

Calais Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2020 (rain date)

Robinson Cemetery

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

Guests: Joe Mangan, Paul Hannon, Donna Fitch

John called the meeting to order at 5:30.

Janes Cemetery: Paul H. had contacted commissioners recently, inquiring about purchasing a burial plot and placement of a bench. Acknowledging the history of removal and inaccurate replacement of headstones, the lack of a reliable map and the "full" status of Janes, he offered to pay for a ground-penetrating radar survey to determine where potential empty spaces may be. A similar survey for ledge had been conducted in Worcester's cemetery. Joe responded that it is not a fool-proof technology and it may be difficult to detect all human remains once the caskets have deteriorated. He mentioned that a similar type of survey in Williamstown had failed to detect water pipes. Paul would like to purchase a memorial bench all the same, whether the survey is conclusive or not. It is possible that cremains could be contained within the bench. Jennifer made a motion to invite the survey company rep. to our October meeting to answer further questions. Fletcher 2nd. Approved. Joe and Paul will meet at Janes to discuss possible bench placement.

Card file data entry update: Fletcher and Juanita have not met since last fall at New Fairview to continue collecting headstone data because of the town office closure due to COVID -19. Donna F. and friends are interested in helping with data collection and entry, working from home. Discussion followed regarding the daunting process in these difficult times and with changing IT platforms.

Minutes from the February 19th meeting were reviewed and approved.

Sexton's report: Jennifer reported that she will be stepping down from her roles as sexton and commissioner when her term is complete at Town Meeting in March.

Robinson Cemetery: Jennifer presented a map of the green burial section showing where about 15 trees plus perennials will be interplanted among the gravesites. She will contact East Hill Tree Farm about the purchase and best times to transplant. Fletcher will look into a possible grant from Hunger Mt. Coop.

Contractor's Report: Joe and his crew have been mowing regularly through the summer. They completed straightening the headstones in Robinson that had needed the most immediate attention.

Financial report and Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget: Commissioners reviewed the budget and expenses as of September 8. The endowment balance is \$166,920.01.

Hudson Cemetery: Juanita pointed out that there is still no sign. Joe will install it. John and Joe will meet there as well.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15.

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

Next meeting

October 28, 2020

Time and Location TBD

Respectfully submitted,

Fletcher Dean,

September 17, 2020