

WATERBURY CEMETERY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes • July 1, 2026 – 4:00 p.m. • Steele Room

Members Present • Jan Gendreau, John Woodruff, Robert Dostis, and Jill Chase.

Guests • Alec Tuscany, Town and EFUD Engineer.

Discussion

June Meeting Minutes

- Approved as written.

Commissioner Barbara Walton

- Barbara will be moving soon, so the Commission should begin looking for a replacement for the Select Board to appoint.

Maple Street Cemetery Planning

- Alec was invited to provide an engineering perspective on the Maple Street Cemetery project. He felt that, with the expertise of Town staff, there may be no need to hire outside engineers. A challenge will be fitting the project into the Town's current workload. Coordination with the Public Works Director and the Town Manager will be essential.
- Initial priorities may include roads, water service, and parking.
- Alec will begin discussions with Bill Woodruff and obtain a cemetery map from Grenier's.
- He also cautioned that public-use issues should be considered, referencing the unauthorized trail creation occurring at the Waterworks.
- Alec will report back with recommendations, and the Commission will keep him included in future email discussions.

Maple Street Cemetery Master Planning Discussion

The Commission continued its discussion of long-term planning for Maple Street Cemetery, using four strategic planning questions as a framework for developing a master plan.

1. Long-Term Vision

- Create a park-like space that encourages safe public use.
- Develop something more distinctive than a typical Vermont green space.
- Provide additional burial options.
- Make richer and more efficient use of the available land.
- Create a haven for local wildlife, particularly birds.
- Encourage community involvement through individuals and organizations such as ARRTI, the American Legion, Scout troops, and local schools to help use and maintain the property.
- Develop a model that contributes to long-term financial self-sustainability.
- Employ dedicated cemetery staff with expertise in trees and landscaping, in addition to traditional maintenance duties, and possibly assume some sexton responsibilities.

- Well-designed common landscaping may reduce the desire for individual plantings around monuments. If future sections are designed primarily for cremation burials rather than traditional graves, this issue may become less significant because individual plots would occupy less space.

2. Challenges to Address

- Transition from primarily full-body burials to increased cremation burials.
- Provide attractive burial options, recognizing that many families may not know what they want until they see available choices.
- The Commission lacks the engineering and design expertise to develop the project independently.
- Determine whether the long-term vision is financially achievable.
- The current cemetery layout is projected to reach capacity for traditional burials in approximately 20 years, making advance planning essential.
- Determine whether sufficient assistance can be obtained from Town staff given current staffing limitations.
- Seek increased Town funding to support cemetery improvements.

3. Immediate Priorities

- Roads.
- Water service for future landscaping and visitor use.
- Trees.
- Overall cemetery layout, including balancing burial space with other public uses.

4. Funding and Implementation

- Establish an annual budget that reserves funds specifically for long-term improvements.
- Seek increased Town funding for maintenance and improvements to all Town cemeteries.
- Explore revenue-generating opportunities that contribute to long-term self-sustainability.
- Review the current budget to determine how much of existing funds can be used without jeopardizing the cemetery's long-term financial health.
- If additional Town funding is secured, consider establishing separate burial and lot purchase rates for residents and non-residents.

Other Business

- ARRTI requested that the Commission purchase a Limelight Spirea to replace an existing planting at a cost of \$40. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the purchase.
- The Commission observed that the Town would benefit from having its own arborist, given the large number of public trees requiring professional care and maintenance.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, August 5, 2026 • 4:00 p.m. • Steele Room

Respectfully submitted July 4, 2026, Jill Chase

