

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING
Howard Barton Jr. Conference Room**

**Wednesday, November 17, 2021
5:00 P.M.**

Board Members Present:

Brett Sanderson
Bob Brandt

Lou Gabranski
Bruce Schmidt

Herb Van Guilder

Others Present:

Doug Sheehan

Rebecca Devereux – Okemo Valley TV

1. Call to Order

A. Brett Sanderson called the meeting at 5:00.

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

A. Scott Murphy said there are no changes

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 October 20, 2021.

B. **Motion by Herb Van Guilder and seconded by Bruce Schmidt to accept the minutes from October 20, 2021 as presented. Motion passed to accept minutes as presented.**

5. Sexton's Report

- A. Herb Van Guilder said asked if the Gendron's are paid up. And what about the damage done by their equipment.
- B. Scott Murphy said they are current on their payments and our staff took care of the grounds.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said we charge others to fix the grounds, we should charge them. Why did we fix it?
- D. Doug Sheehan said we couldn't leave it the way it was.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said that the monuments that were cleaned look good. We should put money in the budget to have some cleaned every year. It's our responsibility.
- F. Bruce Schmidt said that we should sent a letter, through the Town Manager to Gendron and make it part of the public record that they were disrespectful of the cemetery. We should make note that we have worked closely with them and are expecting payment for the repairs to the grounds. He said that Mr. Gendron called out the Cemetery Commission Chair about fixing it.

- G. Brett Sanderson agreed that we should charge him for the repairs.
- H. Bruce Schmidt said that Mr. Gendron said that Brett Sanderson would fix it in the spring. Bruce Schmidt said that he does not like the attitude and we should bill him for the repairs.

6. Buildings & Grounds Report

- A. Herb Van Guilder said that the Cemetery Commissioners have been quite lax this year. We were short staffed. We normally have 3 to 4 people all summer. We had 2 ladies that mowed and trimmed. The other projects went by the wayside. He said that he had brought up that we needed more staff and he doesn't know why it took so long to hire someone. We didn't accomplish anything outside of mowing. He said he wants 3 – 4 employees budgeted for next year. He said that the flag station is not done and that we had paid for a landscaping plan and it hasn't been done. He said the brush and trees are not done. He said that he blames it on the commissioners. He said he hopes that we get projects done next year.
- B. Bruce Schmidt thanked the management for the good job up there. He said that Kevin MacPherson does a great job. He said that he disagrees with Herb Van Guilder. We look to be efficient. He said that to get to the end of a year and criticize the work done isn't right. He said the cemetery looks fabulous and the staff should be commended.
- C. Herb Van Guilder said the staff is fantastic. He asked Bruce Schmidt what projects had been done, outside of mowing the grass and work on the roof. He said that in the past, we set up programs and they are not getting done. The brush and trees are growing.
- D. Bob Brandt said there was quite a bit of brushing done this summer on the lower level and across the bank on the upper cemetery.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said that we had 3 people work on the upper brush by the Okemo Pond and it took 3 weeks to do. You can't see the view. The fault is with the commissioners.
- F. Louie Gabranski said that the date on the Buildings & Grounds report was 2020 and should be 2021.

7. FY2023 Cemetery Budget Workshop

- A. Scott Murphy advised that he had sent a draft budget to the board.
- B. Herb Van Guilder said he wants to go through it line by line because it's short.
- C. Bruce Schmidt said this budget has an increase of 20%. He asked Herb Van Guilder if he thinks it should increase more than 20%. He said that labor is up \$4,500.
- D. Herb Van Guilder said we need 3 employees.
- E. Brett Sanderson said there is \$8,000 in Miscellaneous Labor.
- F. Herb Van Guilder said we need more staff if we want to do the projects that need to be done.
- G. Scott Murphy said we are at 52% year to date. There is \$35,000 projected with the 4th employee added in there.
- H. Bruce Schmidt said we are \$5,000 over.
- I. Scott Murphy said the Miscellaneous should have been for the 4th employee.
- J. Herb Van Guilder asked with the \$43,000, how many employees will that be
- K. Scott Murphy said 4. He said we had 3 through 8/17/21, and then we added the 4th. We will see if we can get him earlier in the season.
- L. Herb Van Guilder said the supervisor was not full time.
- M. Scott Murphy said we had the 2 women, the supervisor and Doug Sheehan.
- N. Bruce Schmidt asked if Scott Murphy can separate out the Sexton, making it a separate line item.
- O. Scott Murphy said yes.
- P. Bruce Schmidt said that the \$47,300 is for all the labor.

