

**TOWN OF LUDLOW  
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**Thursday, November 17, 2016**

**Board Members Present:**

Herb Van Guilder	Lou Gabranski
Marty Nitka	Brett Sanderson

**Board Members Absent:**

Dave Harlow

**Staff Present:**

Frank Heald

**1. Call to Order**

- A. Meeting was called to order by Chairman, Herbert Van Guilder at 4:00 p.m. All members present, except Dave Harlow. Herb Van Guilder advised that Mr. Harlow had called to advise them of his absence.

**NOTE: Herb Van Guilder suggested that the board address Item #4 of the agenda before other agenda items. The board agreed. Minutes are in order of agenda item numbers.**

**2. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- A. Herb Van Guilder said that the minutes to be reviewed are from August 18, 2016, August 31, 2016, September 15, 2016, September 27, 2016 and October 20, 2016.
- B. **Motion by Marty Nitka and seconded by Brett Sanderson to approve the minutes of August 18, 2016 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**
- C. **Motion by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Lou Gabranski to approve the minutes of August 31, 2016 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**
- D. **Motion by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Lou Gabranski to approve the minutes of September 15, 2016 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**
- E. **Motion by Marty Nitka and seconded by Lou Gabranski to approve the minutes of September 31, 2016 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**
- F. **Motion by Lou Gabranski and seconded by Brett Sanderson to approve the minutes of October 20, 2016 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Comments from Citizens**

- A. There were none.

#### 4. **Manager's Report**

- A. Frank Heald advised that the cemetery is about to close. There were 2 burials on Thursday and will be one on November 26<sup>th</sup>. The crew will clean up after that. They have already excavated for the cremation on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The water will be drained on November 18<sup>th</sup> and they will haul dirt until the snow comes. Within the next few days, they will load dirt at the top of Thompson Avenue with the backhoe and then hay. He showed the board a copy of the draft for the new sign, advising them that it will be done in the spring. The work will be done by Awesome Graphics in Rutland.
- B. Frank Heald said that he and Herb Van Guilder had looked over the budget and thought about things from this fall out a couple of years. He said that to repair the fence where the tree fell on it (in the back 40) will cost about \$150. It is a non-insurance item. The work will be done this week by Springfield Fence.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said they usually get estimates from Williams Fence in Londonderry. He would like to move the fence where the Okemo swap area is.
- D. Frank Heald said he will get them in for a price. He advised the Steve Mongeon gave them a large price for the survey. Frank Heald said that they can take the plot that Michael Engineering did and incorporate the work that Steve Mongeon and Bruno Engineering (from Okemo) for a few hundred dollars. He would also like to pin the line on the right side of the main entrance to the cemetery where there is some discussion with the abutting owner about where the line is. That will probably take about ½ hour. He said that he had also spent some time on the budget.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said he would like to review the present budget to see where we are.
- F. Frank Heald said there is about \$74,000 left as of the Accounts Payable run today. That is the total of all line items.
- G. Herb Van Guilder asked about labor.
- H. Frank Heald said there is about \$31,554 left in the labor budget and \$4,000 left on the Commissioners line item.

#### 5. **New Business**

- A. Herb Van Guilder said that maintenance of leaves has been very inefficient and we need to buy a vac that sucks in leaves. Now they are blowing the leaves, pushing toward the trailer.
- B. Frank Heald said they are also mulching them. He said they are proposing in the Town Capital budget a blower attachment that goes on the back of a truck or tractor and it could be used in the cemetery, but they would have to be careful of the pots, plants and flags.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said that he went through the project review list with Frank Heald and they are doing an outstanding job. He is a little disappointed that they have not mowed by the fence or bank.
- D. Rules and Regulations
  - i. Frank Heald said this is not on the agenda, but he compiled the Rules and Regulations. He would like the board to mark it up and get the comments back to Pam Cruickshank.
  - ii. Herb Van Guilder said there are a bunch of items that are missing.
  - iii. Marty Nitka said he had done a complete one with all of the mark ups.
  - iv. Herb Van Guilder asked board members to review these at home and come back to the next meeting with comments.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said that board members should call if they are unable to attend a meeting.

