

Minutes of Meeting Nelson Cemetery Board Tuesday, January 15, 2019 6:00 PM

Members present: Elaine Giacomo, Harry Flanagan, Linda Cates, Al Stoops, Marty French

Elaine called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Linda introduced herself to Marty; the two had never met before. Elaine informed Linda and Al that when the time comes to register as candidates for the Cemetery Board, their terms would be for two years, and not one year as she previously said. Harry also needs to register, but his term is for three years. Julia will email them when the registration period opens.

Minutes of the December meeting were approved and signed by the four Board Members present at that meeting.

Annual Report. Elaine distributed the draft copy of the Cemetery Board 2018 annual report and asked for comments, corrections and suggestions. Linda suggested a wording change that was approved by all. Elaine will make the correction and send the report to Edie tomorrow for inclusion in the Nelson town report.

Cemetery Software. Harry reported that he researched other cemetery site planning software companies and discovered many companies willing to do it for a fee. He will email members information about the companies, but reminded members that we first have to establish exactly what we need; this is particularly important with regard to the field across from the Nelson cemeteries that will become the town's newest cemetery (henceforth called Cemetery 3). A brief discussion of the layout of Cemetery 3 ensued, and Elaine promised to send members a copy of the proposed designs submitted to the cemetery board years ago.

Cemetery 2 Drainage. Linda inquired about the water table level in Cemetery 2, alluding to our plans to put drainage lines in that cemetery. Marty replied that there is a layer of clay about six inches below the soil surface, which causes the wet conditions. Since Phil Hamilton was unable to do the job in 2018, it was suggested that we see if Mike Tarr and Nick Barrett could do it instead. Elaine will check with the Select Board to see if this is possible. She added that Mike and Nick will be placing gravel on the roadway that passes through Cemeteries 1 and 2.

Rules for Cremains in other Towns. Al Stoops reported that he was able to get a copy of the Stoddard cemetery board rules and regulations; he will make copies for all of us. Stoddard has three public cemeteries and two private cemeteries. Like Nelson, they permit a maximum of four cremains per lot, but they do not require a vault for cremains. Elaine asked Bert Wingerson about Nelson's requirement that cremains be placed in a vault, and Bert did not remember that requirement. However, she did say that if family members wished to inter cremains in the ground without a vault, she required that they sign a form acknowledging that they understand that they cannot remove these cremains at a future date.

Headstone Repair. The board reiterated its resolve to make sure that Peterborough Marble meets its commitment to repair headstones in 2019. Harry will take the lead.

Border Markers for Cemetery 3. Al could not find the border markers for Cemetery 3. Since Marty and Bud French hay that field, Al showed Marty the tax map. After looking at the map, Marty reminded members that only half of the open field belongs to the town; the other half belongs to Betsy Street. This potentially reduces useable area of Cemetery 3 to approximately one acre. Marty said that he thinks he saw a marker near the wrought iron gate. Since winter is now upon us, the board decided to look for the markers again in the spring.

Rule and Regulations. Elaine reported that the Nelson Cemetery Rules and Regulations were last updated in 1999. Elaine will bring copies for everyone to the next meeting. We talked about possible changes, perhaps banning metal, maybe banning plants with thorns, and limiting the size of plants. We can also amend the rules for cremains at this time.

The board came up with the following priority list to insure that our 2019 goals are achieved:

1. By the 2020 town meeting, have a plan for the design of Cemetery 3.
2. Update the Cemetery Board rules and regulations
3. Put fresh gravel on the road running through Cemeteries 1 and 2
4. Have a remediation plan in place to solve the Cemetery 2 drainage problem
5. Keep in regular contact with Peterborough Marble to insure that headstones are fixed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Giacomo