

**TOWN OF LUDLOW  
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**Tuesday, June 27, 2017**

**Board Members Present:**

Herb Van Guilder	Lou Gabranski
Dave Harlow	Marty Nitka

**Board Members Absent:**

Brett Sanderson

**Staff Present:**

Frank Heald

**Others Present:**

Bruno Brzoza

**1. Additions to the Agenda**

- A. Frank Heald explained that this item was added in order to give the commissioners the ability to add new items for discussion that may need to be voted on. This is in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. Additions to the agenda must be made before the meeting is called to order.
- B. Herb Van Guilder said the board usually does that under Other or New Business.
- C. Frank Heald said they cannot vote on items under Old or New Business.
- D. There were no additions to the agenda.

**2. Call to Order**

- A. Meeting was called to order by Chairman, Herbert Van Guilder at 5:02 p.m. All members present, except Brett Sanderson. Herb Van Guilder explained that Mr. Sanderson had called to say that there was leak at Trailside and he may not make it.

**3. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- A. Herb Van Guilder said that the minutes to be reviewed are from May 17, 2017.
- B. Herb Van Guilder asked if the "\$13,000" in Item 5QQ was a mistake.
- C. Frank Heald explained that that item was a part of the discussion started in Item 5II where they were discussing. The staff could still purchase the red flowers and would not spend \$13,000.
- D. Motion by Marty Nitka and seconded by Lou Gabranski to approve the minutes of May 17, 2017 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

**4. Comments from Citizens**

- A. Bruno Brzoza said there is a statue that he would like to have cleaned and asked Doug Sheehan about it. Doug Sheehan said it would be okay to have it professionally cleaned.
- B. Herb Van Guilder said that would usually be left up to Doug Sheehan.
- C. Marty Nitka said that he is concerned to allow anything done to a monument without permission from the family.
- D. said he does not know whose relation it is.
- E. Herb Van Guilder agreed that they would need permission from a family member.
- F. Marty Nitka said it should be the family.
- G. Herb Van Guilder said that Bruno Brzoza would need to get a letter from the family.
- H. noted that they used to clean monuments but don't anymore.
- I. Herb Van Guilder advised to check with the family.

## 5. Discuss & Confirm Staff Position Descriptions

- A. Cemetery Sexton
  - i. Lou Gabranski said that Under Distinguishing Characteristics, we need to have more than one person under which the person works. We should add the Cemetery Commission Chair.
  - ii. Frank Heald explained that every Department Head in the town reports to the Town Manager. If I am not available, I designate an Acting Municipal Manager.
  - iii. Lou Gabranski said the commission needs to know who that is.
  - iv. Frank Heald said the Select Board, the Trustees and the Water Commission can work with that form of management. We don't spend a lot of time micromanaging.
    - v. Lou Gabranski said when he goes through the cemetery, he doesn't see anyone around.
    - vi. Frank Heald asked what does that have to do with the sexton?
    - vii. Herb Van Guilder asked Frank Heald who is second in line after him.
  - viii. Frank Heald said when he leaves; Jeff Billings is the Acting Town Manager and is available 24/7. If Doug Sheehan can't make a decision, he can call Jeff for cover. The town has worked this way for 14 years.
  - ix. Lou Gabranski asked who coordinates the tents, chairs and parking for funerals. He said someone should be designated.
  - x. Frank Heald read the following paragraph:

“The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.”

Frank Heald continued saying that he has confidence in staff to have things done properly. He said for a recent funeral, he followed staff from grave opening to chairs to parking to the end of the funeral and everything went like clockwork.
  - xi. Lou Gabranski said in the past, they have had trouble with staff not putting up tents and chairs.
  - xii. Frank Heald said that they had that problem when they ran the cemetery operations. He said that he has not had those problems. He said that Doug Sheehan knows exactly what needs to be done and Frank Heald has confidence in Doug Sheehan. He added that John Grassi also gets his job done.
  - xiii. Marty Nitka asked Frank Heald if he has any objection to adding to the Sexton's job description putting up tents and chairs.
  - xiv. Frank Heald said he will add it to the job description.

