

HARTFORD CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Committee Meeting Minutes - 04/03/18

PRESENT:

Members:

SUE BUCKHOLZ, TOBY DAYMAN, JEFF KNIGHT, JOHN NEWTON, KEN PARKER, ART PEALE; (ABSENT: Larry Hudson)

Liaisons:

DENNIS BROWN, SCOTT HAUSLER

Community Member:

HENRY HAZEN, Christian Street Cemetery

Introductions

Appoint Chair, Vice Chair and Recording Secretary

Chair - John moved, Sue seconded, that Ken Parker be elected chair. 6-0 in favor.

Vice Chair - Ken moved, Art seconded, that John Newton be elected vice chair. 6-0 in favor.

Secretary - Ken moved, Jeff seconded, that Sue Buckholz be elected secretary. 6-0 in favor

New Business

Committee members reviewed the Cemetery Committee Charge and discussed the frequency and target length of meetings.

The expectation of written reports to the Selectboard and the content/format for 9/30/18 report at Selectboard meeting was reviewed.

Toby suggested that the Committee meet again in 2 weeks to try to get a solid handle on the charge and how to address it fully

Members discussed the advisability of issuing some preliminary recommendations to the Selectboard long before the 9/30/18 report.

Ken put forward proposition that it would make good sense to have all of the records in one place (Town Offices?)

It was agreed that the Committee will meet on every other Monday evening at 6:00 p.m. until agreed otherwise by the members.
6:00 for now. Thus, the next three meetings: 4/16, then 4/30, then 5/14
Scott will be away 5/14 but will coordinate with his office to ensure that the meeting will occur

Review of the Charge:

Members discussed the information that we need to amass in order to fulfill the charge:

- Funding status of existing cemeteries
- Status of Trustees/Sextons
- Continuity/maintenance of knowledge/records Inventory of currently available spaces
- Relevant statutes (analysis from Garrett Baxter, VLCT)
- Education (of us? Of citizenry?)

Jeff reported that, aside from Quechee, there is not a current shortage of plots in Hartford cemeteries

Jeff also brought up the possibility of using columbaria for future interments

The members then reviewed the status of Hartford cemeteries. It was reported that all town cemeteries are inactive, and that some of the private cemeteries are closed, including Azra Wyman, Ballardville, Protein and St. Anthony's.

Members then discussed how private cemeteries are run and some of the history of how they came into being. In the late 1800's and early 1900's, cemeteries were set up as private organizations/nonprofit organizations. Those cemeteries that are now inactive cemeteries no longer have active organizations to run them.

Art recommended that members look at "Digging Deep: Unearthing the Mysteries of Burial and Cemetery Law", published by the Vermont Secretary of State. He said that the booklets is available for download on the VOCA website.

Ken reviewed work being done by other towns on this topic, and that cemeteries seem to be coming up in several locations

Ken will circulate some writing he did when we started looking at these issues, around the time of the budget process, He looked into various issues that we will need to address if we are going to chart a way forward into the future for Hartford and its cemeteries Having an inventory of what is available now will serve us going forward.

Additional thoughts offered on the work to be done by the Committee included:

John: How will mowing be done without the inmate work crews.

Jeff: Mt. Olivet and St. Anthony's and the church have contracted for mowing for \$14,000

Ken: Lebanon and Hanover have town squads who do the mowing/maintenance

Scott: Reviewed the agreement with Probation and Parole for mowing town cemeteries and some recreation land

Discussion followed about the merits of developing a 5 or 10 year plan for the expenses of the cemeteries. It was suggested that the Committee look at a grant to do a study of what the needs and costs are and will be into the future.

For next meeting, members were encouraged to think about:

Costs and funding

Assessing space availability

Statutory requirements/prohibitions

Tree inventory - how many are damaged? How many might damage stones, etc.?

Assessment of what folks are doing in other towns

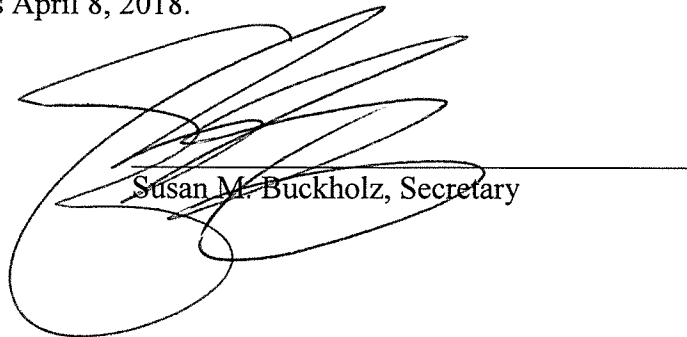
Ken suggested that members bring reports on all of these issues for next meeting, as well as setting up a time for members to visit some of the cemeteries.

Scott said that there are some administrative costs that the town can cover for the Committee. He will ask Leo what is available

Agenda will be set by the Chair prior to the next meeting.

Adjournment proposed, seconded - unanimous.

Respectfully submitted this April 8, 2018.



Susan M. Buckholz, Secretary