

## City of Barre

### Public Body Special Meeting Minutes

**Committee:** Cemetery and Parks

**Date of meeting:** July 6, 2023

**Location of Meeting:** Alumni Hall, 2nd Floor

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Chairman Giuliano Cecchinelli, Ilene Gillander, Starr LeCompte, Renie Zanleoni, Helen Long, and Staff Liaison Stefanie Quaranta, Director Bergeron

**Committee Absent:** Mark Gherardi    **In Attendance:** City Manager Storellicastro

Meeting Called to Order: 11:02am.

The Special Meeting was called and publicly warned for the purpose of clarifying cemetery policy regarding the recent removal of personal items at Hope Cemetery.

The meeting began with a discussion about the purpose of an “Advisory Committee” such as Cemetery and Parks. The purpose is defined as “**non-binding strategic advice to the Director**” on a variety of subjects. The Cemetery Director has **sole discretion and right** to make exceptions, suspensions, or modifications to any of the rules and regulations governing the cemeteries.

The meeting continued with the Chair criticizing Ilene for her work in the cemetery on the removal of items from 120 of the 10,000 lots. He stated that she was not authorized by either the Committee or the Director to do such an extensive removal of items. The five most egregious offenders who were sent certified letters last year would have been permissible in his view. Ilene did not respond to the Chair’s comments. No committee members present spoke in support of the Chair’s criticism of Ilene’s actions.

Removal of personal items at Hope Cemetery has been suspended until further notice. The Director does not feel that there would be support at City Council for any strict enforcement of the rules and regulations that are documented in the handbook, as they have gone unenforced for decades.

The Chair, Director and City Manager stated that a much slower approach must be taken with the public in the future. Their consensus was that the rules and regulations should now be considered only guidelines. It was agreed that communication needs to be improved between the lot owners and the City.

Motion to Adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:44 pm.

**The next meeting is July 17<sup>th</sup>.**

Submitted:

Starr Parnigoni LeCompte

