

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, August 18, 2016

Board Members Present:

Herb Van Guilder
Lou Gabranski

Dave Harlow
Marty Nitka

Brett Sanderson

Others Present:

John Grassi

Evan Riccardo

Doug Sheehan

1. Call to Order

- A. Meeting was called to order by Chairman, Herbert Van Guilder at 4:00 p.m. All members present.

2. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

- A. Herb Van Guilder said that the minutes to be reviewed are from August 4, 2016.
B. **MOTION by Dave Harlow and seconded by Lou Gabranski to accept the minutes of August 4, 2016 as presented.**

3. Comments from Citizens

- A. There were none.

4. Cemetery Staff Reports

- A. Inside Operations Manager
i. Herb Van Guilder said that Doug Sheehan had a busy month. He added that in addition to the Inside Operations responsibilities, Mr. Sheehan has been helping out with the mowing.
ii. **Herb Van Guilder moved that, with no objections, the Inside Operations Manager's report be accepted as presented.**
- B. Chairman's Report
i. Herb Van Guilder advised that one employee had been hurt on the job and that Doug Sheehan has been helping out with the Workman's Comp paperwork, along with Pam Cruickshank.
ii. Herb Van Guilder advised that he had met with Pat Garvey and reviewed the cemetery needs with regard to mowing and trimming. No proposal has been received.
iii. Herb Van Guilder said that they had had some full burials and town employees had helped out with the excavating.
iv. Herb Van Guilder said the Cemetery Master Plan is ready from Tim Calabrese.

5. **Old Business - Review proposed Cemetery Policies – 8/2/16**

- A. Herb Van Guilder suggested that on page 2, item 4 under Burials that they strike “processions” in the winter the hill is bad and it is difficult to get cars up and down. They should limit it to immediate families and hearse.
- B. Marty Nitka noted that he had been assigned the project to put a new policies booklet together. He took the old green book and added all new policies since that booklet has been put out and reformatted and renumbered it. His last draft was November, 2015. He noted that the draft that commission members were requested to bring to discuss today, is dated August 2, 2016. It is different from his 2015 draft and things were added. He said differences included the 2 inch margin around the headstones, and repurchasing lots at the original sales price.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said that changes had been made since then. Herb Van Guilder said that, at their last meeting, the commissioners worked off the August 2, 2016 draft. He added that repurchase has always been at the original purchase price.
- D. Marty Nitka said that there are things in that draft that were not in any previous draft. He added that granite corner stones was also new. He said he is not opposed to the changes, but wanted to know how they got into the new draft. He also pointed out that the 8/2/16 draft says that green burials are allowed and he understood that they are not allowed.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said they are not allowed and said it must have been a typo.
- F. Marty Nitka said there is also a new paragraph about discouraging artificial flowers. He suggested they work off the November 2015 draft.
- G. Herb Van Guilder said they have had the 8/2/16 draft and have been working off of it already.
- H. Marty Nitka asked if everyone is in favor of repurchasing at the original sales price.
- I. Lou Gabranski said it has always been that way.
- J. Marty Nitka noted that the draft he did has numbers and letters to differentiate items. He suggested that they make the numbers in the 8/2/16 draft sequential. For Cemetery Lots, they were broken apart into 2 sections, 1-5 and 1-4.
- K. Herb Van Guilder said it would be changed to 1 – 9.
- L. Marty Nitka said, under the Burials section, they should delete #8 about green burials. He said that they are not allowed. He said that would change the numbers to 1-10. He noted that for the now #11, it says “No service of work...” He suggested that “of” should probably have been “or.”
- M. Lou Gabranski suggested that it should just read “No work...” and leave out service.
- N. Doug Sheehan agreed.
- O. Herb Van Guilder said to strike out “service.” He referred back to his original suggestion about striking “processions” from item #4 under Burials.
- P. There was general consensus from the board to strike “processions.”
- Q. Marty Nitka suggested that under the Monuments and Headstones section, item #1, they should insert “minimum” before 2”. (“All monuments shall have a minimum 2”...) He asked why they require granite corner stones.
- R. Herb Van Guilder said they always have because they are better than marble, they hold up longer.
- S. Marty Nitka noted that under Plants & Herbage, item #1, “without approval” was added.
- T. Herb Van Guilder said that requests have been made in the past and granted for nice tree or bush.
- U. Marty Nitka asked if it wouldn’t be easier to say no planting. If you let one person, you would have to allow others.
- V. Herb Van Guilder noted that also under Plants & Herbage, item #2, they should strike “sexton and their.”
- W. Marty Nitka suggested under Plants & Herbage, that they strike out item #4 about discouraging all imitation floral designs.

- X. Herb Van Guilder said it is written into other towns' policies and some cemeteries do not allow them. The wires in the pieces could end up hurting someone.
- Y. Dave Harlow said to strike it.
- Z. Lou Gabranski said to leave it.
- AA. Herb Van Guilder said that he would ask Pam Cruickshank to incorporate the changes from tonight into the draft and get copies to the commissioners before their September meeting.

