, the policy was to open in May, when the weather was better. We don't have to have staff there and it doesn't have to be cleaned up until Memorial Day, but the gate should be open so people can visit the cemetery. Opening the gate is very important.
 - H. Kevin McPherson said they tried to open earlier, but the road was not clear. If the snow or ice is gone, we can pull the gate. There were pieces of trees and sticks and last weekend there was the flood.
 - I. Herb Van Guilder said that as past chair, he thinks they should open the gate or close it based on conditions. He said that he took people up for Christmas. He wants access as long as the weather permits.
 - J. Scott Murphy said we opened it as soon as possible or within a few days of when it was cleaned up. He noted that the commissioners can get rid of the contract with the town and do it themselves.
 - K. Herb Van Guilder said that the commissioners spent a lot of money on the building and the sexton should be in the office. He said that he understands that the sexton is doing research, but he should be there when people come. He thinks that the research can be done from the office computer.

- L. Scott Murphy said he would check into it and get back to the board at the next meeting.
- M. Doug Sheehan said the system is in the town office. He also has to check the vaults in the Town Clerk's office.
- N. Scott Murphy said he would check on it.

6. Sexton's Report

- A. The sexton's report was submitted and accepted.

7. Possible Summer Projects

- A. Scott Murphy said that they put the list together after discussions last fall. He noted that Kevin McPherson got two large flower pots donated to the cemetery. He saved them about \$1,000. He said that the sluiceway is a priority. It was pretty bad after the last flood. He noted that the one at Dorsey Park was similar and had been corrected.
- B. Brett Sanderson said it was a double drain and catch basin with grate. It was in the back, right corner of the park.
- C. Kevin McPherson said the one in the park is the same basic set up as the one in the cemetery and the one in the cemetery was a constant battle all fall.
- D. Herb Van Guilder asked if they would get an engineer and 3 estimates.
- E. Scott Murphy said yes.
- F. Herb Van Guilder said he wants the new commissioners to review the project list.
- G. Scott Murphy said the staff will give input and discuss the list with the commissioners.
- H. Herb Van Guilder said the list provided by Scott Murphy should be added to the original commissioners' list.
- I. Scott Murphy advised that he has not seen the original list.
- J. Bruce Schmidt said that he has reviewed past minutes and did his due diligence. We need to understand how much money is in the budget and how much we want to spend. We need to work together to get the project list together and focus on this coming season. Some things should be prioritized and some should be considered maintenance.
- K. Herb Van Guilder mentioned the flag pole project.
- L. Bruce Schmidt asked if the flag pole project is more important than the bathrooms.
- M. Scott Murphy said there is \$39, 095 in the Capital Reserve and the roll-over Capital Account is \$75,000.
- N. Bruce Schmidt we should try to keep money in the budget each year. We need direction on how much to spend.
- O. Herb Van Guilder said the commission also receives about \$10,000 to \$15,000 each year from the Trustees of Public Funds.
- P. Lou Gabranski said there are 2 big projects – the flooding issue and the upper bathroom.
- Q. Herb Van Guilder said that the Van Guilder family tried to donate to the bathroom project in the past.
- R. Lou Gabranski said they should get 3 bids.
- S. Scott Murphy said it should be ADA accessible. He will get rough estimates together for the next meeting.
- T. Bruce Schmidt asked Scott Murphy and Kevin McPherson to come back to the board with an estimate of a certain amount for each project on the list - possibly in spreadsheet format. He said that spending \$50,000 for the bathrooms would be worth it. We need to find out the costs. He then asked about the dedicated plaque mentioned with the proposed flower bed project.
- U. Scott Murphy said it will be done.
- V. Bruce Schmidt said that the minutes reflected that there had been projects that has not been completed, but did not say why. He would like to know why and would like better communication.
- W. Scott Murphy said he would also like clear direction.
- X. Herb Van Guilder said the flower area project was Kevin McPherson's idea. Rather than place one plant on each grave (some people had paid for this service) they will have two large flower areas with planters. They should be in the lower level because that is where the older graves are.
- Y. Kevin McPherson suggested one big, vibrant one at the round-about by the tomb and the other at the top of the hill. They will be large.
- Z. Herb Van Guilder said the commissioners will decide the locations.
- AA. Herb Van Guilder said that he thinks that they are incurring more expenses than ever. He said that there are more bosses. He thinks that the town should hire one person to work at the cemetery for 5 to 6 months and then work in the town for the rest of the year.
- BB. Scott Murphy said there is only one person who is directing the workers and that is Kevin McPherson. He said that Doug Sheehan is not in the management chain.

