

Town of Orford
Cemetery Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 22,2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Messer, Fred Kidder, Brenda Smith, Linda Pease

OTHERS PRESENT: David Smith, Lucille Palifka

Call Meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Brenda Smith.

Old Business:

- 1) Guidelines/schedules for mowing:
Mowing begins 1st of May and ends 1st of November with occasionally beginning one week early and ending one week late depending on seasonal weather.
- 2) Update on Mowers:
Paul Messer's meeting with Chuck Reagen did not happen because of rain. Paul called Chuck instead regarding mower and was told by Chuck to bring mower down and he will have a look at it. The dx was a bad fuel pump. It was repaired and returned but a reoccurrence occurred and went back to Chuck for a needed fuel filter. We are in business!
- 3) Shadowing:
Paul Messer and David met and spent a day together; David learned a lot. Other mtgs. to be scheduled.
- 4) Repair of head stone/Power washing cemetery fences:
Brenda spoke with Sean Harris who reported that it would be very expensive to repair head stones and that he only does a few a year. Look at other avenues? Brenda also spoke with Mrs. Keefe regarding cleaning/painting of cemetery fences. It was decided not to power wash the fences and that Mrs. Keefe would pain them as a volunteer. Mrs. Keefe and Brenda will reconnect on this subject.
- 5) Review of Town's Purchasing Policy:
Paul Messer reported on the cost of tree removal, stating amount could be as much as \$10,000 for Dame Hill Cemetery. Fred Kidder will get a copy of the tree removal policy. Fred also reported that the State says you need a guideline with town vote of costs over \$10,000 going to bid.

- 6) Water Containers at each cemetery:
Paul Messer reported that the West Cemetery (main street) would need 3 water containers @ a cost of \$200 per container and a cost of \$90 every three months paid to the water company, with an additional 11 cent charge per gallon if needed. A container would also be placed at the Dame Hill Cemetery and East Cemetery. He suggested that perhaps the fire department could fill these containers.
- 7) Designated Veterans Section at each Cemetery:
Discussion centered on the request from John O'Brien to have designated Veterans sections at cemetery. Paul Messer suggested that we invite John to our next Cemetery Commission mtg. (October 20) to speak on this matter. Brenda Smith will call John O'Brien.

New Business:

Walk Abouts

West Cemetery – Main Street

Brenda Smith, Linda Pease, and David Smith had the following concerns about the cemetery:

- A. Stone walls/stone moats half-way around the front of grave stones. Discussion among the cemetery committee was that stone walls/stone moats should extend in front of the monuments not more than 12 inches. The moats should be filled with bark mulch and not stones. These suggestions are for all three Orford cemeteries. It was felt that the Main Street Cemetery grounds look lovely and that Kurt is doing a wonderful job.
- B. Discussion regarding installing electricity in the mower shed. It was felt that this was needed to sharpen blades, etc. Paul Messer stated that it would cost about \$20,000 to put in electricity, which would include burying of lines, putting up poles, etc. Solar power was also a possibility. We need to explore the cost of solar power installation. Further discussion at next meeting.
- C. It was felt that shrubs could be planted throughout the cemetery in place of trees.

Dame Hill Cemetery

Fence needs painting and two trees need to be removed. There are many broken head stones. Paul Messer suggested that we ask the Old Graveyard Association to speak to interested guests from Lyme, Orford, Piermont, etc. on restoring headstones. Brenda Smith will contact person to arrange talk. There is no room at the Dame Hill Cemetery for future burials. Cemetery Committee will get a map of the Dame Hill Cemetery from the Select board's Office. Grounds look great.

East Cemetery

Replacement of gate is needed, and stone pillars need repair at the East Cemetery. Fred Kidder will make a couple of phone calls regarding stone repair. The new burial area perimeter needs to be marked at the East Cemetery.

OTHER

Guidelines/Rules need to be established by the Cemetery Committee. Paul Messer provided each member a handwritten copy of such that was drawn up by Julia Fifield. Members will review and discuss at our next meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Brenda Smith and seconded by Fred Kidder.

Respectfully submitted

Linda R. Pease