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- xv. Lou Gabranski referred to the section Education and Experience, and suggested making minimum age 21 years.
  - xvi. Frank Heald said he would add it, but added that a responsible manager would not hire a kid to do the Sexton's job.
  - xvii. Herb Van Guilder said he has a problem with the benefits. He said we did have benefits for this position and pay.
  - xviii. Marty Nitka said this board sets the pay. Benefits are beyond pay.
  - xix. Herb Van Guilder said they had some sick and holiday time.
  - xx. Frank Heald said we agreed that we would set those somewhere near town policy. He said benefits are per town policy.
  - xxi. Marty Nitka said we use municipal employees now, and they have to be treated the same.
  - xxii. Herb Van Guilder repeated that there was a list of benefits. We have to be fair. He said he would give that list to Frank Heald.
  - xxiii. Marty Nitka said benefits should be in accordance with town policies.
  - xxiv. Herb Van Guilder said that would mean Doug Sheehan would receive a raise (not putting actual dollar amount in minutes.)
  - xxv. Frank Heald asked what Herb Van Guilder is basing this on.
  - xxvi. Herb Van Guilder said town policy.
  - xxvii. Frank Heald said what he is looking at is a part of the union contract, the wage scale under the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Cemetery employees are not part of that. Doug Sheehan is not in the union and not covered by that. He is not a full time sexton, he is an Interim Sexton. He added that before the commission came, cemetery employees worked for the town in the winter.
  - xxviii. Marty Nitka said he would like to clear this up.
  - xxix. Frank Heald said that we don't have a sexton anymore that is full time. He is part time.
  - xxx. Lou Gabranski asked what says Doug Sheehan can't be in the union.
  - xxxi. Frank Heald said he could only be in the union if he were a full time employee.
  - xxxii. Lou Gabranski said if the guy joins the union, we will have to pay those rates.
  - xxxiii. Herb Van Guilder said we have a pay scale. Last year we did not do right by Doug Sheehan and he wants to be fair to him.
  - xxxiv. Frank Heald said he will get the board a copy of the document that Herb Van Guilder has. He added that it will expire in 3 days and the sexton position will be out of the next contract because it is not a full time position. We will review all wages and salaries beginning after the new fiscal year and new wages will be retroactive to July 1, 2017.
  - xxxv. Marty Nitka asked if the new contract does not mention the sexton...
  - xxxvi. Herb Van Guilder said then we will set our pay scale.
  - xxxvii. **MOTION by Lou Gabranski and seconded by Dave Harlow to accept the Cemetery Sexton job description with changes discussed. Motion passed, 3 to 1, Herb Van Guilder no.**

B. Cemetery Grounds Supervisor

- i. Lou Gabranski said they don't open the cemetery. The description should say that the Police Department opens and closes the gates.
- ii. Frank Heald said they can't put that in because it is a Cemetery Policy issue.
- iii. Marty Nitka asked if Lou Gabranski was referring to mornings and nights or spring and fall.
- iv. Frank Heald said in the spring and fall and also in the mornings and evenings. This person would be responsible and when he can't do it, he can request the Police do it. The request to the Police would be with my authorization. If the gate is found to have been left open all night, the person should contact me and I will take care of it. I am responsible for a boatload of things that I don't personally do myself.

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- v. Lou Gabranski said it should be in writing.
  - vi. Frank Heald said not in this job description.
  - vii. Lou Gabranski said we couldn't get the police to do it.
  - viii. Frank Heald said the police do not work for you, they work for me. He said that he had probably copied the job description from something they had in the past.
  - ix. Lou Gabranski said the cemetery is still closed when he gets out of church.
  - x. Marty Nitka said if that happens, Lou Gabranski should call Frank Heald.
  - xi. Herb Van Guilder said it was listed as Laborer.
  - xii. Frank Heald said this was taken from the Outside Operations Manager.
  - xiii. Herb Van Guilder said the position should have someone capable of supervising projects, like a clerk of the works. They would need more professionalism. The person should get the benefits that are on the Cemetery pay scale.
  - xiv. Marty Nitka asked what the benefits are.
  - xv. Frank Heald said the person would be a limited term employee as defined under the town policy. John Grassi has agreed to the terms. The limited term employees work up to 6 months and during that time will have all of the required benefits when working here. That includes the option for health care, for which they pay a portion
  - xvi. Marty Nitka suggested that Limited Term Position be added and that the person would be compensated based for wages and benefits provided under the town policy.
  - xvii. Herb Van Guilder said we did not create this position. He said he thought the Select Board did. He is trying to understand and make things equal for cemetery employees. What about the cemetery laborers.
  - xviii. Frank Heald said the board has to decide. He said that this board can either accept our management scheme or not. We don't create special things. Doug Sheehan' position was already in place and is special. We need to hire part time people and they do not get benefits.
  - xix. This item was tabled for the next meeting
6. **Report of the Sexton (Interim)**
- A. Tabled for the next meeting.
7. **Report of the Grounds Supervisor (Interim)**
- A. Frank Heald advised that the report was dropped off at the office, but not included in the packet.
  - B. Discussion tabled for next meeting.
8. **Re-Visit and Make Decision on the Flag Park**
- A. Frank Heald had supplied copies for pictures of the Springfield and Chester flag parks. He asked if they wanted to add 2 or more flag poles.
  - B. Lou Gabranski made a motion to add 2 more poles. (not seconded)
  - C. Herb Van Guilder said he likes Chester's. They have a small flag for each branch of US service, plus the US flag, POW, Fire Department and Vermont flags. We have the space.
  - D. Lou Gabranski said that at one time, we had talked about 5.
  - E. Frank Heald said that they currently have 2 flags, two short ones on one side of the one larger one. They are the US, with the POW underneath, the state and the American Legion flags.

