

**Minutes of Meeting
Nelson Cemetery Board
Monday, April 18, 2022, 4:00 PM**

Members Present: Elaine Giacomo, Linda Cates, Al Stoops, Laurie Smith

We met in Cemetery Two at 4:00 to review the area available for new plots and then moved to the lower level of the Library at 5:46 PM to continue the meeting.

Review of Area in Cemetery Two for New Plots

We focused on the area in Cemetery Two that was originally designed as a traffic circle to allow vehicles into the back of that cemetery. The traffic circle design was never developed and is, in fact, an open grassy area. Doing away with the traffic circle, yet leaving a roadway to the back of the cemetery on each side frees up 29 feet along the stone wall adjoining Cemetery One and 51 feet along the stone wall adjoining the Coughlin's. Avoiding two rocky areas on the Coughlin side, there is room for eight full 5 x 10 feet burial plots. Avoiding a tree (and rocks?) on the Cemetery One side there is room for four or more 4 x 4 feet cremains plots. We agreed to lay out these plots and make them available for sale once we determine that they are not owned by anyone.

Review of Minutes

Minutes of the March meeting were reviewed and approved as written. The minutes were drafted by Linda with revisions by Elaine, Al and Laurie.

Report on New Hampshire Cemetery Association Conference

Laurie reported that the focus for this year's meeting was green burials. This month's issue of "National Geographic" magazine has an article on green burials. Some cemetery operators have asked their local nurseries to provide them with a list of native plants, shrubs and trees for use on their grounds. We learned that there is a Green Burial Master Class and that some funeral operators are now offering a "Green Package" to their customers. Wool shrouds are being used for cremains or for green burials. Various organic materials are used for caskets. There is such a thing as "Natural Organic Reduction" (human composting), where the body is heated, but not burned.

Green burials are recommended to be 3-1/2 feet deep with lots of soil mounded on top of casket burials to level the ground as the casket decomposes. Light machinery can be used for digging graves.

The website for New Hampshire funeral resources, education and advocacy is www.nhfuneral.org. They offer classes and information.

One option of Conservation Burial is very close by to us if anyone is interested in visiting - Life Forest, on 200 Beard Rd. in Hillsborough.

Some cemeteries have begun to use digital markers and /or QR Codes to mark graves and coordinate their records. QR Codes are also used to provide information about the person who is buried there.

Jack Goodnoe, a cemetery designer in the Midwest was mentioned. His website, www.jackgoodnoe.com has several articles that he has written: Master Planning, Large and Small, Planning with Water in Mind, Planning for Tomorrow, Preparing Your Cemetery for Winter, etc.

Forms were also discussed: Waivers for Liability, Waivers for Disinterment, Certificate of the Right to Intern, where the town still owns the land. Fitzwilliam has a form to share from their website, "Designation of Rights to Intern."

Laurie told us that she learned about and joined the New Hampshire Old Graveyard Association. They are holding a meeting on May 14 at the Stoddard Historical Society. Laurie will be attending, please let her know if anyone else is interested.

At the cemetery conference, Laurie won maple syrup and Al won Panera bread.

Update on Gary Robinson Work on the New Cemetery

Linda reported that Gary has reserved the necessary laser equipment for the week of May 21 thru May 28. The cost is about \$130 for the week. Gary would like to become familiar with the perimeter of the new cemetery prior to that time. He will be away the first two weeks of May. Al will contact Gary and arrange to walk the property lines with him.

Finding a Certified Arborist

Al reported that he spoke to the New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Office and they referred him to two certified arborists, one in Alstead and one in Marlborough. After further discussion, we agreed to wait until next year, after this year's tree work is complete, to engage an arborist.

Tree Work by King Pine Tree Service

Laurie reported that she and Harry met with John Sandri in the cemetery, without snow on the ground, so that he could get a better idea of the lay of the land. Sometime this summer or fall, when the ground is dry, he will get his lift in and do the work, including taking down some high dead branches. The work will be done within the \$7,000 budget for tree work.

Process for Approval of Large Dollar Item Expenditures

Elaine explained that the Select Board has to approve our expenditures or contracts over say \$300.00. Elaine will check with Edie to confirm the exact amount. The Select Board requires a detailed proposal, proof of insurance and a tax ID number. We agreed that the Cemetery Board should approve these items before they go to the Select Board for their approval.

Other Fencing Options for the New Cemetery

Laurie reported that when she and Harry met with John Sandri, she asked him for estimates on various fencing ideas for the new cemetery. (John's family's company does fencing.) She got the following three quotes:

- 1) Granite posts with wood rails - \$18,000.
- 2) Granite posts with chain links - \$19,600.

- 3) Stone wall to match existing stone walls - \$27,000 .The wall would be surface field stones, single stack, 340 feet long by 3 feet high. John said that he would love to build this wall.

We wondered if the new owner of Betsy Street's property would be willing to share the cost of a fence between their property and the new cemetery.

Linda said that the fence could be considered part of the cemetery design and we probably shouldn't make any decision until we have consulted a cemetery designer.

Having no further business, Elaine adjourned the meeting at 6:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Cates for the Nelson Cemetery Board