

## City of Barre

### Public Body Meeting Minutes

**Committee:** Cemetery and Parks

**Date of meeting:** May 15, 2023

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

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Guiliano Cecchinelli, Ilene Gillander, Starr LeCompte, Mark Gherardi, Renie Zanleoni, Helen Long, and Staff Liaison Stephanie Quaranta

**Committee Members Absent:** Heather Ritchie

**Others Not in Attendance:** Director Bergeron

Meeting Called to Order: 11:02 am. Motion made, seconded to accept the minutes submitted after the last meeting with correction of a few clerical errors.

**Old Business:** None

#### **New Business:**

The meeting began with lengthy discussion of the biblically proportioned beetle infestation at Hope Cemetery. Chairman read an email from the Director detailing the issue. TruGreen has been hired to address the problem. The regional manager for TruGreen stated that this is the worst regional infestation that he has seen in 12-15 years. TruGreen believes that this infestation is caused by Japanese beetles. There is not going to be an easy fix to this problem. TruGreen staff will begin with a test area of the front lawn and flagpole area. This is being done in hopes of finding a successful solution for the rest of the Cemetery. This resolution to this problem could take a couple of years and promises to be costly. The small test area is going to be done at a cost of \$700.

Director's email also reported that the Cemetery is fully staffed for the summer.

Mark B. asked if the graffiti had been addressed at Elmwood Cemetery. The Chair reported that it had been removed, probably with "elephant snot".

Helen reported that dogs on a leash and loose were in the Cemetery on her last visit. Discussion continued about where this action item from last year had landed. The Chair noted the Committee's question for follow up with Director after meeting.

Helen asked about the removal of Christmas wreaths and fake flowers. May 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for removal of these items. Stefanie will be putting something on Front Porch Forum and on City website that the deadline has now passed.

Mark asked about the possibility of using cemetery staff for removal (not disposal) of items from lots. The Chair noted the Committee's question for follow-up with Director after meeting.

Renie asked where action stood on the “Worst Offender Letters” which were sent out last June by certified mail. The Chair noted the Committee’s question for follow-up with the Director after the meeting.

There was some good news for the Committee as two generous donations that were in the works last summer have come to fruition. The Richard Russell Family made a generous donation to Hope Cemetery. The Robbins Family has made a generous donation to Elmwood Cemetery. This donation is earmarked for the repair of marble monuments that have fallen into disrepair. Mark suggested the possibility that these monuments be replaced with Barre granite. He noted that marble monuments, while beautiful, will only continue to need repair. Mark continued with the suggestion that the Freeman Foundation may be a source of grants to do future rehab. The Chair noted the suggestion and subsequent discussion for follow-up with the Director after the meeting.

**Roundtable:**

Frustration continues to be growing with the absence of the Director at the meetings and the lack of communication about the items that the Committee has been working on for years. The Committee serves in an advisory role to the Director who has the final say on all things related to the cemeteries. There is a strong feeling that we are no longer effective in this role.

Stephanie said that it is very positive to be fully staffed this year.

The Chair informed the Committee that Heather Ritchie had resigned.

Motion to Adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:17 pm.

**The next meeting is June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Committee:

Starr Parnigoni LeCompte