

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING
HEALD AUDITORIUM**

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Board Members Present:

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| Bob Brandt | Bruce Schmidt |
| Lou Gabranski | Herb Van Guilder |

Board Members Absent:

Brett Sanderson

Others Present:

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| Doug Sheehan | Fred Marin – Okemo Valley TV |
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1. Call to Order

- A. Scott Murphy called the meeting at 5:04.

2. Annual Board Re-Organization

- A. Elect Chair of the Board - Motion **by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Bob Brandt to elect Brett Sanderson as Chair of the Board. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. **Motion by Herb Van Guilder and seconded by Bruce Schmidt to retain same board officers as for 2020 – 2021. Motion passed unanimously.**
- C. Elect Vice Chair of the Board – Bob Brandt
- D. Elect Clerk of the Board - Bruce Schmidt.
- E. Elect Signer of Deeds – Brett Sanderson
- F. Appoint Lisha Klaiber as Recording Clerk.
- G. Set Day and Time of Regular Meetings and Alternate Meetings.
- i. Scott Murphy advised that the current schedule for regular meetings is the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m.
- ii. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt seconded by Louie Gabranski to continue to hold regular meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.**
- H. Designate Newspaper of General Circulation
- i. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Louie Gabranski to retain THE VERMONT JOURNAL as the newspaper of general circulation with THE RUTLAND HERALD as backup. Motion passed unanimously.**
- I. Adopt Roberts Rules Order
- i. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Louie Gabranski to continue using Roberts Rules of Order. Motion passed unanimously.**

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

- A. Scott Murphy said none are necessary.

4. Comments from Citizens

- A. There were none.

5. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

- A. Bob Brandt said that the minutes to be reviewed are from September 16, 2020.
- B. **Motion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Louie Gabranski to accept the minutes from September 16, 2020 as presented.**

6. Sexton's Report

- A. Scott Murphy said that the report contains actions and questions that will be discussed later in the agenda, including rates.
- B. Herb Van Guilder complimented the sexton on the report.
- C. The sexton's report was submitted and accepted.

7. Buildings & Grounds Report

- A. Scott Murphy said that Kevin MacPherson has been setting up. April Dunich and Tomieka MacPherson have been up there most and Eugene helps out as needed.
- B. Louie Gabranski said that the report refers to the "official opening" and said he did not think we have an official opening date.
- C. Scott Murphy said that Louie Gabranski is correct. The intent was to say that the cemetery was opened to the public prior to full clean up so that it could be open for Easter.
- D. Louie Gabranski said that other towns leave their flags up all year and why we don't.
- E. Herb Van Guilder said that they should hire another worker at the cemetery. He said that he has mentioned this to the Municipal Manager 3 or 4 times. We hire Kevin MacPherson's son. He is a good person, young and eager. There's lots of work to be done, cutting brush, cleaning up the fence line. The commissioners should make a site visit to see what needs to be done. The plans were done by Tim Calabrese. He said the board had approved his sketches.
- F. Scott Murphy said that is on the agenda for next month, when we will discuss projects. He said that having the board do a site visit is a good idea. He said that if we decide on what projects we want to get done, we can assess the need to hire an additional person.
- G. Buildings and Grounds report was submitted and accepted.

8. Review Draft & Possibly Approve Cemetery Rules & Regulations

- A. Scott Murphy said that the version that was included in their packets was about to be adopted last fall, but we had to cancel in-person meetings due to COVID. The minor changes include changing specific references from Outside Manager to Sexton or designee. He said that on page 1, item 1k mentions the new, redefined Section G. He said that on page 2-3 is new and deals with mausoleums. He said that there is a typo at the end... "provided" should be "required."
- B. Louie Gabranski said that on page should read, "...graded lots or build, repair or rebuild foundations without approval from the Cemetery Commission."
- C. Scott Murphy said that peoples still have to go through the Outside Manager.
- D. Louie Gabranski said that page 1; Section 1i should say empty lots.
- E. Doug Sheehan said he does not think it should be included.
- F. Bruce Schmidt said it wouldn't hurt, it just clarifies.
- G. Bob Brandt said he doesn't think someone would sell a filled lot.
- H. Scott Murphy suggested "vacant" instead of empty.
- I. Louie Gabranski said that on page 3, item 3j should read, "future maintenance of the unit and foundation and access to the keys to the unit must be provided."
- J. Herb Van Guilder said we need to designate a specific area to put mausoleums, maybe the "old back 40" and/or the right section at the end of the road. It should be in the regulations. Also, you can't combine lots. We could allow a 2-person mausoleum on a lot in the present area.
- K. Louie Gabranski asked if Gedron has another section.
- L. Doug Sheehan said yes, on the other side. He explained that the original request was for a 15-person, 3 high unit. Now it is 2 high with 10 on either side.
- M. Scott Murphy said that when Mr. Gedron first came to the board, there was nothing in the regulations to stop it. That is why we added Section 3j to the regulations.
- N. Doug Sheehan said that on page 2, Section 2h says wooden boxes, and it should be removed. He said that most caskets are wood and go in a vault. He said that Section 2i says that cemetery vaults must be provided.
- O. Bruce Schmidt asked about a wooden urn. There is less compacting. He said if you eliminate the word – wooden – it would be silent on urns.
- P. Herb Van Guilder said wooden urns are allowed. He said that most burials today are cremations.
- Q. Doug Sheehan said that wooden boxes are allowed for cremation burials only.
- R. Herb Van Guilder referred to page 2 item 3h and said that we should add "must be approved by Sexton."
- S. Louie Gabranski said that for item 3g – years ago we tried to do work before Memorial Day.
- T. Bruce Schmidt said they would have to go to the sexton before starting work,
- U. Doug Sheehan said that the companies that do the work do contact him.
- V. Herb Van Guilder said that on page 1, Item 1e – we need to clarify that there will only be one burial and one cremation or 2 cremations per grave site. We should add that lots may not be

combined and a lot is 5' x 10'. People cannot use 2 or 3 lots to do what they did for this mausoleum.

