



TOWN OF DURHAM
8 Newmarket Road
Durham, NH 03824-2898
603.868.8064
www.ci.durham.nh.us

Durham Cemetery Committee
9:30 AM, Friday, August 26th, 2022
Council Chamber, Town Hall
8 Newmarket Road, Durham, NH

MINUTES OF MEETING

- I. Call to order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Members present were Chair Seymour, Mr. Bebbington, Mr. Everngam, Mr. Lawson, and Ms. Lonske. Chair Seymour moved to appoint Mr. Bebbington as a voting member in the absence of Mr. Cote. Passed.
- II. Public Input: No members of the public were present, and no public input was given.
- III. Approval of Agenda. Mr. Bebbington had previously noted an incorrect date in the header of the agenda. Chair Seymour moved approval of the agenda as amended; Ms. Lonske seconded. Passed.
- IV. Approval of minutes from October 22, 2021. Mr. Everngam moved; Mr. Lawson seconded. Passed.
- V. Discussion Items:
 - A. Update From DPW: Sam Hewitt, Assistant Public Works Director
 1. Weekly mowing has been a challenge because of the Town's inability to hire seasonal employees, so it has been contracted out to Northern Landscape. Town has also done some driveway maintenance.
 2. DPW planted and is regularly watering a horse chestnut tree which is a memorial to veterans.

3. Stone wall repairs: Mr. Hewitt noted the removal of vegetation. The Town solicited proposals to fix the collapsed section of wall this spring without success; Ray Laroche has contracted to fix it after haying season.
 4. Tree removal: Orion Tree Service in May removed two large pines and two maples; Mr. Seymour also did some trimming himself, including the removal of two Alberta Spruce. Ms. Lonske and Mr. Seymour conveyed compliments to DPW on the appearance of the cemetery.
 5. Shed reconstruction: Mr. Hewitt referred to a series of photographs to illustrate progress on the shed. Since it has no foundation, the sill rests on the ground and had rotted, along with the floor joists and some lower sections of the wall. The work on the floor is complete, with work remaining on the sheathing, clapboards, and roof. The budget of \$3000 appears to be sufficient to carry out the work.
- B. Status of cemetery trust funds (balances as of 5/27/22):
1. Cemetery Improvement Trust (expendable) - \$33,443,76
 2. Cemetery Care Trust (interest only) - \$214,305 principal, \$34,463 interest
 3. Cemetery Special Projects Trust (donations) - \$217
- C. Tipped monuments: Chair Seymour noted that there are currently five tipped monuments in the cemetery. The repair of monuments is the responsibility of the family, and he is working with funeral directors to address three of them where there are known descendants. However, two monuments are older and there are no known descendants. Discussion ensued as to the cost and feasibility of repairing monuments when there is no longer any family to care for them, culminating in Mr. Lawson making a motion to approve the expenditure of up to \$2,000 to repair damaged headstones. Ms. Lonske and Mr. Everngam both seconded. Passed.
- D. Plot and grave pricing: Chair Seymour reviewed the comprehensive survey conducted by the NH Cemetery Association, with Mr. Everngam noting the Durham's prices were somewhat on the lower end of the wide range of costs among

cemeteries surveyed. Mr. Everngam made a motion to increase the rate charged for a single grave/cremains plot from \$500 to \$650 for residents, and from \$750 to \$850 for non-residents, with multiple grave prices to be raised proportionally, and for the additional funds raised to be deposited into the Cemetery Improvement Account and earmarked for monument repair. Ms. Lonske seconded. Passed.

- E. Pending resignation of Committee Chair and succession planning: Mr. Seymour noted that he will be stepping down from his Trustee position and as Committee Chair this spring. After a brief review of the duties of the Chair, Mr. Seymour noted that in other towns if the cemetery is not run by volunteers, that responsibility typically passes to the Department of Public Works. Alternatively, some towns appoint or hire a sexton to manage the day-to-day business of the municipal cemetery. Mr. Everngam noted that he is leery of tasking the DPW with additional responsibilities. Mr. Lawson suggested a meeting with Todd Selig to discuss possible paths forward, and noted that there is some urgency in scheduling such a meeting since departmental budgets are being developed during the month of September. Mr. Hewitt noted it would be important to know what DPW's commitment would be and requested that DPW be part of any discussions.

VI. Decisions:

- A. Vote to approve expenditure for remaining cremains only-area foundations: Mr. Everngam moved the expenditure of up to \$7,000 from the Cemetery Improvement Trust to create 15 new cremains-only foundations. Ms. Lonske seconded. Passed.

VII. Adjourn. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously voted to adjourn at 10:30 AM.

Approved:

Craig Seymour, Chair

Date