

## Calais Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2015

Town Clerk's Office

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

Guests: Sexton Wyatt Healey, Sage Kennedy

John called the meeting to order at 7:05.

Minutes of the January 28th Commissioners' meeting were reviewed and approved.

### **Budget:**

John presented the P & L budget vs. actual statement through March 25, showing \$6,950.69 remaining in the fiscal year through June 30. The Select Board has been asked to find the extra \$2,500 final payment for last year's pressure washing of headstones in Robinson Cemetery. There was also discussion about surplus cemetery funds from recent years and the possibility of creating a rollover reserve fund, which town voters would need to approve at Town Meeting.

### **May & June Maintenance Projects:**

Wyatt will paint the upper fences at Old and New Fairview Cemeteries.

Randy asked if we could prioritize getting all headstones upright which are presently lying on the ground.

John presented a list of possible jobs for setting priorities. Fletcher read from previous minutes the top three priorities for 2015:

1. Trim hedges at Old and New Fairview Cemeteries
2. Paint Robinson Cemetery fence
3. Install vinyl chain link fencing at Shortt and Ainsworth Cemeteries

Also, Old West Church is next for pressure washing headstones.

John has sent out three bid requests for hedge trimming at Fairview Cemetery and has one quote from TreeWorks. John will put in the application for a curve cut for entrance at Hudson Cemetery.

Fletcher reported that the VYCC crew from U-32 plans to work on May 20-23. Wyatt says they could work on uprighting headstones in Shortt and/or Ainsworth.

Jennifer reported that a Calais Elementary sixth grader, May Lamb, would like to volunteer five hours (with a parent) for her community service project. Possibly cleaning up the Ainsworth perimeter or painting a fence. May 9 is a good date.

Randy had looked into securing help from Dept. of Corrections inmates to provide low cost labor. Wyatt wants to keep mowing contract but could see them doing special side projects.

Randy will contact Mr. Wallbridge after the snow melts to survey all cemeteries to estimate costs for pressure washing and repair of headstones.

A discussion followed regarding the commission's increased budget for 2015-16, which includes higher wages for the sexton and crew, and the infrastructure work expected to be included therein. Then followed a discussion about how Wyatt bills the town for work, based on hourly wages and equipment rental. Some commissioners were questioning whether the present system could be simplified.

**Virtual Tour:**

Randy had a Power Point presentation running continuously at the Town Meeting and received many positive comments. Images from each cemetery are on the Town's website.

**Green Burials:**

Jennifer reported back from a Mass. NOFA conference workshop she attended last summer where she saw a film on low impact "green burials" called "A Will for the Woods." Fletcher reported that there is a bill presently working its way through the VT Legislature, updating VT burial statutes by adding the term " or natural burial grounds."

Meeting adjourned at 9:05.

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

**Next meeting Thursday, May 28, 2015**

**7 PM**

**Town Clerk's Office**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Fletcher Dean,**

**March 29, 2015**