- W. Bruce Schmidt suggested that they form a committee to discuss what is a gravesite, plans for where mausoleums may go and the size of mausoleums. The committee could report back to the commissioners with their recommendations. He asked Herb Van Guilder to be on the committee and suggested the sexton, Scott Murphy and one other board member.
- X. Bob Brandt said the committee is a good idea. He suggested that the board may want to accept this version of the regulations, with the suggested changes and we can make future changes in an addendum.
- Y. Louie Gabranski said they should accept this version, with changes and correct as needed later.
- Z. Scott Murphy said that the board made several changes tonight and said that he will bring back a clean copy for their next meeting to vote on.

9. Possibly Consider Rates for Perpetual Care & Locations for Mausoleums

- A. Bruce Schmidt suggested that they table this item until the next meeting.

10. Directory Update

- A. Scott Murphy said that they have not been able to gather much information. There are not many directories out there. He said that he spoke to Steve Mongeon, who recently moved out of state, and he may know of someone. Scott Murphy said that he is still pursuing information.
- B. Bruce Schmidt said this has to take priority. We put money in the budget for this current fiscal year. Have we checked local surveyors or associations across the country? He said that he encourages the Municipal Manager and Sexton to move forward on this.
- C. Herb Van Guilder suggested contacting the Old Time Cemetery or Northeast Cemetery Association. He suggested Tom Griffin. He has the contact information.
- D. Scott Murphy said that would be a big help.
- E. Doug Sheehan said that he has already called Tom Griffin and also other cemeteries. He said that Hope Cemetery in Barre had wanted to do this, but it was too expensive – about \$40,000.
- F. Scott Murphy said he would bring back information for next month.
- G. Doug Sheehan said we would need a GPS map of the cemetery.
- H. Bruce Schmidt said make it a priority. We have done nothing. People need to know where the graves are located. We are building this for the future.

11. New Business

A. Doug Sheehan Memo

- i. Herb Van Guilder said that in his report, Doug Sheehan mentioned a 25% discount for burials if persons owned more than 6 lots. He said that is too high and suggested 15% and for residents only.
- ii. Scott Murphy suggested this be discussed next month.
- iii. Bruce Schmidt said that in the memo, Doug Sheehan also asked how much we would charge to put the casket in the mausoleum. He suggested treating it as a full burial.
- iv. Bob Brandt asked if people can put a cremation in the mausoleum.
- v. Doug Sheehan said yes.
- vi. Bruce Schmidt said if the urn goes in the mausoleum, it would be the same price.
- vii. Louie Gabranski referred to Doug Sheehan's memo dated March 30, 2021 and said we should still get paid.
- viii. Bruce Schmidt said that town officials, under the regulations, we have to charge. We are responsible.

B. Decrease in Cemetery Budget

- i. Louie Gabranski asked how \$25,000 was taken away from the Cemetery without telling the commissioners.
- ii. Scott Murphy said that is on the agenda for next month, along with prioritizing project and financial information.
- iii. Bruce Schmidt explained that the Select Board made that decision. The Town voted that the Select Board is responsible for the Cemetery budget and it is included in the town budget. He added that the funds were put back in the budget. There ended up being a surplus at the town level.
- iv. Louie Gabranski said that there was an agreement with Frank Heald that the town would not take the cemetery funds.

- v. Bruce Schmidt said that it appeared that the town may have been in a financial bind and we took money from different departments to make up about \$100,000.
- vi. Louie Gabranski said that the Cemetery Commission hires the town to manage the cemetery. He said we, the commissioners, set the budget.
- vii. Bruce Schmidt said that the Town has the ability to take funds. The Cemetery is considered a department of the town. The Select Board did not need to discuss this with the commission and felt that it was in the best interest of the town.
- viii. Louie Gabranski asked if it was a gift or loan.
- ix. Scott Murphy said all that was done was to reduce the budget for next year.
- x. Louie Gabranski said it was done secretly and we should have been told.
- xi. Bruce Schmidt said, as Select Board Chair, that we should have reached out to you and should have gotten a consensus from this board. It would have been the right thing to do. He suggested that the Cemetery Commission should make sure that we are budgeting correctly.
- xii. Herb Van Guilder said that he has been researching this and gone through town reports. He has talked to the state commission. He feels that this is a conflict of interest and untruthful and will make a presentation to the Select Board. He asked what the path for each board is and said that he has strong feelings about this.
- xiii. Bruce Schmidt said there was no untruthfulness. There was no dishonesty whatsoever. There was nothing unethical.
- xiv. Herb Van Guilder said he will bring it to the Select Board. He said he did not think anyone was dishonest.

12. Other Business

- A. There was none.

13. Set Date for Next Meeting

- A. Next regular meeting - Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

14. Sign Warrant Orders

- A. The warrant orders have been signed.

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

- A. Scott Murphy said none is needed.

16. Adjourn

- A. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Louie Gabranski to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Brett Sanderson, Chairman

Bruce Schmidt, Clerk

Bob Brandt, Vice Chair

Herb Van Guilder

Lou Gabranski