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**6. Old Business**

- A. Complete Land Survey
  - i. Herb Van Guilder said this had been discussed.
- B. Complete Master Plan
  - i. Herb Van Guilder said this has been hanging around for a long time. He said that Tim Calabrese is anxious to come to a meeting to discuss it. We need to complete the survey first and Frank Heald is working on that. He suggested that they schedule a meeting just for the Master Plan and the Rule and Regulations.
- C. Creaser Lot
  - i. Lou Gabranski advised that the Creaser's want to purchase the 2 lots between theirs.
  - ii. Herb Van Guilder said they are by the maintenance area and no other lots are sold back there. They are kept open to maintain the banks. He said that Doug Sheehan does not think they should be sold and neither do I. The board should do a site review.
  - iii. Marty Nitka asked if they are laid out lots or if it says they should not be sold.
  - iv. Lou Gabranski said that Doug Sheehan says it is okay to sell them.
  - v. Herb Van Guilder said Doug Sheehan told him no. He said that Jamie sold one of those lots to his family many years ago.
  - vi. Frank Heald said that he thinks that Creaser wants to buy the lots so no one else goes there. They will be a buffer.
  - vii. Lou Gabranski said that now Creaser wants to use them as burial lots.
  - viii. Marty Nitka said they should put this on the agenda for the next meeting.
  - ix. Herb Van Guilder said they should do a site review.
  - x. MOTION by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Marty Nitka to review the Creaser lots and put this on the agenda for next month's meeting. Motion passed unanimously. Lou Gabranski abstained.

**7. FY 2018 Budget Workshop**

- A. Frank Heald stressed that this is only the first draft. Items to be discussed are highlighted in yellow.
- B. Labor
  - i. Frank Heald said that the labor budget will be about \$43,000.
- C. Commissioners
  - i. Frank Heald said that would stay the same, \$4,000.
- D. Insurance
  - i. Frank Heald said that he had put in \$6,500, but that the actual numbers from VLCT are not in yet.
- E. Gas/Oil
  - i. Frank Heald said that he estimates that will be \$1,000 less than this year.
- F. Equipment/Mowers
  - i. Frank Heald said that would remain the same as last year.
  - ii. Herb Van Guilder asked if Frank Heald has a list of what equipment we have.
  - iii. Frank Heald said that Herb Van Guilder had told him that there is a list, but he has not seen it.
  - iv. Herb Van Guilder said that needs to be done.
- G. Uniforms
  - i. Herb Van Guilder noted that they had purchased boots.

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- ii. Frank Heald said that is for OSHA compliance. He did note that there was no number in the 2017 budget, and that he had put the \$300 from previous years back in.
  - H. Tree Work/ Stump Removal/Brush
    - i. Frank Heald said he put money in (\$2,000) and they would try to spend that amount. There is no great urgency and they will move a little each year.
    - ii. Herb Van Guilder said there is the big maple that should come down and they had gotten a price of about \$3,000 to do it.
    - iii. Frank Heald said that there wasn't any money spent on tree removal this year, so it appears that they haven't spent anything. They will have the \$2500 left over, so they can spend \$4,500. They will do it in the spring.
  - I. Flowers
    - i. Frank Heald noted that Doug Sheehan had told him that there are flowers on certain graves. He put in \$500 for that.
  - J. Training/Conference/Mileage
    - i. Frank Heald said that over the winter, he would like to purchase Cemetery Management Software and train Doug Sheehan on that software.
  - K. Cornerstones
    - i. Frank Heald said that Doug Sheehan had told him that people pay for the cornerstones.
    - ii. Herb Van Guilder said it is an in and out item.
    - iii. Brett Sanderson said that they should both be line items
    - iv. Herb Van Guilder said we prefer granite.
    - v. Lou Gabranski asked why.
    - vi. Brett Sanderson said it is harder than marble.
    - vii. Frank Heald said they will note income and expenses for cornerstones.
  - L. Sand/Topsoil/Gravel
    - i. Frank Heald said it was left the same.
  - M. Legal/Engineering/Survey
    - i. Frank Heald said the survey should be completed in this year's budget.
  - N. Supplies/Repairs/Audit
    - i. Frank Heald said Audit should be a separate line item.
    - ii. Herb Van Guilder suggested they purchase the computer software under this line item.
    - iii. Frank Heald said okay.
  - O. South Hill Cemetery
    - i. Herb Van Guilder said they usually have the kids from school come up to help clean up the cemetery and then make a donation to the class.
    - ii. Frank Heald said he spoke to the teacher and we will make a small donation and have pizza for them. The teacher agreed to this.
  - P. Truck Maintenance
    - i. Frank Heald said he left it the same.
  - Q. Improvement Projects
    - i. Frank Heald noted that he had left this item blank for board input. They do need to do the left bank.
    - ii. Herb Van Guilder said that some of the graves need soil.
    - iii. Marty Nitka said they are trucking in dirt from South Face.
    - iv. Frank Heald said he would put \$3,000 in.
  - R. Retreatment
    - i. Brett Sanderson said that includes paving.
    - ii. Frank Heald said there is not much pavement that needs to be done; he put in \$500 for crack seals.
  - S. Water Line Replacement.

