

Calais Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

February 27, 2019

Town Office

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

Guests: Joe Magnan - Kirkyard Services, Andy Christianson - Poplar Hill Cemetery Ass.

John called the meeting to order at 7:05.

Minutes of the Nov. 14, 2018 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Poplar Hill Cemetery: Andy had emailed articles about other private cemeteries, one with serious erosion problems (Weybridge), others with financial problems which led to their dissolution and transfer to town ownership. He also reported that the PHC's request for \$1,500 to cover half of this summer's mowing budget had been turned down by the E. Montpelier Select board, reasoning that the cemetery is located in Calais. Jennifer reported that Denise Wheeler had communicated that she'd like to have the planned Calais request of \$1,500 for mowing (Town Mtg. Article 7) passed over, and for the Select board and Calais Cemetery Comm. to meet with the PHC Ass. after their annual meeting later this spring. Joe offered to do minimal mowing for what is left in PHC's bank acct., but warned that the appearance might not be up to his or the Calais Cemeteries' regular standards. Discussion followed re pros and cons of voting on Article 7. Andy affirmed that it is not a question of *if* the PHC Ass. will dissolve this year, but *when*. Fletcher will check into the process other towns have gone through when acquiring abandoned private cemeteries. Andy recommended Paul Masseti for grant-writing assistance to secure funds for restoring the eroded rear bank of PHC.

Old West Church Cemetery: Jennifer read an email from John McCullough saying that fence changes would need prior approval by the Design Advisory Board since this is an historic zone. John will create and submit a sketch of the proposed fence restoration, keeping the front wooden fence and replacing the three other sides with traditional granite posts and chain.

Budget Discussion: No expense report was available. John presented spreadsheets for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2018-19 and for the proposed FY 2019-20 of \$39,000.

Sexton's Report: Jennifer reported that she enjoys the new responsibility and has had one request for a burial in Ainsworth Cemetery. Juanita and Jennifer will meet to hammer out a job description.

Green Burials: Jennifer presented an article in this week's *7 Days* that mentioned green burials and listed Calais among other towns willing to offer green burial options. She said that Lee Webster is presently writing a "Guide for Municipal Officials Developing Green Burial Cemeteries." She also presented South Hero's Policy and Procedure document for Hazen Westview Cemetery Natural Burial Ground.

Other Business: Joe reported that he will do more headstone washing in Old and New Fairview this spring if he has time but more likely in the fall. John will email a copy of our by-laws to Joe.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50.

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

Next meeting April 24, 2019 - 7 PM

Town Office

Respectfully submitted,

Fletcher Dean

March 4, 2019