

Waterbury Cemetery Commission

Location: Zoom

March 3, 2021 Meeting Notes

Present: Jack Carter, Jan Gendreau, Bill Shepeluk, and Jill Chase

- Minutes of the February 3, 2021 meeting: change “VOCCA” to “VOCA”; approved as amended.

Items Discussed, Old Business:

Bill answered questions on our financial sheets.

Jan asked how gas & water usage and public works director rates are determined. Bill says Woody keeps track of how long he (and perhaps Alec) works for the cemetery, so a percentage of his/their salaried hours and how much gas they use is determined for the cemetery. The water in the Hope and Maple Street is not metered (but I don't remember how Bill said they determined the charge).

The “new equipment” was our share of the flag pole put up in Maple St. cemetery.

Part-time pay refers to mowing in cemeteries other than Hope.

Jan asked if these things could be included in the report we see, but Bill says the only report he could send is very confusing as written. As bills come in, purchases or labor is recorded under headings, not spelled out in the detail found on the actual bills.

The VFW money is being monitored and controlled by the cemetery commission, but the funds are still in a separate VFW account. These funds can be used to clean veteran memorials, but not personal veterans' cemetery stones. The flag pole came out of American Legion and Cemetery funds.

Because the Old Center Cemetery, recently damaged by a crash, is not owned by the town, the insurance company wants to pay the owners, not the town, for damage. Bill is working on what the insurance company needs to pay out. John will give an estimate on the stones and Woody on the fence. Jack is hoping the fence can be changed to something else. The insurance will be paying for so many feet of the current fence, and we could use that amount for a change of fencing. Bill said we could even use the “fence” money in the budget for this cemetery rather than the Maple St.

Bill sold some equity funds for \$70,000 while the market is good and moved it into our money market. This creates a nice pot of money in the cemetery funds which could be used to lend to the town for refinancing some loans, rather than the town getting a bank loan. We'd get the 2% interest rather than a bank, which keeps all the interest money within the town. Bill recommends, month by month, to reinvest some of that money back into the stock market depending on how it's doing. We sold high and could buy low. The cemetery committee in the past has let Bill make these decisions, though Bill will check in with us as well. He will bring some recommendations for investments to our next meeting.

Fence at Maple Street:

When the fence is replaced, it will be moved back enough that the trucks don't end up piling snow against it when they plow or wing the snow back. So far they are using the same quote for the fence from last year in planning.

On February 16th, Jack and Jan met with the tree committee. They decided to increase the number of Lindens from four to six, and replaced honey locusts with maple trees. Steve Lotspeich is ordering the trees. This should fill in along Winooski St. nicely.

Other business:

Jan wanted to know if we have gotten bids for specific tree work (like boxelders, and other “garbage trees”). Bill says if we look at the budget, we have to stick to our numbers. He wants us to realize that we only have \$2,500 budgeted for tree maintenance this year. The matching funds, \$6,500 we get from the state grant for the tree project, will be split between the cemetery and public works, even though it all shows up in our account. The highway dept. has \$4,000 to take down the ash trees. We have discussed what needs to be done over the past year though no specific bids were acquired. John would know where it stands with Woody and bids for clearing out unwanted trees. Bill proposes he’ll meet with John & Woody to decide what will actually get done this year with the money budgeted to try to pin down where money can be spent.

Future action:

Bill asks the commissioners to give a list of jobs that we want done during the next year to Bill in September. This should be an annual routine. Then staff will get estimates, etc. to run the numbers, with John’s help. Jack suggested past requests have not been met, but Bill says things come up during the year that keep things from getting done. If the cemetery commission organizes annually to get a concise list to Bill (for contractors, beyond what highway or public works can get done, we can then press him for answers that must be worked out by Dec. for the budget to be presented in January. Looks like we’ll have \$2,500 to do the tree cutting.

On the idea of having the driver in the cemetery crash perform community service in the cemeteries, that would have to be ordered by the judge in the case.

Next meeting:

Bill will return to discuss fences and encourage a discussion about how the funds in the money market will be used.

We’re looking for a report from John with bids for the tree culling we want done. (Are the trees marked?)

Bill reminded us that if we want to discuss anything between ourselves, we cannot make group decisions through emails. One-to-one emails are fine, but group discussion and decisions must take place in a public meeting setting.

Next meeting, Wednesday, April 7th, 4 pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Chase