- CC. Herb Van Guilder said there were a lot of jobs that had not been done, such as clearing the brush and cleaning the banks. He said they put grass seed on the bank where the flag poles are.
- DD. Scott Murphy said it would be helpful to have board consensus on what jobs are to be done and not just one person.
- EE. Lou Gabranski said that whoever works on the projects needs to have the priority list. He said his priority is the upper bathroom.
- FF. Scott Murphy said he will put the lists together for the next meeting.

8. Review & Possibly Approve Policy Changes to “Cemetery Rules & Procedures”

- A. Herb Van Guilder said the current policy manual is outdated. The commissioners have been working on updating it for 3 years. He said that he put together the drafts from Frank Heald and Marty Nitka and would like to work on this at the next meeting.
- B. Lou Gabranski suggested not putting prices of services in the manual.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said that the verbiage “Inside and Outside Managers” has been changed. Doug Sheehan is the Sexton. He said that the Municipal Manager is the agent.
- D. Bruce Schmidt said the town manager will have the two documents typed, with the changes, for the next meeting. He suggested that the town manager have it available on the screen so that the board can look at both versions.
- E. Bob Brandt said that he had spoken to Marty Nitka and Marty Nitka told him that he had out in what had been discussed at meetings.
- F. Scott Murphy said he will have it put together for the next meeting.
- G. Lou Gabranski said that he thinks that Frank Heald misunderstood what should be the opening date. The staff should start the 3rd week in May to have it cleaned up for Memorial Day, but the gates should be opened as soon as possible after the snows.
- H. Bob Brandt said they could re-word it, not specifying the dates.
- I. Brett Sanderson said it should be at the commissioners’ discretion.
- J. Bob Brandt said the commissioners to let the town manager when to open the cemetery.
- K. Brett Sanderson advised that Kevin McPherson gets a stipend when the cemetery is open and that affects our costs. Now, he is set to start May 1st.
- L. Scott Murphy said that next year, they could have an early April meeting and discuss opening dates at that time.

9. New Business

- A. Video Taping of Meetings
 - i. Bruce Schmidt said that he would like the town manager to talk to Okemo Valley TV about video-taping the Cemetery Commission meetings. He said it is good for people to see the meetings on TV.
 - ii. Brett Sanderson agreed, saying that some of the older people watch the meetings on TV.
 - iii. Herb Van Guilder said we could also invite them to see the projects we are working on.
 - iv. Lou Gabranski asked why the town meeting was not on TV.
 - v. Lisha Klaiber said she would let the town manager know when it will be run again.
- B. Personnel Policies Agreement
 - i. Lou Gabranski said he will not sign the agreement. He said the town is a subcontractor to the commission.
 - ii. Scott Murphy said he will touch base with the office.

10. Other Business

- A. There was none.

11. Set Date for Next Meeting

- A. Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

12. Sign Warrant Orders

- A. The warrant orders have been signed.

13. Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts/Legal Issues

- A. Scott Murphy said none is needed.

14. **Adjourn**

- A. **MOTION by Herb Van Guilder and seconded by Bruce Schmidt to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Brett Sanderson, Chairman

Bruce Schmidt

Bob Brandt

Herb Van Guilder

Lou Gabranski