

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING
HEALD AUDITORIUM**

**Wednesday, June 6, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

Board Members Present:

Brett Sanderson	Lou Gabranski	Herb Van Guilder
Bob Brandt	Bruce Schmidt	

Others Present:

Doug Sheehan	Eric Chattergee – Okemo Valley TV
Paul Gendron	

1. Call to Order

A. Brett Sanderson called the meeting at 5:02.

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

A. Scott Murphy said they will skip #8 and add Item B - Pricing Clarification to the Sexton's Report

3. Comments from Citizens

A. There were none.

4. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A. Brett Sanderson said that the minutes to be reviewed are from May 19, 2021.

B. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Bob Brandt to accept the minutes from May 19, 2021 as presented.**

5. Sexton's Report

A. Gendron's Request for Granite Porch

- i. Scott Murphy said that Paul Gendron is here to answer questions. He said that a hand-written design was included in their packets.
- ii. Herb Van Guilder said that according to our new Rules and Regulations, we can't accept this. He read Item 2C from the regulations: "No lots shall be used for any other purpose than for the burial of the human dead." He said we can't allow this request.
- iii. Bruce Schmidt asked Herb Van Guilder what he thinks this would be used for.

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- iv. Herb Van Guilder said he is just following the rules and regulations. This is a public cemetery and not a playground. It is to be respected for all people
 - v. Bruce Schmidt asked Herb Van Guilder what makes him think this would be used other than as a memorial.
 - vi. Herb Van Guilder said putting a granite slab on the lot. The rules and regulations (item 1E) say: There will be only one (1) burial and one (1) cremation on top of the full burial, or two (2) cremations per lot site.” He said there should not be any other purpose.
 - vii. Paul Gendron said there is a misconception. He will be using granite tiles. The area will be 11’ x 14’ with a bench that is already there. We have already agreed that there will not be any burials in front of the mausoleum which is one-half of the lots. This is to memorialize the family and will not be disrespectful. We bought the lots, and the rules changed after we bought the lots. We should have done all of this before the rules changed. It will not be disgusting looking, a nice bench with a granite patio for family use.
 - viii. Herb Van Guilder said he has heard lots of comments since Memorial Day weekend and people are not happy about the situation up there. He asked if the places in the mausoleum are for family use or is he selling them.
 - ix. Paul Gendron said for family use.
 - x. Bruce Schmidt asked if there are any other benches up there.
 - xi. Doug Sheehan said there are and Herb Van Guilder has 2
 - xii. Bruce Schmidt asked about patios.
 - xiii. Doug Sheehan said no.
 - xiv. Bruce Schmidt asked about the space in front of the mausoleum.
 - xv. Doug Sheehan said we told Mr. Gendron that they would not be able to bury in front.
 - xvi. Bruce Schmidt asked Doug Sheehan if this would be an extension of the bench.
 - xvii. Doug Sheehan said yes. He said that many other cemeteries with mausoleums have cement patios with benches.
 - xviii. Herb Van Guilder the Hope Cemetery has different rules and worked them out with the people who bought lots.
 - xix. Doug Sheehan said that Hope Cemetery told him that if it fits, they can put it on the lots.
 - xx. Herb Van Guilder said he’s been to Hope Cemetery, VA cemeteries and 40 cemeteries and talked to people about this and he is not finding any place where these are allowed.
 - xxi. Doug Sheehan said you wouldn’t find it in a VA cemetery anyway, they limit even the headstones.
 - xxii. Bruce Schmidt asked what may have been the reason for specifying “human dead.”
 - xxiii. Doug Sheehan said it’s always been in the deeds.
 - xxiv. Bruce Schmidt said we can’t plant trees or put up small buildings.
 - xxv. Herb Van Guilder said that is an old rule. Several years ago, a man buried his dog there and that’s why it says “human dead.”
 - xxvi. Bruce Schmidt asked if someone wanted to bury their dog with them in their casket, is that allowed.
 - xxvii. Herb Van Guilder said yes. He said it used to be that there were more full burials, now more cremations. He said sometimes the urns of spouses are buried together. If you have a pet, there’s no real way we can observe if the pet is buried with you. He added that his wife wants the dog with her and he respects that.
 - xxviii. Bruce Schmidt asked Herb Van Guilder what he doesn’t like about this.
 - xxix. Herb Van Guilder said it’s the way he reads the regulations.
 - xxx. Bruce Schmidt said that he could read that “human dead” was put in about the burial of a dog.

