

## **Minutes of Meeting Nelson Cemetery Board Monday, June 16, 2025, 3:30 PM**

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

Elaine called the meeting to order at 3:38 PM.

**Next Regular Meeting:** Monday, August 18, 3:30 PM, in the lower level of the Library. No regular meeting in July.

### **Review of Minutes:**

Minutes of the May meeting were reviewed and approved as presented. The minutes were signed by the Board members present at that meeting. Laurie will deliver the signed minutes to Karen. Elaine will email a copy to Edie.

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

#### **Elaine:**

- Emailed copy of April minutes to Edie.
- Kept up with developments regarding the Munsonville Cemetery, of which there were none.
- Sent a message to Catherine Boyd for information about green burials, awaiting response.
- Prepared and circulated the agenda prior to June meeting.
- Waiting for an estimate from Michael Shawver about liming the Old Cemetery and/or trees.
- Did not arrange for Mike Tarr to contact John LaCroix, (603) 305-4825, to coordinate work on the New Cemetery road and grading. (See discussion below.)
- Selectmen Mike Blaudschun has asked Mike Tarr to place the fallen stones back in the wall of the Old Cemetery.

#### **Harry:**

- Spoke to Joe Merrill about an estimate for removal of the tree in the Munsonville Cemetery,

#### **Linda:**

- Called Bert Wingerson to discuss names of the cemeteries. (See discussion below.)

#### **Al:**

- Didn't arrange to get water from Owen Iselin for the future cleaning of gravestones
- Didn't research practices and regulations for green burials.
- Didn't yet talk to Mike Tarr about further improvements to the gate to Cemetery II.

#### **Laurie:**

- Delivered signed April minutes to Karen.
- Posted official notice of June meeting.
- Got the key for the June meeting.
- Did not research practices and regulations for green burials this month, but will.
- Still reading Diocese of Manchester Rules and Regulations, then will pass them to Elaine.
- Did the geraniums for Memorial Day.

#### **Everyone:**

- Considered the hemlock hedge and shrubbery growing out of the stone walls. (See discussion below)

### **Update on New Cemetery Road Installation and Layout:**

Since John LaCroix reported that the new cemetery would need to be graded and planted with grass before he could lay it out, we discussed the issue. Harry and Linda wondered if it was really necessary. We came up with several ideas to determine if it is necessary. Elaine will ask Michael Shawver to mow part of the area that is being developed first so that we can walk it to determine how uneven it is. The grass should be mowed very low, like the other cemeteries so that we can compare. After it is mowed, the cemetery board members will inspect the area to see if the entire field actually needs to be leveled.

Linda will call Grever and Ward and get their opinion. Linda discussed the issue with Bert Wingerson, who also wondered if it was necessary. Bert did not know if this had been done when Cemetery 2 was established. Elaine will ask Ralph Walter if he happens to know, although he may be too young. Harry said that the new cemetery field had probably been smoothed by whoever first developed it as a field.

We wondered if the cemeteries under John LaCroix's care are prepared and maintained to a higher level on a larger budget than is the case with the Nelson cemeteries.

We considered if the road in the new cemetery should wait until after this issue was resolved, but Laurie made the point that the year is getting away from us and the money has already been allocated, so we decided to proceed with the road. Elaine gave Harry John LaCroix's number. Harry will talk to Mike Tarr to coordinate with John to figure out how to best proceed.

### **Update on Liming:**

Elaine is still awaiting an estimate from Michael Shawver on liming, either all of the Old Cemetery or just the area of the trees. Elaine said that when she was in the cemetery today with Bert Wingerson and her daughter, they noticed that two of the maple trees in Cemetery 2 are looking stressed. Many of our maple trees look stressed, but we are focusing on liming the old cemetery this season.

### **Further Discussion of Cemetery Names:**

Linda reported she talked with Bert and they did not have specific cemetery names while she was chair of the Cemetery Board. Bert suggested the "Old Cemetery" and the "Old Cemetery Annex" or "Extension" for Cemeteries 1 and 2. Later Bert suggested the new cemetery could be called the "East Cemetery." We wondered if we should solicit suggestions from the public through the Black Fly Express. Nothing was resolved and discussion will continue.

### **Update on Grave Sales and Burials:**

Elaine reported that two nieces of Walter Barndt, who is buried in Cemetery 2 and has two empty plots, asked if there was room for them there. There is room, but Elaine wondered how we determine if the nieces are entitled to use those plots. Are there other surviving family members? After discussion we suggested that Elaine call them back and inquire more about surviving family and ask for some documentation. We would like for them to be able to use the plots if possible, but will need some indication that it is appropriate.

