

## Calais Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2014

Town Hall

Present: John Simanskas, Fletcher Dean, Juanita Nunn, Randy Koch

Guest: Sexton Wyatt Healey, Rodney Buck

John called the meeting to order at 7:05.

### **CEMETERY ENDOWMENT FUND:**

(Moved to the top of agenda to accommodate Trustee for Public Funds, Rodney Buck's schedule). Rodney reported that the Cemetery Endowment Fund stands at approximately \$117,000. He forecasts that at an ideal rate of 7-8% return it can grow to \$200,000 in about 6 years, at which time there would be about \$14,000 available annually for expenditures, while keeping the principal intact. He recommends growing the fund and not withdrawing from it for now. Periodic reports may be provided to Commissioners from the Town Clerk. Ultimately, Cemetery Commissioners do have authority to spend any or all of the Endowment Fund interest income and they also may request withdrawals from the Endowment Fund principal by the Trustees for Public Funds. The \$2,500 earmarked in the FY 14/15 Budget for pressure washing stones in Robinson Cemetery is available from the fund's current interest income. Rodney also suggested the Commissioners consider creative fundraising strategies, such as a sale on cemetery lots before raising lot prices.

Minutes of the July 24<sup>th</sup> Commissioners' meeting were reviewed and approved.

### **SEXTON'S REPORT:**

Discussed Wyatt's proposed Fiscal Year 15-16 budget.

Commissioners also discussed creating a "virtual tour" of town cemeteries on the town's website to highlight the critical conditions that need attention. Concern that townspeople want cemeteries to look their best, yet many necessary projects (headstone repairs and pressure washing, fencing, hedge trimming, etc.) must be deferred to future years, given budget restraints and lack of volunteers for workdays. Randy and Juanita will work on the virtual tour. Randy and Fletcher will meet with Patrick Healy, President of VT Cemetery Association, for help with prioritizing projects and creating a practical budget.

### **OLD WEST CHURCH:**

Volunteer work day on Sat. July 26<sup>th</sup>, to repair and paint fences brought out all commissioners and two volunteers. Half the fence still needs to be painted. Sat. Sept. 6, 9 AM set as next volunteer workday. Fletcher will post on Front Porch Forum.

### **AINSWORTH CEMETERY:**

John and Randy met with two town tree wardens, Drew Lamb and Neal Maker, to walk through and discuss remediation steps in the wake of the recent perimeter tree clearing. The consensus was to let natural vegetation re-grow and selectively trim where necessary. Black vinyl chain fencing to replace old rotted boards which have been removed by the logger.

**OLD FAIRVIEW CEMETERY:**

John has ordered a new "Bliss Section" sign to hang under the present sign. Jennifer researched and found costs of granite post replacements to be about \$100 each.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioners read the Planning Commission's Town Plan "Cemeteries" draft. John will contact them to request that Cemetery Commissioners provide new language.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30.

Cemetery Commission meets the third Thursday of the month in summer and bi-monthly thereafter.

**Next meeting Thursday, September 18, 2014**

**7 PM**

**Calais Town Hall**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Fletcher Dean,**

**August 24, 2014**