

Minutes of Meeting Nelson Cemetery Board Monday, May 20, 2024, 3:30 PM

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

Elaine called the meeting to order at 3:35 PM.

Next Meeting

Monday, June 17, 3:30 PM, in the lower level of the Library. Laurie will reserve the room. The following meeting is Monday, July 17.

Review of Minutes

Minutes of the April meeting were approved. The minutes were signed by the Board members and Laurie will deliver them to Karen. Elaine will email Edie a copy of the minutes.

Task Reports by Members

Elaine

- Elaine emailed the April minutes to Edie.
- Elaine contacted Michael Shawver regarding Rick Lothrop's internment.
- Elaine attended the NHCA Meeting.
- Elaine did not ask John Bunce if he would be willing to take down the old maple tree in the Munsonville Cemetery in exchange for the wood, but she will do this tonight.
- Elaine followed up on the Munsonville Cemetery issue. (See discussion below.)
- Elaine prepared and circulated the agenda for the May meeting.

Harry

- Harry continued trying to contact Mike Tarr about moving the granite posts in Munsonville and about straightening the gatepost to Cemetery 2. He did speak to Nick Barrett and will keep trying. Elaine mentioned that they are very busy right now.
- Harry spoke to Wayne Dunham at the VFW and got a list of four or five organizations that will help with the burial of veterans. He didn't know of any state organizations that would help. There is a Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen County where veterans can be buried free of charge.
- Harry attended Rick Lothrop's service.
- Harry put the flags in the Munsonville Cemetery.

Linda

- Linda did the April minutes.
- Linda attended the NHCA Meeting.
- Linda contacted Grever & Ward asking for a proposal on design of the new cemetery.
- Linda contacted Crypt Keeper software for further information. We discussed the possibility of beginning to use this service in January. Al offered to work on this with Linda.

Al

- Al attended the NHCA Meeting.
- Al opened the Cemetery gates.
- Al got a flag for Rick Lothrop's grave and attended the service.
- Al put flags on veterans' graves in Cemeteries One and Two and in front of the Civil War Monument.

Laurie

- Laurie delivered the signed April minutes to Karen.
- Laurie attended the NHCA Meeting.
- Laurie reserved the room for the May meeting and for the remainder of the meetings this year.
- Laurie posted the official notice of the May meeting.
- Laurie brought the expenditure report to the May meeting.

Munsonville Cemetery Update

Elaine reported that we will continue to work with Gary Kinyon on this, using RS 289-9:21, Abandonment of Cemetery Burial Grounds. However, it hasn't been quite 20 years, and this doesn't address the issue of the trust funds.

We need to get this resolved. There are about two dozen stones in the Munsonville Cemetery that need repair.

Linda suggested and we all agreed that we need to publish an article explaining why we are saying the Munsonville Cemetery has been abandoned since the Munsonville Cemetery Association did not, in fact, abandon the cemetery, but instead turned it over to the Town of Nelson.

Update on Harris Family Plot

Laurie reported that she has been in touch with Karen Harris Connley who lives in Maine and is a descendant of the Harris family. They visit the plot regularly and are active in Historic Harrisville. They want to make sure the Harris family plot is kept up properly. Ms. Connley will talk to other relatives and get back to us. Laurie has sent emails and photos.

Meanwhile, Al has performed a "Yankee fix" by propping up the fence. Laurie reported that we have not heard back from the ironworker in Wilton.

Grever and Ward Update

Linda reported that Grever and Ward asked for a copy of the survey of the property, which she sent to them. Dave Ward is away this week but will send us a proposal when he gets back next week.

Memorial Day Plans

Elaine confirmed that instead of individual plants on each grave we will get decent size plants for the Civil War monument in front of the church and the Revolutionary War Memorial in the Cemetery as well as outside the cemetery gates.

Laurie needs to get more geraniums for the Civil War Monument and the Town Hall plaque. Laurie needs to dig five holes. Al will help. They will go after the meeting and check it out.

Elaine will not be here for Memorial Day. She doesn't know about the parade. Maybe Brenna will organize it.

Harry and Al have put the flags on veterans' graves.

Elaine said we used to have a large can of flags to hand out for the parade. We lost them. Mike Blandschun found them, but now they are missing again.

Budget

We wondered about some items in the budget. Laurie had a copy with her. There is \$1,000 for an arborist and \$2,500 for tree removal. Al will follow up with an arborist.

There is \$10,000 for Michael Shawver for mowing. So far \$2,947.91 has been spent on that, plus \$120 on the NHCA meeting.

Request for Green Burial

Nan Lesourde has asked if a green burial in the plot with her parents is possible. We wondered if there is space in their plot. Laurie and Al are going to the Cemetery after the meeting and will check on this. (There is not space on their plot for a green burial which takes the space of a full burial. There are not available plots right next to them, but there are some in the same general area.) Green burials are planned for the new Cemetery but Elaine said that we should only approve a green burial in the existing cemeteries if the body is covered with an upended concrete vault. Linda will relay this information to Nan Lesourde's representative.

Other Business

Space for Cemetery Records – Elaine said that we need space in Town Hall to keep Cemetery records.

Map of Old Cemetery - Harry suggested we fly a drone over Cemetery One to get the layout. Maybe one of Elaine's sons can do this. We wondered if LIDAR might help to identify graves. Linda will consult Rick Church.

We will clean gravestones on Sunday, June 9, from 1:00 to 3:00. We also want to clean the Civil War Monument in front of the church sometime in June.

Al reported that the electric sheep fences are up in the new cemetery, but there are no sheep there yet.

Having no further business, Elaine adjourned the meeting at 4:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Cates for the Nelson Cemetery Board

JUNE TO-DO LIST

Elaine:

- Email May minutes to Edie.
- Ask John Bunce if he would be willing to take down the old maple tree in the Munsonville Cemetery in exchange for the wood.
- Follow-up on the Munsonville Cemetery issue.
- Prepare and circulate agenda prior to June meeting.

Harry:

Linda:

- Do May minutes.
- Contact Grever & Ward to get a proposal. Consult with Laurie and Al.
- Ask Rick Church if LIDAR might be helpful in identifying graves in Cemetery One.
- Relay information to Nan Lesourde regarding green burial.

Al:

- Help Laurie plant geraniums for Memorial Day.
- Follow up or plan for an arborist.

Laurie:

- Deliver signed April minutes to Karen.
- Buy more geraniums and plant geraniums for Memorial Day.
- Post official notice of June meeting.
- Get the monthly report of Cemetery expenses from Edie for the June meeting and clarify categorization of \$288.53 expense. Ask for both monthly and year-to-date columns on the report.

Everyone:

- Clean gravestones on Sunday, June 9, 1 – 3 PM.