

Stowe Cemetery Commission Meeting

Tuesday, December 19, 2023

Approved 1/16/24

A meeting of the Stowe Cemetery Commission was held on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, via Zoom Hybrid starting at 8:30 am.

Members Present: Donna Adams, Claire "Skeeter" Austin, Karin Gottlieb, Gail Kaiser, Nancy LaVanway, Judy Smith. Absent: Mike Lemaire

Minutes

Minutes of the November 21, 2023 were reviewed and after proper edits were made, Skeeter made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Judy. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Skeeter reported that the burial fund was up by about \$450; gain on investments were up due to market conditions and the funds in Edward Jones was up about 6.5%. Skeeter noted that the dividends are the only funds that can be spent from that account. There was discussion of how the investment account dividends income can or cannot be used or if the dividends were reinvested. Skeeter said she would follow up and review the report received from Caren at Edward Jones and follow up with Karen and Penny to get a better handle on what can be spent and what the Commission does not have any control over.

Judy moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Karin. Motion carried.

Skeeter added that she had not heard any push back yet from submission of the Cemetery draft budget request.

Donna added that she had spoken with Matt regarding his budget and he reported that he had not added anything regarding the software program since he believed the request should come from the Clerk's office. He said he had not spoken any further with Charles regarding this.

There was continued discussion from the November meeting regarding the use of the spreadsheet program that Mort Butler had created and any possibility of this being put back to use.

Superintendent's Report

There was no report available from David. Donna reported that the plowing had been taken care of. She said she had spoken with David who asked if a revision to include a date of Jan 1st closing for plowing would appear in the Rules and Regulations. Both Donna and Skeeter said they did not believe it to be appropriate in the Rules and Regulations. Donna added that she also asked David if they would be able to plow the small sidewalk and he said that might be possible to keep it open for people to visit graves. Donna said David does recommend that the Town not plow after January 1.

Judy asked if it could be arranged to have David come to a meeting to discuss some of the Commission's concerns. There was a consensus that nothing would be added to the Rules and Regulations as far as a

particular date and it would be left up to David and the purview of the Parks Department until there was further discussion. Donna said she would let him know of the consensus and ask if he could attend an upcoming meeting.

Remembrance Program Report

Skeeter reported that the flags had been replaced at West Branch. Skeeter said they had discussed the front of West Branch fencing on Rt 108 side and the other project regarding vendor coming to talk about Memorial Wall at Riverbank. Donna will provide the update. Skeeter said the book has been updated page by page and all the donations have been added.

Donna said she did meet with the owner of Premier Stone who was happy to do measurements and offer suggestions. He noted that they could take out the fence and clean up area afterward without affecting the flag pole or garden. He recommended disposing of the existing rose bushes and planting new ones due to the expense and work to remove. The fence will be where it exists now. Maintenance would be easier to have a chain and post. Donna said he will get some numbers together and send a quote by the next Remembrance Program meeting on January 5th.

Donna also said she met with someone from Johnson recommended by Premier for a stone wall. He will also get an estimate together and photo samples for the type of wall. Gail suggested obtaining another bid. Donna said that the project would go out for bid but was hoping to get a general idea of what the project would cost from him.

New Business

Refund Process - Donna said due to a situation with a recent burial, questions had come up regarding the refund process. She reported that there was a mix up during a recent burial regarding what the responsibilities were from the Parks Department and the family. The burial was completed although not as properly as it should have been. Unfortunately there was a misunderstanding of what the responsibilities of each party were since the family did not hire a funeral director. A family member asked for a refund of the fees and Charles indicated that the refund came from the trust fund. As a result of the refund request, Donna said it brought up questions on where the monies for the fees were being distributed within the Town. The Commission discussed the use of the fees and the funds that are budgeted to the Parks Department. Gail suggested requesting a quarterly report. Skeeter said she would also ask Cindy if any other funds get transferred to Parks or the General Fund. After discussion, Donna said she will invite Penny to the Jan. 16 meeting to explain lot sales and other associated sales and fees and where those monies were distributed.

A \$5000 estimate from Heritage was received for 25 stones per the green flags. Donna is following up with them to get a more accurate handle on what the cost will be since there are more than 25 flagged.

Donna said she would be reviewing the Interment Order to make sure the information and fees are clear to the public and staff.

Other - There was a discussion of staff support of the Commission and distribution of meeting information for the members in a timely manner.

There being no further business, Donna adjourned the meeting at 10:10 am. The next meeting will be held on January 16, 2024 at 8:30 am.

Donna wished everyone a Happy Holiday.