

TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2025
Municipal Office Building, Meeting room 3
Via Zoom and YouTube Live

In attendance:

Cemetery Committee Members:

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

Others: Rick Shea, Facilities
Don Henson, VFW

Call to Order

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

Adoption of Minutes.

Motion by Mrs. Denette to accept the minutes of November 21, 2024 as presented. Mr. Brownell seconded the motion. The motion adopting the November 21, 2024 meeting minutes carried unanimously.

Communications

The schedule of meetings for 2025 was presented. It was noted that meetings remain the third Thursday of each month. Mrs. Guinness noted that she would be unable to make the April meeting.

Root trust

It was reported that this matter has been settled through the Probate Court. Cemeteries that were benefactors under this trust have received a final payment.

Veteran's Update

Cemetery Committee –November 21, 2024

Mr. Henson stated that over 613 hours have been put in on town owned cemeteries this year. He stated that Bashan Cemetery is 80% complete..

Mr. Henson advised that nothing has been done regarding the two very problematic large red oak trees that need to be removed, despite pleas to the cemetery committee, the facilities department, the selectman's office and the chair of the Board of Finance..

He stated that a strong wind will take them down and many more stones will suffer for it. The need for fencing at this cemetery was also emphasized. Mr. Henson noted that the cold weather has put the Troopers on a hiatus until spring. He does however, have 13 broken stones ready to be repaired, he is in need of a heated on grade space to perform this work. He has spoken to the First Selectman and is hopeful that the town can provide such space.

Three Bridges Cemetery

Mrs. Denette advised that the Town is obtaining written approval of the intent to convey the cemetery by the property owner, as all communication to date has been verbal.

Old Business

The Mark Phillips stone still has not been located

The Spencer stones are now located in the basement of the Municipal Office Complex

Budget

Mrs. Denette noted that she has submitted the November minutes to the Finance Director where our budget requests were identified.

Neglected Cemeteries Grant

So many priorities exist, Tree removal at Bashan, the need for a fence at Bashan, tree removal and many other cemeteries. Stone work and hand rails at Warner. Dr. Stofko is particularly worried about the liability issues at Warner. He noted that the Palmer Warner house conducts tours at that cemetery. Discussion was held that you cannot deny access to a cemetery. After lengthy discussion it was determined that the tree work at Bsshan was the most important at this time, as the damage that will result in the cemeteries would be significant when the dead trees topple. It was suggested that someone at Landmarks be approached to determine if the Palmer Warner house might be able to assist in the repair of the steps so they can continue to run their tours. It was suggested that a certificate of insurance should be provided the town for such events. A letter to Landmarks will need to be composed.

Audience of Citizens

The Committee reviewed a survey of Ackley Cemetery done by Mr. Ziobron in the 1980's. It is believed that Mr. Ziobron may have done all of the Town owned cemeteries, however, they were not recorded. Effort to contact Mr. Ziobron on this will be made. Discussion on the different types of surveys was also held.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Denette