**TOWN OF EAST HADDAM**
**Cemetery Committee**
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2023
Municipal Office Building
Meeting room 3
Via Zoom and YouTube Live

In attendance:

Cemetery Committee Members

Karl Stofko
Alison Guinness
Deb Denette
Crary Brownell
Richard Pettinelli

Others

Rob Funk

## Call to Order

Dr. Stofko called the Cemetery Committee to order at 7:01 p.m.

## Adoption of Minutes

Mrs. Guinness motioned to accept the minutes of the November 17, 2022 meeting amended to capitalize "Find A Grave" on page two under Veteran's update. as presented. Mrs. Denette seconded the motion to accept with the correction identified by Mrs. Guinness. The minutes of the November 17, 2022 meeting carried with Mrs. Denette, Mrs. Guinness and Dr. Stofko voting in the affirmative. Mr. Brownell and Mr. Pettinelli abstained.

## Correspondence

Mrs. Denette reviewed an email from the Connecticut Cemetery Association inviting the town to join its membership and inquiring whether East Haddam had active municipal cemeteries. There was no interest by the Committee to join this association. Further, Mrs. Denette was asked to advise that we have no active municipal cemeteries at this time.

Vincent D'Amore, Esq. reviewed the draft by-laws that the Committee drafted. He opined that our by-laws are more Rules and Regulations. Attorney D'Amore requested to meet with the chairman, to discuss them. Dr. Stofko requested, and the Committee concurred, that Mrs. Denette could meet with the attorney on behalf of the Committee. A brief review of the

notations provided on the attorney's revision occurred. Dr. Stofko and Ms. Guinness expressed concern over the attorney revision that the town cannot restrict admittance to town owned cemeteries (should they become available) to only town residents. Mr. Brownell inquired if the review would be different from a land use attorney versus a general counsel. Mrs. Denette stated that she will inquire when she speaks with Attorney D'Amore. Mr. Pettinelli offered to provide draft language to expand the "and do no harm" which needed to be "fleshed out" in the attorney's revisions.

**Neglected Cemeteries Account Grant Program**

Mrs. Denette noted that a grant opportunity from the Neglected Cemeteries Account grant program became available with very short notice. As The Board of Finance MUST approve any grant prior to submission, she completed the application and submitted a request to the Board of Finance, who approved the application to move forward.

The application is for removal of a trees and pruning at both Mount Parnassus and Millington Cemetery. The quote received is for $3,400 at Mount Parnassus a $2,800 at Millington. The project would involve removal of dead or diseased maple tree and a cluster of dead or diseased ash and maple on the south side of Mount Parnassus cemetery (new section), large branches are dropping, one of the larger trees in this grouping is leaning to the left. Should the tree fall it will damage the headstones in the older section of the cemetery. At Millington, pruning and removal of dead and dying trees needs to occur behind the cemetery wall, to protect the stones therein. All of the appropriate paperwork to apply for the grant is available.

A second quote for repair to two sections of stone walls at Mount Parnassus cemetery was received totaling over $15,000.

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Guinness, seconded by Mr. Brownell, the Committee unanimously voted to submit the grant as prepared. A February 6th application deadline was noted.

**Veteran Update**

Mrs. Guinness advised that the Riverview Cemetery Board has advised that it will fund the veteran's workshop to teach the appropriate cleaning and straightening of memorial stones. A Saturday in April is being targeted.

Indian Stone

Mrs. Guinness presented photographs of the old stone in place, the removal and the replacement of a temporary marker. She also presented documentation from the East Haddam Historical Society who is now in custody of the stone. Mrs. Denette requested Dr. Stofko and Mrs.

Guinness to forward wording for a memorial so that quotes can be received. It would be the preference of the Committee to install four cornerstone markers and one center memorial stone with the language. It is estimated that the Indian burials occurred over a period of time between late 1700's and early 1800's.

**Budget**

Mrs. Denette drafted a budget memo requesting $10,000 for 23/24 and $5,000 annually thereafter to accumulate for the purpose of ultimately surveying all of the town owned cemeteries. Additionally $3,00 would be requested annually for cleaning supplies and repairing and/or replacing markers of historical importance. (the Indian stone was an example). Mr. Funk joined the meeting at this time. It was noted that there are invested funds dedicated for cemeteries, it was unknown if any of those funds could be utilized for purposes of improvements to those cemeteries. Mrs. Denette will work with Mr. Funk to get a budget submitted. Mr. Funk stated that the starting $10,000 should be a capital request.

Cemetery visits

Dr. Stofko and Mrs. Guinness visited both the Town Farm Cemetery and Parker Cemetery. Dr. Stofko noted that there are 47 markers at Parker cemetery, and that despite the cemetery having been inactive for a significant period of time appears to have had a bench and cremains added to it.

Town Farm lacks markers. It was noted that following completion of the Indian marker, there should be a marker at the Town Farm Cemetery.

Audience of Citizens

Nothing noted.

There being no further business to discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. Brownell and Mr. Pettinelli, and carried unanimously, the Committee adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Denette