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- Q. Scott Murphy said that is correct.
- R. Herb Van Guilder said that the amount budgeted for gas/oil is too low. He said that Tree Work/Stump Removal/Brush should be \$4,000. He said they need to bump up Corner Stones. He said Supplies and Repairs is low. He said we are going to be in the hole and this commission has never run a deficit. If we do, it is up to the commission to come up with funding to cover the deficit.
- S. Bruce Schmidt asked what is the difference between Tools/Equipment and Supplies & Repairs.
- T. Herb Van Guilder said that the portable toilet is a waste of money and we should do away with it.
- U. Louie Gabranski said he thought we had money in the budget for a new bathroom.
- V. Herb Van Guilder said he is discouraged. He could have done the bathroom for a couple of thousand and now he can't. We had the plumbing inspector come. We never completed the office bathroom. We are in violation.
- W. Bruce Schmidt asked if there is any cost for the new software.
- X. Scott Murphy said it's in Improvement Projects.
- Y. Bruce Schmidt asked why it hadn't been in Capital.
- Z. Scott Murphy said it should have and can be reallocated to Capital.
- AA. Bruce Schmidt asked what is included in Improvement Projects.
- BB. Scott Murphy said fences and painting.
- CC. Herb Van Guilder said we used to have a list of projects that we were working on and want to do. In the last 2 years, we haven't done any of them. He asked how much carry-over we have from last year.
- DD. Scott Murphy said about \$63,000 as of April.
- EE. Herb Van Guilder said that should be put in the projects fund. He said he hasn't seen it. He said that all carry-over should be retained in the Cemetery funds for future projects. He said there should be money in the budget to help us get back on track with projects/
- FF. Louie Gabranski asked what the Storm Drain Replacement line item is.
- GG. Scott Murphy said there is nothing in it. It is possible it was used in the past.
- HH. Bruce Schmidt said that Mower/Tractor should be in Capital, not Operations.
- II. Scott Murphy said that the supervisor rotates equipment.
- JJ. Bruce Schmidt asked what the auditors say.
- KK. Scott Murphy said he doesn't know the answer.
- LL. Herb Van Guilder said in the past, we fixed the mowers and didn't replace them. Then we started a program to replace them every 3 years – replacing the oldest. He said that repair costs decreased.
- MM. Brett Sanderson said we are going to need to meet again on this budget.
- NN. Herb Van Guilder suggested that a couple of commissioners meet with the Municipal Manager to go over this budget and get some numbers and update the numbers on this budget. Then present it to the board.
- OO. Bruce Schmidt said that Herb Van Guilder makes it sound like he is the only one who cares about the cemetery. Bruce Schmidt said that he has learned a lot from Herb Van Guilder. Bruce Schmidt said the town manager is doing great. We can set the numbers. This budget shows a 20% increase. He said that he could be willing to look at the labor numbers. He said that he doesn't know if we will ever please Herb Van Guilder. This budget will come down to a vote. He said that he would like to see a 5-0 vote in favor of the budget. He said that Herb Van Guilder said that we did not do our jobs. Bruce Schmidt said that we go through this every meeting. He said that he respects Herb Van Guilder and know what he has done for the cemetery. We should pick 3 projects to do and not sit here and be told by you that we are not doing our job as commissioners. He said that the cemetery looks great. This budget is not too far out. We need to move the items that were put in operations and move them to capital. Bruce