Resident Beverly Kerber looked at available plots but did not make a decision.

Nadine and Buzz Loughlin will buy one of the cremation plots for their son's remains.

Bert Wingerson will be interring the cremated remains of her deceased daughter Susan on July 12.

Vicky Parker called on behalf of her nephew Josh Hutchins to inquire about adding a name to the plaque of Josh's father Ricky. However, the name was added to the plaque by the time Elaine inspected it yesterday. The big issue is that the plot that holds the cremains of Josh's father, Ricky, has not been paid for. Elaine needs to speak with Josh about that. Perhaps we can barter some tree work in exchange for that plot since Josh and his brother own a tree removal service.

### **Memorial Day:**

Elaine commented on how pretty the geraniums look that Laurie planted in a nice planter in front of the Civil War monument. Elaine and Laurie both said that the Memorial Day event was moving, with a band, Scouts, the minister and many townspeople. American flags were distributed and a gun salute was fired by the Nelson Police Chief.

Laurie mentioned that while she was working on the geraniums, she met the family of the young man with the motorcycle headstone. She said they were very nice. They were unaware that maintenance of the plot is their responsibility. Elaine suggested that we might want to write an article for the Black Fly Gazette reminding plot holders of their maintenance responsibilities.

Elaine related how she has ended up in charge of the Memorial Day event when it passed from Kathy Baudschun to her. Elaine is looking for someone to take it over.

### **Selectboard Suggestions Regarding the Cemeteries:**

Elaine reported that the Selectboard walked up and looked at the cemeteries. They think the hemlock hedge looks messy and would like us to do something about it. We discussed it but didn't come to a conclusion. Al suggested trimming it to about four feet high. There was a question as to whose land it is on, the cemetery's or the Coughlin's. Laurie says it's on cemetery land. Someone on the board will double check.

The Selectboard also commented on the shrubs and saplings growing out of the stone walls, and offered to help us clip them. Perhaps we can start doing that when we walk the new cemetery. Linda suggested that when we take that walk we include a walk around Cemeteries 1 and 2 and try to see them with fresh eyes.

### **Other Business:**

Elaine said that someone complained that the Quigley headstone had been damaged. She checked and did not see any damage. Al said that there is more than one Quigley stone in the cemetery. He will check the one that is near May Sarton and will let Elaine know if it is damaged.

Harry reported that Joe Merrill is insured and that Joe wondered if he should include stumping the tree in the Munsonville Cemetery. We asked Harry to ask him to include it, but as a separate item.

**Having no further business, Elaine adjourned the meeting at 4:36 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Cates for the Nelson Cemetery Board

## **JUNE/JULY 2025 TO-DO LIST**

### **Elaine:**

- Email copy of May minutes to Edie.
- Ask Michael Shawver to mow a section of the new cemetery.
- Keep up with developments regarding the Munsonville Cemetery.
- Follow up with Catherine Boyd for information about green burials.
- Prepare and circulate the agenda prior to August meeting.
- Follow up with Michael Shawver about liming the old cemetery.
- Follow up with Barndt nieces about the two Barndt plots.
- Follow up with Hutchins family regarding the unpaid plot.

### **Harry:**

- Ask Joe Merrill to include stumping as a separate item on his estimate for removing the tree in Munsonville.
- Speak to Mike Tarr about getting the road done in the new cemetery. Give him John LaCroix's number and ask them to coordinate.

### **Linda:**

- Do June minutes.
- Call Grever & Ward about the necessity of smoothing and planting the new cemetery.

### **Al:**

- Check the Quigley headstone near May Sarton for damage and report to Elaine.
- Arrange to get water from Owen Iselin for future cleaning of gravestones.
- At some point, talk to Mike Tarr about further improvements to the gate to Cemetery II.

### **Laurie:**

- Deliver signed May minutes to Karen.
- Post official notice of August meeting.
- Get the key for the August meeting.
- Read Diocese of Manchester Rules & Regulations, then pass them along.

### **Everyone:**

- Meet and walk through the new cemetery to gauge its unevenness. Continue to Cemetery 1 and 2 with "fresh eyes." Bring clippers to trim shrubs from stone walls.

### **To Be Assigned:**

- Track down members of the Melville family regarding repairs to the Melville tomb.