

WATERBURY CEMETERY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

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

Members Present • Jan Gendreau, Robert Dostis, and Jill Chase

Guests • Bill Woodruff, Bill Shepeluk, and Bryan Farnsworth

Discussion

July Meeting Minutes

The July meeting minutes were approved as written.

Historical Society Proposal

Bryan Farnsworth suggested that the Waterbury Historical Society could assist with cleaning and straightening stones in the older section of Hope Cemetery. The project would ideally be opened to community volunteers.

Bryan shared his experience with a similar effort in Bolton and offered to bring water and equipment needed for the work. Cleaning methods would follow recommendations from the Vermont Old Cemetery Association (VOCA), including the use of D/2 Biological Solution, a product commonly recommended for historic stone preservation.

The project is tentatively planned for the second or third week of September. Bryan noted that, when properly completed, the results should last approximately five years. Volunteer names and email addresses would need to be submitted to the Town for insurance purposes.

The Cemetery Commission expressed support for the project and would like to provide funding for the necessary supplies and expenses.

Storm Damage and Cleanup

Farr's Tree Service completed cleanup of storm-related damage at Hope Cemetery, including removal of a fallen tree at the Route 100 Cemetery and a street-side maple tree at Maple Street Cemetery.

Financial Report – Cemetery Funds (Fund 53)

Bill Shepeluk presented proposed changes regarding the management and accounting of Cemetery Fund 53.

Bill provided background on the evolution of the cemetery associations into a municipal Cemetery Commission. Historically, Cemetery Fund 53 operated as a separate fund dedicated specifically to cemetery-related expenses. The previous Town Manager changed the accounting structure by moving Cemetery Fund 53 into the Town's General Fund rather than maintaining it as a separate cemetery fund.

Bill recommended returning to the previous structure, with Cemetery Fund 53 once again maintained as a separate fund. He noted that, because the Cemetery Commission is an elected body, maintaining a dedicated fund would provide greater transparency, clearer tracking of

revenues and expenses, and a more accurate understanding of the financial condition of the cemeteries. He also noted that transactions should be recorded with sufficient detail to allow the Commission and public to understand how the fund is performing.

Bill also discussed the loss of the annual \$15,000 allocation from the General Fund that had previously supported cemetery restoration and maintenance projects. That funding was discontinued by the previous Town Manager. The Cemetery Commission expressed its interest in restoring this annual contribution, in addition to returning to the prior structure for management of Cemetery Fund 53.

Bill also suggested that improved financial oversight would be aided by having a Finance Director with a strong understanding of municipal funds and accounting practices.

Bill discussed the Monument Fund that was transferred to the Town shortly before the local VFW dissolved. These funds may be available for cemetery-related projects, such as improvements to the flagstaff area at Maple Street Cemetery. Further discussion with the American Legion is planned, and representatives may be invited to attend a future Cemetery Commission meeting.

Bill noted that there is currently a remaining balance in the Cemetery Commission's contractor line item that could be used before the end of the fiscal year. Potential projects include work at Demeritt Cemetery or repair/replacement of the fence at Route 100 Cemetery.

Old Route 100 Cemetery Stones

John Woodruff was absent, so the Commission was unable to receive an update regarding the status of the flush stone replacements at the Route 100 Cemetery.

Online Presentation of Cemeteries

Jill shared draft webpage content for the Route 100 and Maple Street cemeteries with the Commission. Robert used AI tools to enhance the presentation and improve the visual appeal of the proposed webpages.

The Commission will review the drafts, provide feedback, and discuss adding additional cemetery pages in the future.

Other Business

The Commission discussed the need to better divide responsibilities, including assigning contacts and areas of responsibility among members. The Commission would like to develop a shared list of contractors and service providers used for cemetery work rather than relying primarily on one individual to maintain contacts.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, September 2, 2026 – 4:00 p.m. • Steele Room

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Chase

August 6, 2026

