

Calais Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

May 23, 2018

Town Office

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

Guests: Sexton Wyatt Healey

John called the meeting to order at 7:10.

Minutes of the commissioners' April 25th meeting were reviewed and approved.

Sexton's Report: Wooden fences at Old West Church Cemetery are wearing out. He recommends putting it in line for three-side replacement with granite posts and chain, possibly keeping the front wooden. Wyatt reported that he and his workers had not been paid for equipment rental and had been told the Select Board needs to sign off first. Commissioners will inquire at the May 28th S. B. mtg. A town resident has issues with plantings at the spouse's gravestone. Wyatt says the plantings are not being cared for by the resident. Jennifer will contact the resident and explain the rules and regulations.

Old Fairview volunteer gravestone cleaning: Fletcher reported that the May 19th cleaning, led by Barb Baird, went well but the turnout was very light, with most of the Commissioners joined by a just handful of residents. About 30 - 40 headstones were cleaned by hand. Discussion followed about the high cost of cleaning and repair of headstones by professionals vs. this considerably slower, labor intensive process. The reality is very few townspeople answer the call for volunteers when projects come up. Cleaning and repair of headstones in all Calais Cemeteries is a significant part of the commission's annual budgets addressing deferred maintenance in town cemeteries.

2017-18 Budget: There was some discussion about whether a vote had been taken and if a contractor had been hired yet to clean headstones in the upper section of Old Fairview. John will make the contact to get it started.

Janes Cemetery fence: Wyatt is on track for installing the new granite post and chain fence this summer.

2018 Projects: Hudson Cemetery granite post and chain fence.

NEMRC Cemetery Software: Juanita will call the Town Office to schedule data entry.

Endowment Balance: \$141,645.79 as of April 30.

Poplar Hill Cemetery: Juanita reported back from her meeting with the P.H.C. Association. They have only enough money left for completing this year's mowing. The rear bank has been severely eroded and a few graves are in danger of becoming exposed with any future catastrophic rain/erosion events. They had difficulty in applying for grants to shore up the rear bank, apparently over confusion about whether their status is non-profit or private. The association voted to dissolve this year and have the town of Calais take over the cemetery by statute. Commissioners decided to make a site visit May 27th, ahead of the May 28th Select Board mtg. where this situation is on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40.

The Cemetery Commission meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month in summer and bi-monthly thereafter.

Next special meeting 2 PM, May 27, 2018

Poplar Hill Cemetery, Rte. 14

Next regular meeting 7 PM, June 27, 2018

Town Office

Respectfully submitted,

Fletcher Dean

May 30, 2018