TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 15, 2026
Office Building, Meeting room 3
Via Zoom and YouTube Live

In attendance:
Cemetery Committee Members:

Karl Stofko, Chairman
Crary Brownell, Vice Chairman
Alison Guinness
Debra Denette, Secretary

Others: Irma Carper-Miller
Bernie Miller
Rick Shea

Call to Order

Dr. Stofko called the Cemetery Committee to order at 7:00 p.m.

Adoption of Minutes.

Motion by Mr. Brownell to accept the minutes of the November 20, 2025 regular meeting as presented. Mrs. Guinness seconded the motion. The motion adopting the August minutes carried unanimously.

Communications

Mrs. Denette noted that the Board of Selectmen liaison to the Cemetery Committee is Erik Dill.

Mrs. Denette also noted that both Hal Bailey and Elaine Woods are looking for burial space at family plots. Decisions by the Committee are necessary, more discussion will take place under bylaws, rules and procedures.

Veteran's Update

Irma noted that the Troopers have nearly completed their indoor work. They have been meeting every Monday and Friday.

Irma added that from the second yard, the John Warner stone has been a significant challenge and a new stone may need to be placed. Irma stated that she learned that a car drove through the cemetery in the 1960's. She stated that second yard has been the most neglected cemetery that they have worked on in her opinion.

Facilities Update

Mr. Shea stated that leaf clean-up has been occurring. Public works is looking to move the gate and create a parking area at the Three Bridges Cemetery.

Old Business

The Mark Phillips stone still has not been located (Irma has been looking)
The Spencer stones are still located in the basement of the Municipal Office Complex
Fencing at Bashan is still a wish of the committee, and an appropriate grant request. As is fencing at Three Bridges, and a gate for the entryway at Warner.
Article promoting need for expansion of cemeteries should be written as the process moves forward.

By-Laws, Rules & Procedures, Ordinance

A Memo was sent to the Selectmen requesting alternates be added to the Committee's charge as the first step prior to formalizing amendments to the by-laws and rules and procedures. They have moved the request forward to town meeting. The town meeting has not been scheduled as of yet.

Mrs. Denette noted that our rules and procedures are silent regarding what a cemetery plot can contain. Many cemeteries allow cremations to be placed on top of burials (when there is deeded family right), ours are silent. Some research is necessary to determine if there are regulations or standards. Dr. Stofko stated that First Church allows one cremation on top of a burial. Only flat markers are allowed after.

It was also noted that there is an inconsistency with closed cemeteries and "no open cemeteries". It results from the fact that Mount Parnassus Cemetery and Millington Cemetery each have deeded plots that are not yet filled. Prior to 1930's Cemetery deeds didn't seem to exist. East Haddam has not sold a cemetery deed since the 1980's.

Additional cemetery space

Mr. Brownell is waiting on Mr. Ventres to obtain the documentation on work done by P&Z to identify town owned land that is suitable for cemetery expansion. Mr. Brownell suggested that perhaps tax credits could be offered to the property owner in lieu of payment to obtain the parcel

behind the Mount Parnassus cemetery. It would be the Committees preference to expand an existing cemetery rather than create another one.

Audience of Citizens

Nothing noted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm upon a motion made by Dr. Stofko, seconded by Mr. Brownell and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Denette