

Minutes – Cemetery Commission Meeting

Wednesday Dec 13, 2023 In attendance: Neil Humphrey, Kathy Johnston & Avis Hayden

Topics discussed:

1. Paid bill from Shea Monument for restoration of Perry headstone (Ira Allen).
2. Commissioners approved changes to the Cemetery Rules document and asked Town to make revisions. Policy now is to hand out this document each time a person pays for new lot.
3. Commissioners signed off on the deed for Welch and added this to the map.
4. Commissioners signed off on the deed for Bebee / Walter and added this to the map.
5. Commissioners developed 2024 budget and turned in figures to Town Clerk.
6. Commissioners summarized the highlights of 2023 work and wrote this up for the Town Report.
7. Commissioners listened to a presentation by William Budde, town historian and his daughter Rowan, who have received ARPA funds to create a data base of all burial sites in Sunderland's three old cemeteries. They have begun work at the Lawrence Cemetery. Some highlights of their presentation:
 - a. Photograph each stone
 - b. Form to document location and measurements of each stone
 - c. Document current damage to stones (lichen, bullet holes, leaning, cracking, etc).

They will continue with their work until finished with all three sites. Information will be kept in an Excel spreadsheet for ready access to information and ability to make maps / indices to help family members find stones. A binder with information and photos about each stone will be turned into the Town office.

It has become apparent that, due to the damage, their work will exceed the initial ARPA budget request. Commissioners are committed to asking for additional ARPA funds so that the researchers can go beyond their initial scope of work to: a) turn over stones that are lying flat, cross-reference names to ensure veterans are properly recognized by American Legion, and prioritize those stones that need Commissioner's attention for restoration and cleaning. Commissioners feel that this is vital to preserving Sunderland's history.

8. Based on the Budde initial report, Commissioners will notify mowing crew to be more careful with motorized equipment (evidence of scraping damage) and will recommend using

nylon-cord weed whacker. Also ,Commissioners will check with Shea Monument about cleaning techniques and will recommend only using what is best for long-term preservation.

9. Per request of Mr. Budde, Commissioners will ask Town Clerk to research the size of each cemetery (perimeter measurements / acreage).

Next scheduled meeting is Wednesday April 10, 2024, at 10:00 am at the Town Office.

Respectfully Submitted,

Avis Hayden