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Town of Shaftsbury

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Shaftsbury Cemetery Committee Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2024

Agenda:

- I. Approval of November 1, 2023 Minutes
- II. Board Organization
- III. Superintendent's Report
- IV. Cemetery Walk Throughs?
- V. Other Business?

Present: Kathy Cardiff - Chair, Rosemary Lindsay, Peggy Wilson, and Jen Holley - Superintendent

Absent: David Kiernan - Interim Town Administrator, Betsy Habberfield, Neal Strong

Agenda Modifications:

Meeting was called to order at: 9:05 am

I. Approval of November 1, 2023 Minutes

Peggy Wilson made a motion to pass the minutes of November 1, 2023. The motion passed 3-0.

II. Board Organization

This was tabled until the next meeting when more committee members are present.

III. Superintendent's Report

On December 23rd, I added a Private Cemetery to our listing of Cemeteries in Shaftsbury. It is named Two Trees and is located on the property owned by David Hart on Shaftsbury Hollow Road. The cemetery and two burials are listed on our website, and it has been added to our List of Shaftsbury Cemeteries - Attachment A.

<https://shaftsburyvt.gov/departments/cemetery/inactive/cemetery-two-trees.php>

The Select Board has removed Marlene as Secretary to the Cemetery Committee. The Cemetery Committee no longer has a secretary, and I will be doing the meeting minutes going forward.

Burials: Since our last meeting there have been 5 burials. Robert Sugarman – Center, Mary Louise Palmer – Center, Annette Rice – Grandview, Marilynne Harrington – Waite, Lowell Greene – Center

Lot Sales:

- I Sold 3 graves in Center in Section B. For a Total of (\$3,000.00)

Happy to report 2 of the graves were sold to a person right from my desk using Cemify. Now that Section B is “Grave Level” She selected where she wanted her lots and bought them right from my office.

Roof Damage - Center

On February 8th, there was an incident reported to me by a Citizen David Green, who said the Roof of the Baptist Meeting House Church next to Center Cemetery has had Severe Damage to the roof. Large amounts of Slate have come off the roof and the Roof needs Attention Immediately. I emailed the SHS and let them know of the incident.

I went over the next morning and took photos, then cleaned up and piled all the slate shingles up for them. I took plenty of photos for them in case they need them for insurance purposes, but they have not asked for them as of yet. There was no damage to any headstones.

Lot Pinning System:

- We now have the Lot pinning system – Mike Yannotti very nicely purchased/made some rebar bars and sharpened one end of each for me, and made the other end not sharp, so it will attach to the label head pin easier. Mike will get me the proper dead blow hammer that I need to begin installing this system.
- I have a volunteer (Ron Jennings) that will be helping me do the first Lot Pinning Section in Center Cemetery. It is definitely a two-person job. We will be doing this area first >

You can see why this is needed as I have now sold 2 graves

In B 154 but can not install cornerstones because I have no references around it. The owner would like to bury a cremation as soon mid-May. This is why, I will start here.



Cemify Update:

Cemify has upgraded their software as promised and I have been a Beta Tester for them. I am now able to turn our lot level cemeteries into grave level – exactly what we need. This saves the Town a great deal of money. We could not have them do this for us when loading our raw data initially because we did not have accurate plat maps. If we did they would already be grave level mapped. Thank you to Cemify for this incredible software upgrade.

Grandview Update:

Grandview – My Friend! I've completed compiling the raw data for Division 3 at Grandview. I'm currently halfway through crafting the corresponding Photoshop plat that Cemify requires for data matching and mapping purposes. This step was necessary due to the incompleteness of our initial data and the inaccuracies present in the cemetery plat we had. I anticipate completing the new plat and submitting Division 3 to Cemify no later than April 12th. Following this, I'll proceed to work on Division 2's raw data.

While I still need to capture all the required headstone photos for Division 3 and address a few remaining discrepancies in Division 4, the latter is already accessible online. Once online, the process accelerates significantly, making it easier to rearrange burials to their correct grave numbers. It's worth noting that only 2% of the data we initially had for Grandview included grave numbers, with many entries consisting solely of lot numbers. Some of those lot numbers weren't even on any map. This complexity is what's contributing to the prolonged sorting process at Grandview. However, once the burials are properly allocated to their lots and assigned grave numbers online, adjustments within the lots become much more manageable. The primary focus now is ensuring each burial is correctly placed within its designated lot.

PLAT Example of Lot 32 & 39: The raw data says Lot 32 has 8 graves / Lot 39 has a B Section and an A Section. Section B has 5 graves and Section A also has 5 graves.

32	5	1
	6	2
	7	3
	8	4

39^B	4	1
	5	2
	A	3
	4	1
	5	2

This shows the entire row that 32 and 39 are in. This row is done – Therefore Cemify can map our raw data that I give them and overlay it on our orthomosaic image (map) – This shows them how we want our graves to look and where they are.

4	11	18 ^B	25	32	39 ^B	46 ^B	53 ^B	60 ^B	66

Headstone Cleanings & Repairs:

With the Incredible help of the DPW Crew, I was able to Repair and Straighten over 100 Stones. We were all so happy with the outcome we plan to do it again because we realized there is so much more to do. They have

been neglected for so long – we have much more to do. If you would like to see the before and after photos: The links can be found here under the 2023 year tab.

<https://shaftsburyvt.com/site-management-committee.php>

I will keep this Live Excel file updated this year also – so you should bookmark this page in your web browser.

Center: November – 36 Stones, Village: November – 86 Stones

Cemetery Projects/Collaborations

I will be collaborating on a project with Saint John's the Baptist Cemetery in North Bennington, at the request of Corrine Levin, a resident of Shaftsbury whose father is buried there. Corrine has approached me to assist in acquiring and affixing Veteran Medallions (just like ours) to the headstones of the cemetery's veterans. In exchange, she has pledged to try and to secure free or discounted flags for Shaftsbury's veterans. She finds it odd that neighboring towns receive flags without charge, and she is currently investigating this with area organizations. However, for the current year, we had to procure flags from the American Legion and cover the expenses ourselves, as it is imperative for us not to be without flags.

Projects/Donations

I would like to ask the Committee's permission to work with the Town Treasurer (to start an account) for Donations (from the website) from the Community for Headstone Cleaning Supplies. I would like to run a Veterans Stone Cleaning Weekend – Get a few Volunteers, possibly borrow the kits from the library, but buy the D2 from donations. I would like to run a stone cleaning weekend with a few volunteers that is not veterans also. The D2 is expensive and if we have a small fund of donations, I'm sure we could get it covered.

IV. Cemetery Walk Throughs?

We will discuss doing walk-throughs at a future meeting, but it may not be necessary at this time in the active cemeteries.

V. Other Business?

Peggy Wilson was going to ask her contacts at Park Lawn, who they used for Cleaning Stones and their process and cost. We will discuss the cemetery budget and other business at the next meeting. We will be welcoming our new Town Administrator, Paula Iken very soon.

Meeting was adjourned at: 10:20 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Holley

Shaftsbury Cemetery Superintendent