

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

REGULAR RESCHEDULED MEETING

Monday, November 23, 2015

Board Members Present:

Herb VanGuilder

Lou Gabranski

Marty Nitka

Board Members Absent:

Dave Harlow

Brett Sanderson

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Meeting was called to order by Chairman Herb Van Guilder at 4:00 p.m. All present, except Brett Sanderson and Dave Harlow. Herb Van Guilder noted that Mr. Harlow has health issues and Mr. Sanderson had not called.
- B. Marty Nitka apologized that he had missed the previously scheduled meeting on November 18th.

II. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS – SPECIAL GUEST – ULLA COOK, TOWN CLERK & TREASURER

- A. Herb Van Guilder advised that he had invited Ms. Cook to this meeting to explain questions commissioners may have pertaining to the budget.
- B. Marty Nitka asked about the line item for Insurance expense where nothing had been budgeted.
- C. Ulla Cook said that was for the town employee who worked for the cemetery over the summer. She explained that no other cemetery employees have health insurance through the town.
- D. Marty Nitka noted that a new line item was budgeted for recording secretary and asked where the pay had been charged to in the past.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said labor.
- F. Marty Nitka noted the large increase in the budgeted amount for Monument Restoration.
- G. Herb Van Guilder said that it is mostly for veteran's monuments.
- H. Marty Nitka said that Dan Cavoto had said that he wants to concentrate on monuments next year. He then asked about the budgeted increase in Income from Trustees of Public Funds.
- I. Herb Van Guilder said he had spoken to Ulla Cook and they decided that they could increase the amount. They only take out accumulating interest and do not touch the principle.
- J. Ulla Cook said that the amount available is \$22,000.
- K. Marty Nitka asked if those funds were solely for the use of the cemetery.
- L. Ulla Cook said yes. It varies as the market increases or decreases.
- M. Marty Nitka asked if \$15,000 is a fair amount to budget.
- N. Ulla Cook said yes, and added that they can look at it again in May.
- O. Marty Nitka asked about the increase in labor costs for.
- P. Herb Van Guilder said that the two operations managers' costs have now been included and they cost more than the sexton in the past.
- Q. Marty Nitka indicated that the budget expenses for FY2016 were \$88,272 and the budgeted expenses for FY2017 are \$106,130, amounting to a 20% increase. He then asked about a pool of money that has been referred to in the past.
- R. Herb Van Guilder said it is the funds that the cemetery commission raised in the past through articles and where the amount of money requested in the article was not completely used for the project. He cited the Building Fund, noting the about \$25,000 of the requested funds was not used because they changed the location. He added that Equipment Fund has about \$25,600 and the Capital Reserves has about \$15,300. This year, there will be expenses for paving in there. We have not touched these funds for the last several years. They are posted in the Town Report every year and are available to the commissioners to use as they see fit.
- S. Marty Nitka suggested that they should be used for the purposes established. They do accumulate interest.
- T. Lou Gabranski asked about truck repairs.
- U. Herb Van Guilder said that would come out of the budget.
- V. Marty Nitka said there is \$2000 budgeted for maintenance of the mower and asked why that could not come out of the Equipment Fund.

- W. Herb Van Guilder said those funds were not set up for daily maintenance and were allocated at town meeting.

III. APPROVE MINUTES

- A. Herb Van Guilder advised that the minutes to be approved were from the August 19, 2015, September 16, 2015 and October 21, 2015 meetings.
- B. It was noted that the September 16th minutes had been approved at the October meeting.
- C. **MOTION by Marty Nitka and seconded by Lou Gabranski to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2015 and October 21, 2015 meetings as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.**

IV. STAFF REPORTS

- A. Herb Van Guilder advised that the staff reports were included in the packets. He advised that staff finished up last Thursday. He said that they worked on Veterans' Day and took off Friday. He added that he has strong feelings about the men working on Veterans' Day and think we should make a policy against it for the future. He said it was also a town holiday.
- B. Lou Gabranski said the staff should have asked for approval from the commissioners before working on Veterans' Day and taking off on Friday. He said that all holidays should be approved by this board.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said that Dan Cavoto said that the town crews have done it at times.
- D. Inside Operations
- 1) Marty Nitka noted that on page 2, paragraph 3, referring to working on the computer, "...not working in maps..." should read "...now working on maps..."
 - 2) The board accepted the Inside Operations Report as corrected.
- E. Outside Operations
- 1) There were no comments on this report.
 - 2) The board accepted the Outside Operations Report as presented.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Review Proposal from Good Earth Landscape (Mr. Calabrese)
- 1) Herb Van Guilder advised that he has asked staff to get proposals for projects and there were not able to get it done. He said that the commissioners had received the proposal from Good Earth for the Master Plan. He said he met with Tim Calabrese and he is all set to work. Herb Van Guilder said that board allocated money for the work.
 - 2) Marty Nitka asked where it is in the budget.
 - 3) Herb Van Guilder said there was a motion made and approved to transfer \$3,500 from the Funds, but the chair wanted to wait for more information. He said that he met with Tim Calabrese on Thursday.
 - 4) There was general discussion regarding the amount on the proposal, Not to Exceed \$3,600 and the amount discussed with at the meeting he attended.
 - 5) **MOTION by Lou Gabranski and seconded by Marty Nitka to accept the proposal from of Good Earth as previously agreed, not to exceed \$3500. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Review Stone Wall & Monument Restoration
- 1) Herb Van Guilder advised that he and Dan Cavoto had met with Brian Post from Standing Stone. He said they have a good reputation and were recommended by Andover. He got a proposal to resent monuments and work on the stone wall along the road to the upper cemetery and the wall to the new tomb. The total is \$93,930. The biggest portion of this is \$70,000 for 310 feet of stone wall to the upper cemetery. Herb Van Guilder said he tried to get other estimates, but has not been successful. He said the quality of their work, in the brochure, shows that they are capable of good monument repair. Herb Van Guilder said he thought the board might hire him to do 3 or 4 repairs, and have Dan Cavoto there to learn how to do it. He added that it does not seem like we will be able to do all of them because of the costs.
 - 2) Lou Gabranski said that what Dan Cavoto did is good and he does not see much of a difference.
 - 3) Herb Van Guilder said he will look further into this at the seminars he attends.
 - 4) Marty Nitka said we could spend a lot of money fixing the stones up there.