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- xxxi. Herb Van Guilder said this is a public cemetery, if they want to do odd or different things, they should go to a private cemetery. He said that as a commissioner, he has to represent all of the people. He is not prejudiced against him.
- xxxii. Bruce Schmidt said this is an extension of what is already there - a mausoleum with a slab to define the family plot with a bench. He said it would be different if they wanted to put a 5' wall around it. He said that he read this as a definition of the family plot. They are not burying anything there. I think it is completing the lot. He thinks that the "human dead" was put in because of dogs.
- xxxiii. Herb Van Guilder said that two rules are not being followed, Item 2C - referring to the "human dead" and 1E referring to one burial and one cremation or 2 cremations. It doesn't allow anything else. Each lot is 5' x 10'.
- xxxiv. Louie Gabranski said he understands they will be putting in another mausoleum unit.
- xxxv. Paul Gendron said the other unit is scheduled for delivery on 8/15 on the existing slab.
- xxxvi. Louie Gabranski asked if it is on the other side and if it is the same as the one on the left side
- xxxvii. Paul Gendron said yes.
- xxxviii. Louie Gabranski noted this is a concrete slab with 1 ½" granite tiles.
- xxxix. Doug Sheehan said they have 16 lots: 8 for the mausoleum and 8 empty.
- xl. Bruce Schmidt said he doesn't see any reason not to approve this request. While he respects Herb Van Guilder, he does not think this has anything to do with this.
- xli. Louie Gabranski said are you saying we are changing the rules?"
- xlii. Bruce Schmidt said he doesn't read the rules that way, they are not putting anything in the ground, and they are just finishing off. There are already benches up at the cemetery. We are following the regulations.
- xliii. Herb Van Guilder said all of the benches are on the grass. This is not permitted and he is against it.
- xliv. Louie Gabranski said he can see putting the bench there, not the marble, like a dance floor. He doesn't object to benches.
- xlv. Bruce Schmidt said it makes more sense to put it on granite, it will be more stable.
- xlvi. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Bob Brandt to approve the proposal put forth to the Cemetery Commission as proposed.**
- xlvii. Bruce Schmidt said he has a lot of respect for the knowledge that Herb Van Guilder and Louie Gabranski have and he likes to hear their opinions. He thinks this will make the cemetery look good. He likes to have the board all agree, but this is contentious. We have to make sure as Commissioners, to adjust to what people want. This will make the cemetery look good.
- xlviii. **Motion passed, 3 to 2 against (Herb Van Guilder and Louie Gabranski.)**

B. Pricing Clarification.

- i. Scott Murphy advised that there was a burial at the mausoleum last week and there was some question about the fees. A casket was put in the mausoleum and we charged the standard burial fee. Paul Gendron thought that when he paid the fees for the lots, that this was included.
- ii. Doug Sheehan said he charged \$800, with a 50% discount for Veteran - \$400.
- iii. Paul Gendron said he got hit with this 2 weeks ago. He asked if the price was \$700.
- iv. Doug Sheehan said Sundays are \$800.
- v. Paul Gendron said that there were 3 funeral directors there. We opened the doors because they are very sensitive. We want to put our own bodies into the mausoleum, and not one cemetery person touched it. How can you charge \$700 to have someone stand there and then put a casket in the mausoleum. It is not fair. It is very exorbitant. We are not looking for any help. We have the technique and take care of it. We don't want anybody touching it.

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- vi. Bruce Schmidt said the fees are \$700 for burial on Saturday, \$800 on Sunday and \$450 during the week. Cremations are \$250 during the week and \$350 on Saturdays. He asked if we would have supported the burial with another mausoleum. Did he get treated any differently because the family is funeral directors?
 - vii. Doug Sheehan said we helped do Harrison's funeral.
 - viii. Bruce Schmidt asked if other cemeteries are different.
 - ix. Doug Sheehan said all the other cemeteries charge exactly the same as for a burial.
 - x. Bruce Schmidt said he thinks the fees should stay the same, even if it is fortunate that you have the expertise. He said that Doug Sheehan was present.
 - xi. Paul Gendron said that being hit with \$800 and during the week \$450 is a lot. He asked what they charged for the Harrison burial.
 - xii. Doug Sheehan said nothing because he was a town official and the town manager at the time said to not charge.
 - xiii. Bob Brandt said we have already discussed and agreed to pricing for mausoleums. He said that he knows that Mr. Gendron is a professional and has the staff. We have to be responsible for any other burial.
 - xiv. Bruce Schmidt said we do support veterans.
 - xv. Paul Gendron said these rates were put in after we bought.
 - xvi. Doug Sheehan said we have charged \$250 to put an urn in a mausoleum.
 - xvii. Herb Van Guilder asked if Mr. Gendron has a copy of the rates. He said that all of the answers are in the rates and asked Mr. Gendron to read them.
 - xviii. Bruce Schmidt said Mr. Gendron is a member of the public and we would never tell anyone to read the rates. As Cemetery Commissioners we try to do the best and as public officers we should allow people to come in and talk to us. We have regular burial rates and cremation rates in place. As a board, we decided to make the mausoleum rates the same as burial rates.
 - xix. Paul Gendron said that he chose not to have cemetery personnel there. We have the expertise for it.
 - xx. Herb Van Guilder said that as Cemetery Commissioners, we have to have access to the mausoleum; our personnel have to be there.
 - xxi. Paul Gendron said that no one from the cemetery knows how to install the doors.
 - xxii. Doug Sheehan said that we took the doors off for the Harrison burial to clean.
 - xxiii. Paul Gendron said the cemetery staff does not have the background.
 - xxiv. Bruce Schmidt said we should have people there. We will respond if the family does not want us to be involved. It is nice and looks professional. This board will also decide if mausoleums will be situated in different areas of the cemetery in the future.

