

## **Minutes of Meeting Nelson Cemetery Board Monday, April 20, 2026, 3:30 PM**

**Members Present:** Elaine Giacomo, Harry Flanagan, Linda Cates, Al Stoops, Laurie Smith.

Elaine called the meeting to order at 3:33 PM.

**Next Regular Meeting:** Monday, May 18, 3:30 PM, in the lower level of the Library.

### **Review of Minutes:**

The March minutes were reviewed and approved as presented. The minutes were signed by the Board members. Laurie will deliver the signed copy to Karen and Elaine will email a copy to Edie.

### **Task Reports by Members:**

#### **Elaine:**

- Emailed approved February minutes to Edie.
- Requested approval from the Selectboard for up to \$1,500 for markers for the New Cemetery.
- Did not deliver maple syrup to Grever and Ward.
- Emailed Michael Shawver about regular mowing of a portion of the New Cemetery but has not received a reply.
- Got the phone number of a possible gravedigger, Jeremy Hamilton.
- Got black plastic to cover the scattering garden and vinegar for clean-up day.
- Prepared a page of our current prices for plots and cornerstones.
- Visited the Munsonville Cemetery with Peterborough Marble and Granite. (Discussion below)
- Checked with Karen to see if the Laughlins followed up on their plots. Nadine said they will proceed.
- Did not follow up with Catherine Boyd for information about green burials. Low priority.
- Prepared and circulated the agenda prior to April meeting.

#### **Harry:**

- Talked to Mike Tarr about finishing the road in the New Cemetery. It's weather dependent. Mike expects to do it around Memorial Day.
- Followed up to get the new Munsonville Cemetery sign hung. (Discussion below)

#### **Linda:**

- Did March minutes.

#### **Al:**

- Attended the NHCA spring meeting on April 7.
- Arranged lime for April 16.
- Was not able to borrow a functional spreader for clean-up day.
- Did not develop list of all veterans in our Cemeteries.
- Added Joseph Felt to the list of veterans and found his grave, which does not have a veteran's marker.

#### **Laurie:**

- Delivered the signed February minutes to Karen.
- Met with Jon Buschbaum at the New Cemetery but did not get a firm quote.
- Attended the NHCA spring meeting on April 7.

- Posted official notice of April meeting.
- Got the key for the April meeting.

### **April 16 Cemetery Workday Recap:**

We successfully covered most of the scattering garden area with black plastic. We need an additional piece of covering about 10 feet by 10 feet. We should all look around to see if we have something that would work.

Unfortunately, we did not have functional spreaders available, so we were unable to do the liming. Harry's spreader broke on the day. He bought a new one at Hamshaw's for \$80.00. It handles 20-pound bags. Harry also found out that you can rent a spreader for \$23.00 a day from Hampshaw's. Harry will rent a spreader for tomorrow and he and Al will meet at 1:00 to start the liming.

Laurie will spray the Revolutionary War Monument on Friday. We were unable to do it on April 16 as Michael Shaver's crew was working in that area.

### **Report on Hanging the Munsonville Sign:**

Harry reported that our plan to use the two existing granite posts in Munsonville to hang the new Munsonville Cemetery sign will not work. The posts are only five feet long, and to stand solidly they need to be at least 3 feet in the ground, making the posts too short. Peterborough Marble and Granite has 7-foot granite posts that cost \$50 a linear foot, which comes to \$700 for two posts. Harry said he asked them about seconds, posts that have been removed from somewhere else. We agreed they do not need to be perfect. Harry also wondered if we could pour cement to mount our 5-ft posts on. Harry will keep working on this.

Harry added that he and Elaine think the sign should be perpendicular to Granite Lake Road. We all agreed.

### **Michael Shawver Update:**

Elaine reported that Michael Shawver's contract has been approved. It's \$200 over last year but does not include mowing the New Cemetery.

### **Update on Plot Layout of New Cemetery:**

Laurie, Linda, and Al met with Jon Buschbaum in the New Cemetery on March 25. We walked Jon around the cemetery and explained the sections that we want to have marked. We had a map with us and also showed him on the map. We will need to be sure that he understands to only mark the sections we want. John said he hadn't marked anything so small (as 12-grave sections) before and it would be like marking a mini housing development. He was willing to do the work but did not give Laurie a firm quote on how long it would take or how much it would cost. Laurie will follow up with him.

Linda suggested that we get rid of some of the outlying single plots that the Grever and Ward plan have. Laurie has already done that on the map she developed to determine the markers to order. The markers have been ordered from Andover Marker Company. Laurie is trying to get a firm price and said she may pick them up herself depending on the shipping costs; the town currently reimburses \$.725 a mile.