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- i. Frank Heald said he put in \$500 for this.
    - ii. Lou Gabranski asked who does that.
    - iii. Frank Heald said that our guys do it to the curb stop and then John and Kevin will drain the system.
  - T. Land Site Work and Fencing
    - i. Frank Heald said they had overspent this year. And he put \$3,000 in to finish the work next year.
  - U. Monument Restoration Projects
    - i. Frank Heald noted that no money had been spent this year. He said that currently, they are going through and looking at each of the tippers and will fix what can be fixed. He asked Bowker to come in and give us a price for the big ones. He put \$4500 in for this.
    - ii. Herb Van Guilder asked if the municipal crew could do this.
    - iii. Frank Heald said that they will do the ones that they can do safely and those costs will be in the labor line. We will get prices from the professionals to do the rest.
    - iv. Herb Van Guilder said he thinks we can do about 100 of them.
    - v. Frank Heald said we put in \$4,500 for outside help. The internal labor costs will be on the labor line and we may have to increase the \$43,000 number.
    - vi. Lou Gabranski said some don't have foundations.
    - vii. Frank Heald said they are doing the analysis now.
    - viii. Brett Sanderson said they may not be able to do them all in one year.
    - ix. Herb Van Guilder said there are differences of opinions on how to do foundations, sure pack or cement.
    - x. Brett Sanderson said everyone does it differently.
    - xi. Herb Van Guilder said there is also a right way to clean monuments, soap, water and a soft brush.
  - V. Revenue - Vault
    - i. Frank Heald said you never know how many you will get
    - ii. Herb Van Guilder said that Doug Sheehan did a great job of selling vault space to other towns.
  - W. Revenue - Lots
    - i. Frank Heald said that as of November 18<sup>th</sup>, they had sold \$1,359.50 in lots this fiscal year. He would like to increase the number to \$1,500.
  - X. Foundations.
    - i. Frank Heald said he left the number the same.
    - ii. Herb Van Guilder said he would like to see us get more professional in the way we are doing foundations. One that was done in the cold weather may not hold up. We have had problems with 2 or 3 of them.
  - Y. Trustees of Public Funds
    - i. Frank Heald said they have to be flexible with this one. He plugged in \$12,500. He explained that anyone who buys a lot donates to the Trustees of Public Funds and that money is used to maintain the cemeteries. There is room to take more money from the endowment.
    - ii. Marty Nitka said that \$12,500 is less than what is earned.
    - iii. Herb Van Guilder said that money fluctuates with the markets and some years we may lose. In the best year, we made \$15,000. He said that Ulla Cook gives us an idea of how much we can take.
    - iv. Frank Heald said the financials are on the website.
    - v. Herb Van Guilder said we tried to stay at about \$10,000.
    - vi. Frank Heald said that based on this year's numbers, he thinks \$12,500 is okay.

- Z. Frank Heald said that the amount to be raised in taxes is down about \$18,209 and he would make the changes on the budget that they discussed today.
- AA. Marty Nitka said they could finalize and vote on the budget at their next meeting.
- BB. Frank Heald said he would try to do that in December.