6. Buildings & Grounds Report

- A. Louie Gabranski said he was up to the cemetery and only saw one person mowing.
- B. Scott Murphy said we usually have 2 people on a daily basis.
- C. Bob Brandt said he was there at lunchtime today and there were 3 people mowing.
- D. Herb Van Guilder said he wishes the manager would listen to people. They need more help up there and we should hire a part time person. We have always had 3 full time people. He is discouraged with the manager.
- E. Doug Sheehan said there were only 2 people mowing last year.
- F. Herb Van Guilder said we always had the sexton, 2 employees and the outside manager. We are short-handed and why won't the manager listen.

7. Sign Cemetery Rules & Regulations Approved May 19, 2021

- A. Scott Murphy said that the board approved this version at the May 19th meeting, but the copy was not ready to sign.
- B. Louie Gabranski said we should make changes to satisfy Mr. Gendron.
- C. Scott Murphy said we will put that on the agenda for the meeting next month.
- D. Louie Gabranski asked if they should vote tonight.
- E. Scott Murphy said if they want to make changes, they would have to warn them. We voted on this last month.
- F. Herb Van Guilder said one lot is 5' x 10' for one burial. He referred to section 1E.
- G. Brett Sanderson noted that 1B and 1E refer to the same thing and should be one line item.
- H. Brett Sanderson said that they can still make changes in the future.

8. Review Town's Agreement with Cemetery Commission

- A. This item has been deleted from this meeting's agenda.

9. Review Directory Proposals

- A. Scott Murphy said they have made some progress and Doug Sheehan has done a lot of work on it. They have found 3 companies that may fit and are all similar. He showed a demonstration video of Legacy tonight. It would provide a mapping system to locate grave sites with access by phone, computer. Doug Sheehan would have access. It would provide better record keeping. It has a GIS interface. When contracted, they would do an aerial view of the cemetery and work with information provided by Doug Sheehan. We would even be able to set up a kiosk. The estimate on Legacy includes \$3,500 for software, \$5,400 for mapping and \$1,600 for supervision - about \$10,000.
- B. Herb Van Guilder asked about the annual costs.
- C. Doug Sheehan said \$600.00 per year.
- D. Herb Van Guilder asked if there could be designated colors for grave sites of veterans.
- E. Doug Sheehan said yes.
- F. Louie Gabranski said there are people who don't understand computers, what about them. He said he thought we were going to have a map of the sections.
- G. Scott Murphy said some of that would work in conjunction with the system.
- H. Louie Gabranski said we are dealing with older people, they need listings.
- I. Scott Murphy said that could also be done, print the map with names.
- J. Louie Gabranski said by section.
- K. Scott Murphy said yes.
- L. Bruce Schmidt said he thinks we should pursue this and also include a display, with glass that could be updated every 6 months. He said that Pittsfield Cemetery has one that gives a map with directions. We should be prepared to look at bids for the next meeting. We shouldn't skimp on this. It will make a difference in the cemetery.
- M. Brett Sanderson said they could also do the kiosk.
- N. Herb Van Guilder said they should add signs for the sections.
- O. Bruce Schmidt said we need to keep this moving forward.

10. New Business

A. Financials

- i. Scott Murphy said that this year to date we have \$3,500 over on revenue, \$50,000 under on expenses for a total of about \$52,600 to the plus. There is \$64,300 in the fund, so after June 30th, we will have about \$116,000.
- ii. Bruce Schmidt said we need to get ideas of how to use this.
- iii. Louie Gabranski said the upper bathroom.
- iv. Brett Sanderson said paving
- v. Bruce Schmidt said we are not being fiscally responsible holding on to the money. The commissioners should bring ideas for the July meeting. We should do something or plan for things to do starting in May, 2022.

11. Other Business

- A. Louie Gabranski asked about the contract dated August 19, 2016. He said that Frank Heald had a copy that we all signed.
- B. Scott Murphy said Pam Cruickshank was on vacation and we couldn't find a copy. He said that is why he pulled it from tonight's agenda.
 - i. Louie Gabranski said that he had proposed 6 months' notice instead of 30 days to end the contract. We don't want to end the contract during the season. This was just a temporary paper.
- C. Scott Murphy said that he was speaking with Frank Heald and he had come to the cemetery on Memorial Day and thought it was in good shape.
- D. Herb Van Guilder said he has a copy of the original contract.
- E. Scott Murphy asked Herb Van Guilder to get a copy for him.
- F. Herb Van Guilder said yes.

12. Set Date for Next Meeting & Possible Agenda Items

- A. Next regular meeting - Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
- B. Bruce Schmidt said he will not be available

13. Sign Warrant Orders

- A. The warrant orders have been signed.

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

- A. Scott Murphy said none is needed.

15. Adjourn

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- A. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Louie Gabranski to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - B. Meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Brett Sanderson, Chairman

Bruce Schmidt

Bob Brandt

Herb Van Guilder

Lou Gabranski