- 5) Herb Van Guilder said we need to set up a program to start fixing the stones. He added that there should not be a lot of problems in the upper cemetery because there are better foundations and we need to do this as economically as possible. He added that the stones also need cleaning.
 - 6) Marty Nitka asked if the stones are not cleaned, will there be permanent damage.
 - 7) Herb Van Guilder said yes, they will get worse. We need to sit tight on this right now. He added that Brian Post said that the exit wall does not need repairs and to leave it alone.
- C. Tomb Repairs
- 1) Herb Van Guilder said there is no update on this. He added that Dan Cavoto had called people for estimates, but no one got back to him.
- D. Review Updated Policies
- 1) Herb Van Guilder advised that this be tabled for tonight.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposed Budget for FY2017
- 1) Lou Gabranski asked why cornerstones were listed under Expenses as well as Income.
 - 2) Herb Van Guilder said we buy the cornerstones and then sell them to people when they buy lots. They are not included in the lot price. He added that Dan Cavoto is looking for a new source dealer for them. He added that the foundation cost is also extra and not included in the lot price. Herb Van Guilder said that he had met with Doug Sheehan and Dan Cavoto about the budget and they requested that some items be combined and individual lines items be removed. This will make it easier for them to charge costs off to the correct line items. Herb Van Guilder said he also added line items for recording secretary, audit and improvement projects. Looking at the labor costs, he added that he does not know if we really need to work after October 31st.
 - 3) Lou Gabranski said they used to lay everyone off at the beginning of hunting season.
 - 4) Herb Van Guilder said if they are being productive, they could work. It is something the board needs to decide on at the reorganizational meeting.
 - 5) Marty Nitka said to leave the labor amount at \$54,000 as it is in the draft budget.
 - 6) Lou Gabranski said that the commissioners should get a raise.
 - 7) Marty Nitka said that would be up to the voters at town meeting. Someone would have to make the motion at the meeting.
 - 8) Herb Van Guilder asked what they should do if the board members do not attend meetings.
 - 9) Marty Nitka said that also would have to be voted on at town meeting.
 - 10) Herb Van Guilder referred to the line item for Equipment/Maintenance/Mower and said they are not buying a new mower this year. Referring to Tree work, he advised that that the maple was not removed this season. He said Flowers and Uniforms were removed and will be added to other line items. He said that Sand/Top Soil/Gravel was lowered to \$0 because we have been getting some from the town and making some of our own. He said that Legal/Engineering/Survey was lowered, but not removed because the Okemo land dispute is not fully complete, but that all of the paperwork has gone to Okemo. He added that on the Income side, the FY2017 budget was increased because other towns have also been using our vaults. He said that the board needs to get the budget to the office.
 - 11) **MOTION by Marty Nitka and seconded by Lou Gabranski to approve the FY2017 draft budget for both Income and Expenses as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Separate Articles
- 1) Herb Van Guilder suggested to the commissioners that the board consider putting separate articles to the voters to maintain a Capital Fund for Repairs and Restorations of the Ludlow Cemetery in the amount of \$25,000. This will include beginning of repairs to the 310 feet wall and tomb repairs. We need to allow the taxpayers to be aware of the work needed and the funds needed to do the work.
 - 2) Marty Nitka said that he does not like Articles and thinks this should be part of the budget. He asked Herb Van Guilder what he would like the board to do about it today. He said they could petition the voters and ask the Select Board to put it on the agenda for the warning. He said that they need to tell people that they need \$70,000 to redo the wall and they should ask the Select Board to put that on the agenda for the warning. He said that they should probably have staff do the wall,

but it wouldn't get done in 1 year. A separate article would give us the money to buy the materials and then do the work in-house. It would probably take 2 to 3 years to complete.

- 3) Marty Nitka said the commission could say we need the \$25,000 to start the project.
- 4) Herb Van Guilder said we need to put out the most honest possible budget and ask the taxpayers for the money to do the extra projects.
- 5) Marty Nitka asked if the commission would be telling the taxpayers that the project cost is \$75,000 spread over 3 years.
- 6) Herb Van Guilder said the board would explain and have an estimate for the voters. The commission's budget has only been denied by the voters once. Herb Van Guilder said he wants to get on the program. He said that he has spoken to several people to get quotes, but hasn't received any yet.

VII. **REVIEW POLICIES**

- A. Tabled

VIII. **SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

- A. Herb Van Guilder said the next regular meeting will be in the spring, but that emergency meetings may be called as needed.

IX. **ADJOURN**

- A. **MOTION by Marty Nitka and seconded by Lou Gabranski to adjourn this meeting. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisha Klaiber

Herbert VanGuilder, Chairman

Marty Nitka

Lou Gabranski

Brett Sanderson

Dave Harlow