

Stowe Cemetery Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, January 16, 2024  
Approved \_\_\_\_\_

A meeting of the Stowe Cemetery Commission was held Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 8:30 am via a hybrid/Zoom.

Members present: Donna Adams, Claire “Skeeter” Austin, Gail Kaiser, Nancy LaVanway, Judy Smith, Mike Lemaire, Karin Gottlieb

#### Superintendent’s Report

David reported that they are continuing to plow at Riverbank and will do so as long as it stays cold and conditions permit. He said he would like to continue to add gravel to the drive in the coming year. Since there is money in the budget, they will be working on some of the buildings and also taking down a couple of the trees that need to be removed in the Spring. He added that they put the new fence in and will install the new side in the coming year.

Estimates – David said he has reviewed some of the estimates that the Commission had received and thought that it was about the going rate for labor and materials. He thought the Parks Department could help cut some of the costs by picking up items instead of paying for shipping. He said they could help with other things like taking down the chain link fence and putting up the posts providing he gets all the help he needs in manpower this coming season.

Estimate for retaining wall – David recommends using concrete or at the very least foundation block for the base of the wall since natural stone has a tendency to move over time. He noted that it was a large wall which would require more support.

Request from Nordic Club – Since the collapse of the pole barn during the recent storm, David said he was asked by the Nordic Club if they could temporarily house their snow machine groomer in the Cemetery building. He said he did not see a problem with this as long as the Commission gave permission. Donna asked if David would benefit from using the groomer while it was located there to make a path through the middle of the cemetery. David said probably not since it would pack down the snow and take longer to disappear.

West Branch Fence – Skeeter asked if the Parks Department could help in painting one side of the chain link fence black. David agreed to do so if he has the manpower. He said if they plan a post and rail fence he would need to know by mid-March.

#### Discussion with Town Clerk to review Trust Fund

Since the issue of a burial refund had recently been addressed, Donna said the Commission had questions regarding Trust Fund activity as to how funds are recorded and how they are tracked and what is spendable for purposes of beautification.

Town Clerk Penny Davis reviewed the following items: Interest/Dividend Income – is recorded as revenue as detailed on the Edward Jones statement Dividends gains/losses are recorded monthly they do not separate gains and losses on dividends and investments it is all recorded in the one account. Dividends are reinvested as per the Edward Jones policy into the investment account. A 1099 is received in February for the calendar year but it is recorded monthly. Burials, cash receipts sale of lots, tent rentals and labor is coded to the cemetery endowment fund. Corner post installation (labor) fees go to the general fund Parks Department revenue. Corner post sale revenue is coded to Cemetery Commission general fund. Advice on reinvesting – rely on Caren for guidance on reinvesting according to policy.

Skeeter asked for clarification on burial and interment income and what number the Commission can actually look at for projects and beautification. Penny said only installation and the \$8500 goes to the general fund.

As part of the discussion, Donna asked if a report could be provided as to the number of lots and lot sales etc that are being sold currently and what has been sold in the last few years. Skeeter said Finance does provide this information and she will pull the numbers together from the last five years.

Penny noted that she recently attended a conference and learned that other towns are charging more for their fees than Stowe.

Donna offered that if the Clerks Office needed any clarification on Cemetery Rules and Regulations that she is available to answer any questions they may have to better understand terminology etc.

Internment Order revisions – Donna will forward the proposed revisions to Charles for review and approval by the Selectboard.

The Commission thanked Penny for her information and time.

#### Minutes

On a motion by Gail Kaiser, seconded by Judy Smith, the Minutes of 12/19/23 were approved as amended.

#### Treasurer's Report

Skeeter said there was no income and funds are up a bit with investment funds up about 4.5%. As a follow up, Skeeter said she would include the information on lot sales for the last few years in her financial report for the next meeting.

Judy moved to accept the Treasurer's report, seconded by Nancy. All were in favor.

#### Remembrance Program Report

Skeeter said Karin and Mary should have an estimate coming up for painting of the fence. West Branch sign dedication: The Remembrance Committee will prepare some thoughts on the dedication for Judy to bring before the Legion at their next meeting in March.

Discuss Trust Fund project estimates – Entrance to Riverbank – Donna noted that in 2018 a drawing was submitted for two pillars with engraving at an estimate of \$8000 without installation and Donna has since received a \$6000 estimate in August of 2023. Donna asked if the project was something the Commission wanted to continue to pursue. There was discussion regarding the Memorial Wall and whether that could be considered a capital project as well as the fence at West Branch and what had priority.

Donna asked if there was a consensus of the fence project at West Branch being number one, second would be the Memorial Wall and the entrance at Riverbank. The Commission agreed.

There being no further business to conduct, Donna adjourned the meeting at 10:05 am. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024.