They may want to put in two more short ones on the other side. He said that we can move one of the used poles to the other side and add service poles on other poles.

- F. Herb Van Guilder said the POW flag has to fly under the US flag. It was a requirement of the legion. We could even them out with the military flags.
- G. Marty Nitka asked why the Fire Department flag.
- H. Herb Van Guilder said because they donated. He said we could add the military flags.
- I. Marty Nitka asked what that would cost.
- J. Frank Heald said he can't get them a price until the board decides what they want to do.
- K. Marty Nitka said it is up to us to decide.
- L. Lou Gabranski said he has no objection to the design that Chester has.
- M. Frank Heald said we could move one pole to make it more balanced.
- N. **MOTION by Marty Nitka and seconded by Dave Harlow to not purchase new poles and to move one pole to balance the design. Motion passed.**

9. **Re-Visit Bank Stabilization Project: RE Enclosures**

- A. Dave Harlow asked the cost.
- B. Frank Heald said it's in the packet. It's from M&M; \$6,000 for grass, \$13,000 for rip rap and \$2,000 for matting.
- C. Marty Nitka asked if grass is a reasonable solution to erosion.
- D. Frank Heald said any of the 3 options will do. Grass is harder to maintain.
- E. Lou Gabranski said how much for flowers.
- F. Frank Heald said \$2,000 to \$3,000.
- G. Herb Van Guilder said he read the proposals and thought they would try to beautify the bank and enhance the flag station. We have to contend with the wall. He said they should do rip rap for the first 2 – 3 feet and then shrubs and flowers.
- H. Lou Gabranski said he thought they were going to widen the road.
- I. Herb Van Guilder said that they thought about it at one time and have it go straight up. They decided not to do it.
- J. Marty Nitka said it would have been quite steep. He agrees that rip rap is ugly. He understands that grass will do the job and look good.
- K. Herb Van Guilder said there is more maintenance to grass. They never maintained the big bank last year. They should rip rap 2 to 3 feet and then plant shrubs. They shouldn't plant trees. They should ask the garden club.
- L. Frank Heald said they spent \$3,500 on the Calabrese plan. He said the plan suggests 180 Rosa Rugosa bushes and plants to stabilize.
- M. Herb Van Guilder said the lower bank has raspberries and buttercups.
- N. Frank Heald said we will go over that selectively with the trimmer.
- O. Herb Van Guilder said to haul in unscreened topsoil.
- P. Marty Nitka said he wants a lawn.
- Q. Herb Van Guilder repeated they should rip rap the slope.
- R. Marty Nitka said that would cost times as much and be 3 times as ugly. He said we are not ready to make a decision.
- S. Frank Heald noted that there is a limited growing season. He said the money is in the budget.
- T. **MOTION by Marty Nitka and seconded by Dave Harlow to put in a grass lawn. Motion passed. Herb Van Guilder no.**

10. **Survey Update**

- A. Frank Heald said that Steve Mungeon is still trying to get this all together. It started with the survey from Ralph Michael from 1992 and concerns a 2 to 15 feet discrepancy along the right hand side boundary with Odd Fellows. He added that regarding trees, when a tree falls, the owner of the property that it falls on, are the persons responsible to clean it up.
  - B. Marty Nitka asked why the new survey.
  - C. Frank Heald said the chair requested that the entire perimeter be on one sheet.
  - D. Herb Van Guilder said the neighbor thinks we're on his property line.
11. **Conduct Site Visit & Make Decision on the Open Space on the Northwest Edge of the Upper Cemetery**
- A. Frank Heald said the Creaser request was for no further graves on the pond side of this row other than what exists now. He asked to keep the space green.
  - B. Lou Gabranski said he did not want anyone next to him.
  - C. Herb Van Guilder said he wanted to buy the lots or have the lots not used.
  - D. **MOTION by Marty Nitka and seconded by Dave Harlow to have the town manager develop language for this request. Motion passed unanimously.**
12. **New Business**
- A. Tabled.
13. **Other Business**
- A. Tabled
14. **Sign Warrant Orders**
- A. Herb Van Guilder reminded commissioners to sign the warrants and minutes.
15. **Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts/Legal**
- A. An Executive session was not needed
16. **Set Date for Next Meeting**
- A. Next regular meeting will be on July 19, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.
17. **Adjourn**
- A. **Motion by Dave Harlow and seconded by Marty Nitka to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
  - B. Meeting was adjourned at 6:23 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