**8. Discuss Consolidation of Fund Balances into a Single Cemetery Fund – FY 2016 Consolidation Balance \$59,422.**

- A. Frank Heald said that the draft article on the agenda is to consolidate the 3 accounts into one account and then to develop a Capital Spending Plan to phase in capital expenditures each year to maintain a fund balance and to level fund purchases over the next 10 to 15 years. Currently, they have \$62,035 in the 3 accounts. He said that over the past 10 to 15 years, they have put articles out at town meeting to put money in the funds that was not used. They would use this new fund to purchase capital items.
- B. Equipment Purchases
  - i. Frank Heald said he would like the board to consider equipment purchases. The Xmark 0-Turn is not used and they rotate the small John Deere. He would like to take the Xmark and the John Deere and turn them in for a properly sized 0-Turn and teach someone how to use it more efficiently. The new unit would cost about \$9,000 and he expects to be able to get trade-ins for the other 2 of about \$3,000. The capital cost would be about \$6,000.
  - ii. Herb Van Guilder said he is in favor of that.
  - iii. Frank Heald said he also would like to get rid of the backhoe. It is in good shape and has not been used much. He would like to get a Kubota with a smaller footprint and bucket and a small backhoe that would go down 8 feet. He said the equipment would cost about \$35,000, but he expects to be able to get about \$20,000 for the trade-in, leaving a cost of about \$15,000.
  - iv. Herb Van Guilder asked if we could share the equipment with other departments.
  - v. Lou Gabranski said we should not share the backhoe.
  - vi. Brett Sanderson said we should not buy and share. If they need the equipment, we can bill it out to the other department.
  - vii. Herb Van Guilder said it is crazy to have equipment that is not used.
  - viii. Frank Heald said there may be times when other departments use it and we will charge the use back to them. We have one that we share with the school and it is really not good to do.
- C. Flag Pole Scheme
  - i. Frank Heald said the flag pole scheme is not good and he would like the board to get two more flag poles and have the American flag in the middle.
  - ii. General consensus.
- D. Upper Right Side of the Road
  - i. Frank Heald said he has 2 options.
    - a) Rip-rap with 2 to 3 feet black flat stone for about \$13,500
    - b) Put loam on the bank and clean stone. Use matting and pin it in place and have green grass. The down side of this is maintenance. It would not be easy because it is a steep slope and would have to be done with an air-mower or hand trimmed. The cost for this would be about \$8,500 to \$9,000.
    - c) Herb Van Guilder said he would prefer the rip-rap because it would have a nicer appearance. They could put wild flowers among the rip-rap.
    - d) Lou Gabranski asked about the wall.
    - e) Frank Heald said it would be maintained as it is.

- f) Lou Gabranski said that a 5 to 6 foot wall would even it out.
  - g) Frank Heald said you do not have enough money to pay for that,
  - h) Herb Van Guilder said it would be about \$40,000 to \$85,000 to fix.
  - i) Marty Nitka asked if it would be untreated stone,
  - j) Frank Heald said gray and carefully placed.
  - k) Brett Sanderson said they have white stone at the entrance to South Face.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said we need to fine tune the Capital budget
- F. Frank Heald said he would have a Capital run done for them. He said he would get an estimate from Townline. The jobs would go out to bid in the spring. There would be a published bid opening and committee to review the bid and make recommendations. He hopes to get approval by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

## 9. Draft Article

- A. "Shall the Voters of the Town of Ludlow Authorize the Cemetery Commissioners to Consolidate the Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund; the Cemetery Equipment Fund; the Cemetery Building Fund into a Single Cemetery Fund to be used for Capital Items. Capital Acquisitions or Purchases will be included in Future Cemetery Budgets and Presented for Approval at Future Annual Meetings."
- B. Frank Heald said this is a first draft.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said that he does not like the last section of the draft article. He said that they do not have to get voter approval, because people have already approved the money.
- D. Frank Heald said we (the town) put money away every year and we show the taxpayers what we are going to purchase and how much to fund. We then take the money or bond or borrow to spread the debt out over capital notes. The debt service for the town is almost flat. We plan spending and payments. We take some money out of the fund and spread the rest over time with notes, like you did with the cemetery building. There are fund balance sheets in the financials.
- E. Marty Nitka said the voters would still approve this at town meeting.
- F. Herb Van Guilder said the money is approved on an annual basis for the town. We should just draw the money already approved. The fund has been there for years.
- G. Frank Heald said they need to be more transparent. We believe that to spend the money, the voters should approve the purchase.
- H. Marty Nitka said that is the way the town does it.
- I. Herb Van Guilder said that is not the way we do it. The people have already approved the money for items and we have money left over. We should put the money into one account and just draw the money approved to spend on the cemetery.
- J. Frank Heald said we need transparency. We haven't had problems with the town budget and people know what we are doing.
- K. Marty Nitka said we need to vote on the wording. We have \$62,000 and we should combine the accounts into one account. We should show that we are buying a tractor for \$15,000 and it should be shown on the budget.
- L. Herb Van Guilder said we have already drawn from the funds for work done for years. We still have to pay for the Master Plan.
- M. Frank Heald said you don't have a line item for a Master Plan.
- N. Herb Van Guilder said the money comes from the funds.
- O. Frank Heald said you should not access the funds without a line item.
- P. Marty Nitka said you object to the last sentence. Don't you think the voters would feel better if they know where the money is being spent?

- Q. Herb Van Guilder said they already approved the money.
- R. Frank Heald said he would get an opinion from VLCT. He said he would like ultimate transparency.

10. **Set Date for Next Meeting**

- A. Herb Van Guilder advised that special meetings will called by the Chairman.

11. **Sign Warrant Orders**

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

12. **Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts/Legal**

- A. An Executive session was not needed

13. **Adjourn**

- A. **Motion by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Marty Nitka to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisha Klaiber

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Herbert VanGuilder, Chairman

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Marty Nitka

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Lou Gabranski

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Brett Sanderson

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Dave Harlow