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

In attendance:

Cemetery Committee Members

Karl Stofko
Crary Brownell
Deb Denette
Alison Guinness
Richard Pettinelli

Others

Donald Henson

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 September 20, 2023 meeting as presented. Mr. Brownell seconded the motion to accept the minutes as presented. The minutes of the September 20, 2023 meeting carried unanimously.

Correspondence

At the last meeting, the Secretary was instructed to send a letter to Jim Rankin regarding signage in the East Haddam Cemeteries. A copy of the letter was distributed. The letter was returned, the forwarding order had expired. Dr. Stofko stated that he would give the letter to Mr. Rankin's brother Russell.

Mrs. Denette conveyed information regarding the New England Cemetery Association 2023 December event. The event will be held in Sturbridge Massachusetts December 4th and 5th.

Veteran Update

Don Henson noted that the recently donated trailer is working out very well for the Veterans, as it enables them to store their equipment where it is needed. He documented the following:

- Old Cove Cemetery logged 78 man hours
- Basin Hill logged 23 man hours
- Millington Cemetery logged 101 man hours

Mr. Henson continued that the veterans have utilized four tons of processed stone in resetting stones. Dr. Stofko was particularly interested in the work that occurred at Millington Cemetery as that is a Town Owned Cemetery. Mr. Henson noted that five broken stones had been repaired and another 12 had been reset. He noted that work is necessary for the Joshua Cone stone, which is located on the North side of the cemetery, leaning down the hill around the bad corner on Mt. Parnassus. He noted that Mr. Cone was a revolutionary war captain. General discussion regarding the best way to access that stone was held. Mrs. Denette will inquire with the town what would be required to close the road to one lane and bring in appropriate equipment.

Mr. Henson stated that the work that the veterans are doing is purely volunteer work and he added that there is no budget for them to work with. He stated that they have been fortunate to have had supplies donated by the Town, Riverview Cemetery and Shagbark in order for them to do the work, but there would be no budget to pay flagmen to close a road, or to rent heavy machinery. He added that donations to the Veterans are always welcome as would be additional workers to work on non veteran stones.

Ms. Guinness noted that the late season will necessitate a hiatus. Mr. Henson added that epoxy needs 60 degrees to set. He stated that he has been taking broken stones to his shop for repair. He added that most of the breaks that have been encountered are a result of impact from mowers. Dr. Stofko stated that much of the damage occurred when string trimmers were metal.

Indian Stone

A spring date is being targeted. Mr. O'Neill stated that he would look at his calendar and provide some dates.

Three Bridges Cemetery

Dr. Stofko noted that the Town maintains this privately owned cemetery that is right by the road on Three Bridges Road. The property transferred in 2022 to Richard and Julie Neely, Jr. whose primary residence is in Virginia.

Dr. Stofko stated that there should be some type of agreement by the property owner and the Town regarding access and maintenance or the Town should see if it can acquire the cemetery property. Dr. Stofko stated that there is significant history of East Haddam's early settlers in that

cemetery. Mrs. Denette was charged with drafting a letter for the Committee's review. The objective of the draft letter to the property owners is to see if they can be engaged.

Schedule of Meetings

Mrs. Denette noted that it is time to file the 2024 schedule of meetings with the Town Clerk. She also noted the invitation to attend a Freedom of Information Workshop that will be held on November 29, 2023 at the Municipal Office Building. Copies of the invitation were distributed. It was the consensus of the Committee to keep meetings status quo.

Accordingly, Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to continue Cemetery Committee meetings on the Third Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm (MOC Meeting Room 3). Mr. Brownell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously via voice vote.

Other

Mrs. Denette distributed a packet of photos to all members documenting work done by the veterans at Bashan Cemetery that was presented at the last meeting. She also assembled title work regarding the lack of a deed for Warner Cemetery and provided a copy for each member.

Dr. Stofko charged all members with coming to the next meeting prepared to establish a list of priorities for the Committee. Mr. Brownell and Mr. Pettinelli also suggested establishing three dates to organize work parties. The cemeteries that should be priorities will need to be discussed. Ms. Guinness can work on advertising for helpers at the work parties. Mrs. Denette suggested that working with the scouts and having them pick the date may work better than the Committee picking the date and asking the scouts to join.

The agenda for the November meeting will be to work on this priorities list and to make final edits to the Neely letter for submission. It is anticipated that the December meeting will be cancelled.

Audience of Citizens

Nothing noted.

There being no further business to discuss, upon a motion made by Mrs. Denette, seconded by Mr. Pettinelli the Committee adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Denette