### **Gravestone Repair for Munsonville Cemetery:**

Elaine reported that she and Harry met with Broderick Kaufhold and an assistant from Peterborough Marble and Granite Works at the Munsonville Cemetery to discuss gravestone repair there. The priority for gravestones in Munsonville to be repaired this year are 1) veterans, 2) the most badly damaged, and 3) those visible from the road.

Regarding the cost, Broderick said that leaning gravestones can be repaired for as little as \$75, but fallen headstones that need two people to lift and restore to its original spot can cost as much as \$250. He said that they could fix a few headstones before Memorial Day, but that the bulk of their work would take place after Labor Day. The cost will depend upon the extent of the repairs needed. Elaine mentioned a budget of \$12,000; considering the number of headstones that they have fixed in previous years, the total of the work should be significantly less. She cited that figure because the Munsonville Cemetery General Trust Fund currently has more than \$33,000.

We thought we had money in the budget for Munsonville gravestone repair this year, but upon checking the budget we discovered that we do not. Elaine said it was originally in the budget but was removed, possibly because the Munsonville Trust Fund would cover it. Elaine will check with Edie about that. The question is - can we expend funds from the Munsonville Trust funds without having included it in the approved budget?

### **Munsonville Erosion Control Project for 2027:**

Our goal for 2026 is to identify a contractor and a methodology to deal with the erosion in the Munsonville Cemetery next year. We wondered if Mike Tarr could recommend someone. Also, Harry will talk to Jeremy Hamilton about it.

### **Report on New Hampshire Cemetery Association Meeting:**

Al and Laurie attended the NH Cemetery Association meeting on April 7. They said it was a good meeting, and Laurie provided two pages of notes on the presentations, which included the following information:

- Natural Organic Reduction (which is not yet legal in NH) and Green Burials (which are) were discussed. NH winters restrict the timing of green burials. Blankets to warm the soil are an option. Consider flexible closing dates based on weather. After a green burial, the grave needs to be closed immediately. Our Rules and Regulations will need to include green burials.
- Fifty to seventy percent of NH's more than 200 funeral directors are retiring soon. There is a bill in the legislature to license Associate Funeral Directors, which may alleviate the problem.
- Towns are required to provide a "decent burial" for indigent populations.
- There are 12,000 to 15,000 veterans from the Revolutionary War buried in NH.
- The state RSAs are on the NH website. A training day with Terry Knowles is being considered.
- Rules and Regulations should be posted in the cemetery.

### **Cemetery Rules and Regulations:**

We will review our Rules and Regulations at a later meeting.

### **Other Business:**

Harry confirmed that there are plenty of flags for Memorial Day.

Al will talk to Mike Tarr about the gate to Cemetery 2. Al also told us about his female ancestor in the Revolutionary War and told us about a program at the Keene Historic Society to honor Revolutionary veterans in honor of the country's 250th anniversary.

**Having no further business, Elaine adjourned the meeting at 4:42 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Cates for the Nelson Cemetery Board

## **MAY TO-DO LIST**

### **Elaine:**

- Email approved March minutes to Edie.
- Follow-up with Michael Shawver about regular mowing of a portion of the new cemetery.
- Give Karen a copy of our current prices for plots and cornerstones.
- Talk to Edie about money for the Munsonville gravestone repairs.
- Follow up with Catherine Boyd for information about green burials.
- Prepare and circulate the agenda prior to May meeting.

### **Harry:**

- Follow up on the granite posts necessary to get the new Munsonville Cemetery sign hung.
- Rent a spreader and work with Al to lime trees in the Old Cemetery.
- Talk to Jeremy Hamilton about the erosion work in the Munsonville Cemetery.
- Talk to Jeremy Hamilton about digging graves for us.

### **Linda:**

- Do April minutes.

### **Al:**

- Develop list of all veterans in our Cemeteries.
- Talk to Mike Tarr about the gate to Cemetery 2.
- Work with Harry to lime the trees in the Old Cemetery.

### **Laurie:**

- Deliver the signed March minutes to Karen.
- Follow-up with Jon Buschbaum for a quote to lay out the plots in the New Cemetery.
- Follow-up with Andover Marker Company for a firm price on the markers.
- Post official notice of May meeting.
- Get the key for the May meeting.

### **Everyone:**

- Review the Rules and Regulations to be discussed at a later meeting.
- Review the four cemetery record keeping software packages.
- Look for a 10 by 10 feet piece of black plastic to cover the uncovered area of scattering garden.

### **To Be Assigned:**

- Look into getting a water tank for the New Cemetery.
- Track down members of the Melville family regarding repairs to the Melville tomb.