

**Town of Concord  
Cemetery Committee Meeting  
April 6, 2022  
In Person and Via Zoom**

Members Present: Mr. Leo Carroll  
Mr. Brian Davidson  
Mr. Rod Riedel  
Mr. Jerry Soucy  
Ms. Rebecca Purcell

Also Present: Mr. Aaron Miklosko – Highway and Grounds Superintendent  
Ms. Patricia Hopkins – Cemetery Supervisor  
Ms. Justine St. John – Administrative Assistant for Highway & Grounds  
Ms. Linda Escobedo - Select Board Liaison  
Mark Gailus, 62 Prescott Road

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**A-1** The meeting was called to order at 4:06 pm

**A-2** It was announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.

**A-3** Three deeds submitted for signing.

**A-4** Next Meeting will be May 11, 2022 at 4:00PM

**A-5** Meeting Minutes from March 2, 2022 were approved.

Brian Davidson moved to approve the March 2, 2022 minutes. Rebecca Purcell seconded, and it was voted as follows to approve: (5-0)

Rod Riedel – Aye  
Leo Carroll - Aye  
Jerry Soucy – Aye  
Brian Davidson – Aye  
Rebecca Purcell – Aye

**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

**D-1: STAFF REPORT:**

Mr. Miklosko reported that during the Month of March there were 11 full burials, and 11 single grave lots sold. A large tree came down, whose root system failed that resulted in damage to headstones and a stone step, which has since been repaired. Work continues on the mapping program and he hopes to have it available to the public in May. Ms. Hopkins did a lot of work at Old Hill Cemetery this week in preparation for Patriots' Day.

## **D-2: LOT TRANSFER REQUEST – HAYWARD FAMILY:**

Ms. Hopkins spoke to this request. Ruth Hayward is the only descendent remaining who wishes to transfer ownership of the lot to her trust, of which she is the sole trustee. She may or may not sell the lot back to the Town in her lifetime. If she does not, her successor trustee, or attorney will then sell it back to the Town.

Mr. Davidson moved to accept the lot transfer request for the Hayward Family. Mr. Soucy seconded the motion, and it was voted as follows to approve (5-0)

Rod Riedel – Aye  
Leo Carroll - Aye  
Jerry Soucy – Aye  
Brian Davidson – Aye  
Rebecca Purcell – Aye

## **D-3: UPDATE – STONE WALL ASSESSMENT REPORT:**

Mr. Miklosko explained that per a previous request of the Cemetery Committee, funding was allocated from the FY22 budget to perform an assessment of the stone walls on cemetery property. The Town contracted with Wright-Pierce, one of the engineering firms utilized by Concord Public Works Engineering Division. They worked with Ms. Hopkins and staff to inspect the stone walls. They presented their findings in a detailed report, providing some options and probable costs. This is a good resource for the Committee and Department to use for long term planning. This is one of many needs identified by the Committee.

Discussion continues as to how to determine priorities. Mr. Miklosko advised staff or private contractors would need to analyze the size and condition of the walls, including abutting properties to determine which walls would have the highest risk. Perhaps a grant could be sought, or other determination of what funding could be utilized would be determined.

Mr. Soucy asked if the stone walls at Old Hill have been analyzed to determine the cost of their repair and questioned if they merit special attention. Mr. Miklosko responded that they had been included in the survey and that a stone wall in poor condition, that could impact a sidewalk such as at Old Hill, would most likely be given a higher priority than a stone wall located in a field. The Committee is charged with establishing the priority and the policy. The staff would work on putting together the information to implement those prioritized plans.

Mr. Riedel asked that Mr. Miklosko circulate the stone wall report to the Committee in Excel format. He also expressed that the Committee should work on obtaining funding for this endeavor, and that he would be happy to volunteer to assist. He also suggested that a column be added to the spreadsheet indicating the impact of failure, to assist with the prioritization. By doing a quick analysis the work needed on stone walls at the Old Hill Burial Ground would total approximately \$160,000 to \$180,000, which could potentially be achieved by a CPA grant. Mr. Soucy asked if Mr. Miklosko had an idea of what the engineering firm's estimated cost compared to the actual might be, based on the Town's past experience with their work. Mr. Miklosko advised that he would look into that.

## **D-4: UPDATE – COLUMBARIUM SUBCOMMITTEE:**

Mr. Soucy explained that the subcommittee recently met, and that design concept planning can occur over the summer. A meeting will occur with Wright-Pierce at the end of April to discuss more about construction and design, and he believes they may have some good recommendations for subcontractors for designers and builders of columbariums.

