

City of Barre

Public Body Meeting Minutes

Committee: Cemetery and Parks

Date of meeting: June 19, 2023

Location of Meeting: Alumni Hall, 2nd Floor

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

Committee Members Absent: Mark Gerardi

Others in Attendance: Wendy Brown, Ruth Weeks

Meeting Called to Order: 11:05 am. Motion approved to accept the minutes submitted after the last meeting.

Public Comment:

Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Weeks both attended the meeting to voice complaints about the recent removal of items which are not permitted under the “Rules and Regulations for Barre City Cemeteries” (Revision – Summer 2015). These rules are documented on Page 13 of the handbook under the heading “Lot Plantings and Decorations”. It clearly states what is and is not permitted. These items were removed by cemetery staff and retained for retrieval by the lot owners.

The accumulation of unpermitted items in the cemeteries has gone unaddressed for many years. The Committee began tackling this highly sensitive and emotional subject last year in earnest. The 5 worst offenders were sent certified letters that required them to take these items off their lots by the May 15th, 2022 deadline. There was no response to these letters. No further action was taken last year. Unfortunately, a whole section of Hope Cemetery known as Evergreen can no longer be included in the summer tours because of the ever-increasing number of unsightly items.

There are 10,000 headstones in Hope Cemetery. The removal of the unpermitted personal items affected only 120 of these lots. The Committee feels very strongly that this 1% of lot owners is having a very adverse effect on the dignity of the City of Barre cemeteries.

A motion was approved to allow Mrs. Brown to place her items back on her son’s lot at this time as there is no headstone.

Take Aways:

The Committee agreed that public notification at the start of this process should have been more rigorous. The Committee discussed the possibility of placing a small laminated sign on the

graves where items have been removed. This will inform them of the rules and give them information about the whereabouts of their items.

In addition, the Committee agreed that more definition of what constitutes a permissible solar light needs to be addressed as part of this process.

Old Business:

The Director gave an update on the continuing grub issue at Hope Cemetery. The repair process will not be quick, taking a couple of years. It will be a very costly problem to eradicate.

Director is going to request financial report of the cemeteries for the next meeting.

The Route 14 road construction project continues to cause headaches for the traveling public. Heavy rain worsened the road conditions. Director B. was going to reach out ECI after the meeting to see if they can improve the road condition where washouts have made it very difficult to navigate.

Monument Cleaning which is graciously funded by the BGA and Polycorp will continue this summer with a few remaining monuments in I and section G.

Discussion of replacement or repair of monuments in Elmwood Cemetery was tabled as Mark was not present.

New Business:

Discussion of need for solar light standard continued.

Roundtable:

The Chair will be attending the next council meeting to discuss the structure of the Cemetery and Parks going forward. He will be sending an email after the Council meeting.

Motion to Adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:04 pm.

The next meeting is July 17th.

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Committee:

Starr Parnigoni LeCompte