TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
Cemetery Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 20, 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
Debra Denette, Secretary

Others: Don Angersola, 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 Mr. Brownell to accept the minutes of January 16, 2025 regular meeting and the March 6, 2025 Special Meeting as presented. Mrs. Guinness seconded the motion. The motion adopting both sets of minutes carried unanimously after a brief pause while the minutes were read.

Communications

Mrs. Denette noted that there were no communication items that were not on the agenda.

Veteran's Update

Mr. Henson stated that the cemetery troopers are grateful to have indoor space to work in over the winter. He stated that they have just completed restoration efforts on their 100th stone. Mrs. Denette and Mrs. Guinness both attested to the quality of the work.

Mrs. Guinness noted that Preservation Connecticut will recognize the Cemetery Troopers for their restoration efforts in East Haddam cemeteries at a May 8th awards dinner in Hamden.

Mr. Henson noted that Parker Cemetery, Tater Hill Cemetery and Bashan Cemetery (will be)

totally restored. He stated that going forward the Troopers will return their focus to veteran's gravestones.

Facilities Update

Mr. Angersola reported that the tree work at Bashan cemetery should be completed tomorrow. He stated that if the winds are problematic for the work, then it will be pushed off to Monday. He added that the budget moved forward with $20,000 for tree removal in and around the town owned cemeteries and a commitment to budget the same for the next three years.

Mr. Angersola stated that at last Saturday's Board of Finance budget meeting, the Board of Finance was not receptive to cemetery expansion.

It was noted that spring clean up of the cemeteries has begun.

Discussion was held relative to fencing at Bashan Cemetery. Mr. Angersola stated that he did not see the need for it. A 1980 survey clearly showed the granite and cedar posts of a fence long gone. Mr. Henson stated that wrought iron railings must have been in place at one time as remnants were found. The Committee stated that it would like to see fencing restored, and felt that it was a safety concern on the east side. It was also noted that fencing may be statutorily required. Mr. Angersola stated that St. Bridget cemetery does not have fencing around its entire cemetery, only the front. The Committee and Mr. Angersola agreed to disagree and it was noted that it was moot at this time as there was no budget for it.

Three Bridges Cemetery

Mr. Angersola noted that a quit-claim deed has been drafted and is being reviewed by the attorney. The property owner is pleased to convey the parcel to the town.

Old Business

The Mark Phillips stone still has not been located
The Spencer stones are still located in the basement of the Municipal Office Complex
Mrs. Denette relayed a citizens suggestion that the original spencer stones be returned to Millington Cemetery at the gravesite where the remains likely are. Dr. Stofko and Mrs. Guinness both believed that additional burials have since occurred on the original site, and the exact location would only be a guess. It was further stated that it would be up to the SAR to determine where they will ultimately be housed, if a room at the Historical Society does not materialize. It was also noted that the cost of restoration was approximately $30,000 and the stones are too fragile to be housed outdoors with no protection.

Budget

Mr. Angersola stated that the Board of Finance will finalize its deliberation this Saturday; the cemetery budget was discussed last Saturday. It was noted that the Cemetery Committee never received notice of when it's request was being discussed.

Neglected Cemeteries Grant

Mrs. Denette noted that the deadline to submit was 2/12/2025 and that an application was delivered. Determination of awards was to be by 3/13/2025, however, no notification has been received. She stated that she checked with the selectman's office and reviewed the neglected cemetery grant page on OPM's website, which only listed application information.

Audience of Citizens

Nothing noted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm upon a motion made by Mrs. Denette, seconded by Mr. Brownell and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Denette