- Schmidt said that he doesn't want to hear constant complaining about what didn't get done. He said that he would vote for this budget. We also need to separate out the Sexton to a separate line item.
- PP. Scott Murphy said if we move those 2 items (Mower/Tractor and Improvement Projects) out of the operations and move them to Capital, which would be about \$14,000.
- QQ. Louie Gabranski asked about the bathroom.
- RR. Bruce Schmidt said he doesn't see us doing the bathroom. We should continue with the portable bathroom, possibly change companies.
- SS. Herb Van Guilder said we have cut our budget quite a bit from 3 years ago. Maybe that's why we are not doing projects, like landscaping and paving. He said that he agrees with a lot of what Bruce Schmidt has said, but he is disappointed that we are going behind not ahead. We are responsible for the cemetery. He said that he goes to the cemetery 3 to 4 times per week and talks to the employees and manager. He said that we have a beautiful cemetery and he would hate to see it not beautiful.
- TT. Brett Sanderson asked Scott Murphy to make the changes discussed.
- UU. Bob Brandt said if we take those 2 items out and put them in capital and check on wages after we separate out the Sexton.
- VV. Brett Sanderson said we should re-evaluate salaries.
- WW. Herb Van Guilder said the employees put their hearts and souls into this and they are overworked. They feel bad that they can't accomplish what they want to get done. We need to pay them fair wages and keep them happy. He said it is hard to find employees now. He would hate to see them leave us.
- XX. Louie Gabranski asked what the increase in wages will be.
- YY. Scott Murphy said he doesn't have that yet and would rather not speculate.
- ZZ. Herb Van Guilder said he wants to work with the other commissioners, but has strong feelings. He apologized.
- AAA. Brett Sanderson asked Scott Murphy to make the changes – move the Mower/Tractor and Improvement Projects out of operations and to Capital. Separate Sexton's wages from labor and make it a separate line item. When the changes are made, please send draft to board members. He said then, we will see how much money we need to put into labor on the ground.
- BBB. Bruce Schmidt said we can increase salaries when we see where it's going.

8. **New Business**

- A. Incorrect Burial
- i. Bruce Schmidt asked if they are dealing with the issue concerning someone who was buried in the wrong place by mistake.
 - ii. Doug Sheehan said he told the family the options.
 - iii. Bruce Schmidt asked if we disinter the body.
 - iv. Scott Murphy said we would pay the costs.
 - v. Doug Sheehan said we would also have to get the vault company involved. He said he told her that they could disinter the body and put it where it belongs. We could swap lots or give her a new lot or keep the same lot. She never got back to him. He said that a woman was buried in the wrong lot 21 years ago. We can do this in the spring.

9. **Other Business**

- A. Gendron Mausoleum
- i. Louie Gabranski asked if they have received any comments about the mausoleum.

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- ii. Scott Murphy said a couple of negative comments from local people. It is large and unique. We now have regulations in place for mausoleums.
 - iii. Bruce Schmidt said we followed what we had to do.
 - iv. Doug Sheehan said he contacted other cemeteries and they said they would have done what we did.
 - v. Louie Gabranski said that he complained about the location.
 - vi. Doug Sheehan said they had purchased the lots over 20 years ago.
 - vii. Herb Van Guilder said we should clean up the back 40 for mausoleums. He said the ground there is not good for standard graves. He said there are piles of brush on the ground and they never had the fire department come to burn it. He said the contractor didn't put the sign back on High Street.

10. Set Date for Next Meeting & Possible Agenda Items

- A. Next regular meeting - Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

11. Sign Warrant Orders

- A. Brett Sanderson said that the warrant orders are signed.

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

- A. Scott Murphy said none is needed.

13. Adjourn

- A. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Bob Brandt to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisha Klaiber

Brett Sanderson, Chairman

Bruce Schmidt

Bob Brandt

Herb Van Guilder

Lou Gabranski