

## Minutes – Cemetery Commission Meeting

*Wednesday Apr 10, 2024 In attendance: Neil Humphrey, Kathy Johnston & Avis Hayden*

Topics discussed:

1. Need to check on status of ARPA funds for additional cemetery mapping (Bill Budde, see addendum at the end of minutes). Avis will follow up on this.
2. Commissioners approved a rate increase for perpetual care funds. This will require changes to the Cemetery Rules document and asked Town to make revisions.
3. Commissioners will follow up with the Bebee / Walter deed as this family is ready to place cornerstones.
4. Commissioners have considered using a drone to map the back section of Ira Allen (lots have changed due to roads) but decided today to try mapping this ourselves. Will aim for a sunny day in May to get started on this project.
5. Headstone cleaning & repair. Given our funds allotted for 2024, we must prioritize cleaning and repair. Will seek a “high priority” list from Bill Budde before going out for bid for 2024 services. Will also ask Mr. Budde for recommended cleaning practices for long range preservation.
6. Need to determine the perimeter for the Lawrence and Mt. Pleasant Cemeteries. Will begin by looking for deeds. Avis will assist Caroline with this effort.
7. Mowing contract for 2024 has not been renewed by Clyde Baker. Commissioners will reach out to Cassan Landscaping and invite them to our May meeting.

Next scheduled meeting is Wednesday May 8, 2024, at 10:00 am at the Town Office.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Avis Hayden**

Avis Hayden

ADDENDUM (from December meeting): 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.