**D-5: DISCUSSION – ARTICLES 46 AND 47:**

Mr. Miklosko explained that both articles are relative to the Reformatory Branch Trail which abuts cemetery property. The Town of Bedford approved funding in their town for improvements but did not approve that the project would go forward.

Mark Gailus, 62 Prescott Road, spoke to some of his knowledge about the process in the Town of Bedford regarding their articles at their Town Meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of March. There was a vote for 1.5 million dollars for use of Community Preservation Funds which was favorable. The vote for taking of land and easements to enable the construction of the trail failed to pass. Another article for funding failed to get the required vote. Mr. Soucy asked Mr. Gailus if he was aware whether or not seizure of land by eminent domain might be pursued for the bicycle trail in Concord. Mr. Gailus responded that he did not have that information.

Mr. Davidson expressed that the Committee needs to determine if they want to support, remain neutral, or not support these two Concord articles. He felt that discussion should begin with Article 46. Having had a number of bicycle issues in the past in the cemetery, he expressed that as a Committee member, he is sensitive to potentially adding to the bicycle pressure in the cemetery. Since there is a likelihood that a feasibility study could result in the potential high speed bike path, he felt the Cemetery Committee should not support Article 46. Mr. Soucy stated he felt that the vote is for a study and the results could be very favorable to what the Committee is interested in.

Mr. Soucy moved that the Cemetery Committee take no position and say nothing about Article 46 or 47. Mr. Riedel seconded the motion, and it was voted as follows to take no position (5-0)

Rod Riedel – Aye  
Leo Carroll - Aye  
Jerry Soucy – Aye  
Brian Davidson – Aye  
Rebecca Purcell – Aye

**D-6: COMMITTEE COMMENTS:**

Mr. Davidson mentioned that there was an issue raised about the Windmill Hill building project last year and noted one of the cemetery (Old Hill) abutters at 37 Lexington Road is proposing a construction project. The information is contained in the Historical District Commission website. He felt the commissioners should have the opportunity to view the proposed design and perhaps address at the next meeting.

Mr. Riedel mentioned that he has a follow up from the last meeting about the Reformatory Branch Trail Map that was being distributed in hard copy from the Concord Visitor Center. He alerted Ms. Kaye that the 2015 version was still being distributed. He asked if there were printed copies of the 2021 version, which contained updates from the Cemetery Committee, which could be distributed to the Visitor's Center. Ms. Kaye stated there were and that she would follow up on that matter.

Mr. Riedel also asked Ms. Kaye what would be required to add language restricting the use of bicycles in the trails that go through Sleepy Hollow on the Town's trail maps. She said it would require a vote by the Cemetery Committee. If this Committee does wish to go forward, he will distribute the finished product to other sources to include that language in their publications.

Mr. Riedel also provided an update to groundcover restoration. A vote had already approved the 2022 groundcover repair project. Ms. Hopkins and Mr. Miklosko did three major ground cover repairs in 2021. The area near the Melvin Gravesites where groundcover had been applied has not been successful. He is asking that alternative groundcover be selected in the effort of solving this issue. He will have more information available for discussion at the May meeting.

Mr. Miklosko invited the Committee to review the minutes from past Cemetery Committee meetings, in 2020 and 2021, which are on the Town's website, regarding bicycle use in Sleepy Hollow, as the topic had been discussed at length. This could also help with future discussions.

#### **D-7: PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Mark Gailus, 62 Prescott Road expressed his thanks to the Committee for all its work. He suggested if there were problems with the stone walls on Old Hill, it might be a good idea to have the Historical Commission or the Economic Vitality Committee get involved, as it effects the downtown area. Some citizens might also pitch in.

With regard to the area of the Melvin graves, and the erosion that has occurred, he's wondering about shrubbery or trees above this area. Mr. Riedel thanked Mr. Gailus for his suggestions and acknowledged that they would look at the plants above the eroded area to see what plantings would be helpful.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Brian Davidson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 P.M. Rebecca Purcell seconded. (5-0)

Rebecca Purcell-Aye  
Rod Riedel - Aye  
Leo Carroll - Aye  
Jerry Soucy - Aye  
Brian Davidson - Aye

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved,

Justine St. John  
Administrative Assistant, Highway & Grounds Division

Leo Carroll, Chairperson  
Cemetery Committee