

Town of Orford, NH
Cemetery Commission Meeting
November 7, 2020
Niles Room

Members Present: Paul Messer, Brenda Smith, Linda Pease, Fred Kidder
Others Present: David Smith, Joe Arcolio, John O'Brien, Cora Day

Call Meeting to Order

10:00 AM

Approve Minutes: Motion made by Fred Kidder to accept minutes of the August 22, 2020 meeting, seconded by Brenda Smith, motion approved.

Reports

Tree Removal – Dame Hill Cemetery

Fred Kidder

Bill Wilson, Orford's Tree Warden, concurs that two of the maple trees on the Dame Hill Cemetery property need to come down per Paul Messer. Steps to be taken are (1) get at least two written estimates (2) cost to be under \$10,000 (3) bidders must have insurance and (4) Fred Kidder to email Paul Messer and Linda Pease the Town's Purchasing Policy.

Database of Cemetery Residents

Cora Day

Existing records were obtained from Esther Dobbins-Marsh and listed alphabetically by Cora. A list of names/dates/other, i.e., relations was compiled. In the 1700's and 1800's writing was often very small on the gravestones. Sunken gravestones are unreadable. Veteran's gravestones have been labeled in this program. Listing of gravestones has been completed for the 1700's through the 1900's. Ten gravestones are listed as illegible. Cleaning of gravestones would make reading easier. Working on listing for years in the 2000's. Cora has been working with Emily Bryant on a map labelled with resident's names in the West Cemetery. Cora will graduate in 2021. She will make sure records are all up-to-date and will look into finding someone else who could take over and complete the project. All recordings to date will be put on-line (Google Drive) that can be turned into a PDF file and given to Esther.

Recognition of Veterans – Orford Cemeteries

John O'Brien

John suggested designating an area at each cemetery to build a monument listing veterans from World War One and later periods. The site for the West Cemetery monument could be next to the bandstand and include the American Flag, POW Flag and Service Flags. Persons who would qualify to be named on the monument would be either born in Orford or a citizen of Orford and active duty or guard. A perpetual garden was suggested. Megan O'Brien, John's daughter, would like to work on this project. John offered his equipment to work on the project. Paul Messer suggested a fundraiser. We could establish a committee of volunteers/veterans to work on this project, including determining the appropriate site and size for each monument. Information could be put on the listserv looking for citizens/veterans who are interested. Fred Kidder suggested contacting Jim Durkee, who keeps in contact with a lot of veterans. John O'Brien will contact Jim Durkee. Another contact would be Arthur Pease who knows Orford

well. Joe Arcolio made a motion to accept this project and move forward with the work with other veterans. Brenda Smith seconded and the motion passed.

2021 Cemetery Budget

The Selectmen reviewed Paul Messer's 2021 budget submission and made the following changes: (1) Added four weeks (up from 26 to 30) for mowing/landscaping of the three cemeteries to ensure all needed work gets completed. If the additional four weeks are needed (two weeks at the beginning of the mowing season and two weeks at the end) Kurt's salary has been built in. (2) Kurt will now turn in his mileage reimbursement monthly instead of at the end of the year. Motion made by Paul Messer and seconded by Brenda Smith to approve the budget as revised by the Selectmen. Motion passed.

Mower Replacement

The Town of Orford has two primary mowers; one is a 2005 with a bagger. Kurt has suggested that we trade both mowers and purchase one new one with a larger bagger. Paul Messer reported that we have \$12,750 in the capital reserve fund to purchase a new mower. Fred Kidder cited the Town of Orford Annual Report for the year ending December 31, 2019, page 10, Article 8 where the vote was to appropriate the sum of \$11,000 from the Cemetery Mower/Building Capital Reserve Fund to purchase a new or used Gator, or equivalent vehicle, with dump body. Research on a new mower will be done in the summer of 2021.

Old Business

Fence Repairs – East Cemetery

Paul Messer

Regarding the gate post at the East Cemetery, it was suggested that the gate be re-configured at the entrance by enlarging the right-hand gate, securing it, and not have a left-hand gate. There would be room to walk through only. Put in a section of gate like at the Dame Hill Cemetery. The gate would be movable for mower access. Fred Kidder talked to someone who can come this winter and look at the stone pillars at East Cemetery for repair, not replacement, and will report to Fred. He will ask the person looking at the pillars if he knows of anyone who could clean the gravestones.

Water Containers for Cemeteries

It was suggested that there be a 250-gallon tank at each cemetery with spigots, and screening over the top to keep out debris and catch rainwater. Containers should be available by Spring 2021. Brenda Smith will research this this Winter.

Signs for Cemeteries

Larry and Sue Taylor's daughter Julie could make metal signs for each of the cemeteries as suggested by Brenda Smith. Fred Kidder commented that metal signs look the best; money well spent for the signs. Brenda Smith will contact Julie to get her proposal in writing and ask her what size she thinks would be best. Funding for the signs would come from the Perpetual Care Fund. Fred will get street numbers for the main entrance of each cemetery from Esther.

New Business

Cemetery Invoices

Paul Messer has historically paid cemetery invoices. Fred Kidder reported that the payment of Cemetery invoices will be transitioned from Paul to the Town of Orford.

The next meeting of the Orford Cemetery Commission will be at 10:00 AM in the Niles Room on Saturday, January 9, 2021.

Brenda Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Fred Kidder seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 Noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda R. Pease