

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
HOWARD BARTON, JR. CONFERENCE ROOM**

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Board Members Present:

Bob Brandt
Lou Gabranski

Bruce Schmidt
Shannon Stark

Herb Van Guilder

Staff Present:

Brendan McNamara

Doug Sheehan

1. Call to Order

A. Bob Brandt called the meeting at 5:04.

2. Consideration of Changes, Additions or Removal to the Agenda

A. Brendan McNamara said that no changes are necessary.

3. Comments from Citizens

A. There were none.

4. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A. Bob Brandt said that the minutes to be reviewed are from August 16, 2023.

B. It was noted that in Item 9Biii of the minutes referred to employees stealing tools. It was clarified that this was done in the past by former employees.

C. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Herb Van Guilder to accept the minutes from August 16, 2023 as clarified. Motion passed unanimously.**

5. Sexton's Report

A. Consensus to accept the Sexton's Report for August as submitted

6. Buildings & Grounds Report

A. Consensus to accept the Buildings and Grounds Report for August as submitted.

7. FEMA Update/Flood Recovery

A. Brendan McNamara said that he took pictures of the spillway that they have been working on. The culvert, from the spillway down has been cleaned, vacuumed and jetted by A1 to High Street. They will be back tomorrow to pour a concrete base and put in a grate to keep the fill out. They

- have done a good job and the grate will help. He said when it rained on Monday, the culvert refilled. The work that has been done is an Emergency Work and temporary and part of a bigger scope for a FEMA project for next year. We need to see what is better for the town and also how much work we can do on our own.
- B. Bob Brandt said they did a great job.
 - C. Herb Van Guilder asked where the property line by Gill is.
 - D. Brendan McNamara showed the property line on the photos. He said it is about 2 to 3 feet away and marked by a pink stake.
 - E. Shannon Stark asked if the dam is on cemetery property and if it is inspected.
 - F. Brendan McNamara said no to it being on cemetery property.
 - G. Herb Van Guilder said all dams are inspected.
 - H. Brendan McNamara said that the Okemo snowmaking pond has been the subject of recent conversations. He said that the flood recovery went well and it is only a temporary fix on the spillway and will be more permanent as we go forward.
 - I. Louie Gabranski asked the diameter of the pipe to the road.
 - J. Brendan McNamara said he thinks about 12 or 15 inches.
 - K. Doug Sheehan said 12 inches.
 - L. Louie Gabranski said we may need a bigger pipe because it floods.
 - M. Bob Brandt said it flooded because the pipe was all filled up.
 - N. Louie Gabranski asked how deep it goes.
 - O. Brendan McNamara said it is close to the surface coming out of the sluiceway at 45° and there may be a better solution but we don't have to deal with it now. They will probably do a hydraulic study. He said that for that project, FEMA would reimburse at 75% and also for the permanent fix at 75%.

8. Directory Update

- A. Brendan McNamara showed a picture of the current sign: it includes rules. Once the board gives input, he will get a proof from QuickPrint. He suggested that we include a QR code and any changes we want.
- B. Bruce Schmidt suggested making the rule about PETS be first.
- C. Louie Gabranski suggested that the remove reference to opening month and just leave as weather permitting.
- D. Herb Van Guilder asked why no plantings.
- E. Doug Sheehan said it is in the cemetery regulations.
- F. Bruce Schmidt said they are not allowed in any other cemetery.
- G. Brendan McNamara said they could end up with invasive species.
- H. Doug Sheehan said they get in the way of weeding and mowing.
- I. Brendan McNamara said it may be in the state statutes. He said people may put in potted plants.
- J. Doug Sheehan said that some cemeteries don't allow that either.
- K. Brendan McNamara said they will also add the town website information to the sign. He will have a proof for the next meeting.
- L. Louie Gabranski said asked about pots fixed in to monuments.
- M. Doug Sheehan said they are not in the way.

9. New Business

- A. Financial Reports

- i. Herb Van Guilder said that he wants an overall report. He said that he has estimated that there is about \$3/4 million dollars' worth of work that needs to be done in the cemetery. The \$90,000 we have won't go far. Commissioners used to have keys to the buildings.
 - ii. Brendan McNamara said that the amount we have is about \$40,000 and we were \$50,000 over budget last year. He said there is \$34,020 in the fund and \$8,000 in Capital.
 - iii. Herb Van Guilder said that the board should be aware of the amount of work that needs to be done and he is very concerned.
 - iv. Bruce Schmidt said that the board needs to have an understanding of the finances. Did the Operations Budget go over or did Capital expenses go over. He would like that information for the next meeting. Also, is the \$3/4 million dollars' worth of work flood related or ongoing issues. It may not impact the operations of the cemetery. He would like a full financial report for the October meeting. Last year, \$49,000 – he thinks operations went over and we pulled the money from the fund balance. He said Accounting 101 would allow you to take money from Capital if there was a deficit. Maybe we should get monthly reports. The budget was \$116,000 and we went over by \$49,000 – something is not right. We have expenses for cleaning monuments, labor and supplies and equipment. The \$49,000 is almost 50% of the entire budget.
 - v. Shannon Stark asked if the overage was part of the law suit.
 - vi. Brendan McNamara said he doesn't think so because most of that was after the fiscal year.
 - vii. Herb Van Guilder said he blames this on the commissioners not the town manager.
 - viii. Bruce Schmidt said it is his job, not the commissioners. We encourage the Town manager to manage the cemetery. He added that he is not in favor of commissioners having keys to the buildings or determining what is paid out. He asked if, by statute, can the town help out financially. He said at one time, the town did take money from the cemetery, which was later replaced.
 - ix. Brendan McNamara said he is not sure. He said that he will have a detailed financial report from the last fiscal year for the October meeting/
 - x. Bruce Schmidt said he encourages the town manager to provide a monthly financial report. There needs to be more communication and the board chair needs to know the financial status.
 - xi. Brendan McNamara said he can provide reports monthly or semi-monthly.
 - xii. Shannon Stark suggested to possibly have a meeting halfway through the winter.
 - xiii. Bruce Schmidt said that doesn't make sense as there are very few expenses in the winter. But maybe we should start meeting in March instead of April or May.
- B. Fencing**
- i. Brendan McNamara showed a photo of the fence that needs sections replaced. He said that the upper section – about 132 feet of chain link would cost about \$4,600 and the lower section – about 95 feet would cost about \$3,325. He said he recommends getting a cost for encompassing all.
 - ii. Bob Brandt said they should hold off.
 - iii. Brendan McNamara said this is not on the agenda as an action item. He said consider if we can do it in 2 sections, not 3.
 - iv. Bruce Schmidt said he want to understand the financial situation first. He asked Brendan McNamara to talk to Ulla Cook, saying that the board should not get information like this one day ahead of a meeting.
 - v. Brendan McNamara said it was not her fault, but his.
 - vi. Herb Van Guilder said that the early cemetery commissioners bought extra land for future growth. There is cemetery property beyond the fence and he does not think they need the fence there. He does not think we should spend the money. He said that the cemetery owns property that borders the Okemo Pond. We should clear the brush off the land like we used to have staff do.

10. Other Business

- A. None

11. **Set Date for Next Meeting**

- A. Next regular meeting - Wednesday, October 18, 2023 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. Brendan McNamara said an Executive Session is not needed. He passed out copies of the update on the Legal situation/ROW.

14. **Adjourn**

- A. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Herb Van Guilder to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisha Klaiber

Bob Brandt, Chairman

Bruce Schmidt

Louie Gabranski

Herb Van Guilder

Shannon Stark