6. New Business

- A. Herb Van Guilder advised that he had met with the Municipal Manager, Frank Heald and discussed having the Municipal Manager take over the operations of the cemetery. Frank Heald is interested and will work up a proposal if the commissioners want him to.
- B. Marty Nitka voiced his concern that the voters have voted for the Commission to oversee the operations of the cemetery.
- C. Brett Sanderson clarified that the commissioner would still be running the cemetery, but that Frank Heald would oversee the operations.
- D. Herb Van Guilder said that the commission can hire anyone they choose to run the operations. The commission would still be responsible for the budget and policies. We would have the Municipal Manager handle the day to day work. He asked the board if they are interested, adding that the Chair recommends that we get a proposal from the Municipal Manager.
- E. Dave Harlow confirmed that the commission would not have to accept the proposal if they don't want it.
- F. Marty Nitka said that getting the proposal would not bind the commission to accepting it.
- G. **Motion by Dave Harlow and seconded by Brett Sanderson to request a proposal from the Municipal Manager for the operations of the cemetery. Motion passed unanimously.**
- H. Lou Gabranski asked if they are still pursuing outside help.
- I. Herb Van Guilder said yes, he had spoken to Pat Garvey. He had contacted others, but Pat Garvey was the only one that got back to him. He has also spoken to Ron Tarbell about doing some work and Ron Tarbell had some good comments.
- J. Lou Gabranski asked how the town employees did with digging the graves.
- K. Herb Van Guilder said they did a good job. It took them 3 hours.
- L. Doug Sheehan noted that John Grassi had also dug one of the graves.
- M. John Grassi said it took him 5 hours.
- N. Marty Nitka said he was surprised that town employees had dug graves.
- O. Herb Van Guilder said that the staff was concerned because they are short-handed, with one employee out. He said he conferred with Doug Sheehan and they decided to ask for assistance.
- P. Marty Nitka asked if this is a one-time emergency situation.
- Q. Herb Van Guilder said it worked out so well, that he spoke with the Municipal Manager about assistance. They have since done another grave.
- R. Marty Nitka asked if we pay the town.
- S. Herb Van Guilder said the town will bill us. He added that he does have some applicants with whom he has spoken and asked the commissioners if they want to hire anyone. Currently, they have Doug Sheehan, John Grassi and the other employee who is out with the injury.
- T. Marty Nitka asked if we can tread water until we get the proposal from the Municipal Manager.
- U. John Grassi said he thinks we can, and if needed ask the town for assistance.
- V. Marty Nitka asked what the chair recommends.
- W. Herb Van Guilder said to hire one more. The town won't do the foundations.
- X. Marty Nitka said he would hate to hire someone before we get the proposal from the Municipal Manager.

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- Y. Herb Van Guilder said the applicants are only looking for part-time, seasonal work.
 - Z. Brett Sanderson suggested that before hiring anyone, they should wait for the proposal from the Municipal Manager.
 - AA. Lou Gabranski asked how it would work.
 - BB. Herb Van Guilder said that the Municipal Manager would report to the commissioners. We will tell him what work we want done and he will appoint his staff to do the work. He added that there are some violations at the cemetery and the Municipal Manager has the staff.
 - CC. Marty Nitka asked what violations.
 - DD. Herb Van Guilder noted that an employee who does not have a driver's license has been driving vehicles.
 - EE. Brett Sanderson said they have to be a licensed driver to drive a registered vehicle.
 - FF. Marty Nitka said this board needs to know what is going on. He said the employee can't drive the registered vehicles.
 - GG. Herb Van Guilder said he has been trying to work something out with the employee.
 - HH. Marty Nitka said if our insurance won't cover it if something happens, then the employee can't drive.
 - II. John Grassi said it was not an issue before he wrote the letter.
 - JJ. Brett Sanderson said the town would be liable if there were a vehicular accident and the driver was not licensed.
 - KK. Marty Nitka asked what the status of the employee's license is.
 - LL. John Grassi said 10 weeks.
 - MM. Lou Gabranski asked about the tractor.
 - NN. Brett Sanderson said it is not registered, so the employee can still mow.
 - OO. Doug Sheehan said the truck and bucket loader are registered.
 - PP. Herb Van Guilder said they need to hire someone with a license. He continued, saying that the water standpipe is above ground and there was always a cone covering it. The cone disappeared. This is what caused the employee's injury. It needs to be fixed. He said that he had asked John Grassi on three occasions to dig it up, cut it off, and cover it back up. Herb Van Guilder said that he put another cone over the pipe, but this needs to be resolved. The cemetery has been written up for this safety offense. He said that he thought it is the cemetery's job to fix a pipe on its property, and the Water Department takes care of pipes at the street.
 - QQ. Brett Sanderson explained that it was an in-house safety inspection.
 - RR. Herb Van Guilder said they (the in-house committee) put the original cone on the pipe.
 - SS. Marty Nitka agreed that this needs to get done.
 - TT. Dave Harlow suggested hiring a plumber.
 - UU. Herb Van Guilder said he has told the employee that if the employee digs around it, Herb Van Guilder will cut the pipe.
 - VV. Marty Nitka said to tell the employee to get it done.
 - WW. Dave Harlow agreed.
 - XX. Herb Van Guilder said they would get it done.

7. Other Business

- A. Posts
 - i. Lou Gabranski said he does not like the posts that were added.
 - ii. Herb Van Guilder said this is the third correction since they were originally put it.
- B. Digging Deep
 - i. Herb Van Guilder showed the board a copy of DIGGING DEEP, published by the Vermont Secretary of State. It is a guide to Vermont cemetery and burial laws. He said they can get copies online.

8. **Set Date for Next Meeting**

- A. Herb Van Guilder advised that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.
- B. Marty Nitka suggested that if Frank Heald gets the proposal to Herb Van Guilder sooner, they may want to have an emergency meeting before September 15th.

9. **Sign Warrant Orders**

- A. Herb Van Guilder reminded commissioners to sign the warrants and minutes.

10. **Adjourn**

- A. **Motion by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Dave Harlow to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Herbert VanGuilder, Chairman

Marty Nitka

Lou Gabranski

Brett Sanderson

Dave Harlow