

FINAL

**CITY OF LEBANON
BOARD OF CEMETERY TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
LebanonNH.gov/Live
TUESDAY, May 11, 2021
5:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Fran Hanchett, Vice Chair Antonio Palazzo, Caitlyn Hauke, David Muzzy, Susan Painter

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Patrick McCarthy – Sexton, James Donison – Director Public Works, Paula Maville – Deputy City Manager

GUESTS: Judith Bush, Rainie Kelly and Billy Saine

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 PM by Chair Fran Hanchett.
A Roll Call of Board Members who participated remotely is listed above.

Review of meeting procedures and NH RSA 91-A “Right-to-Know” requirements.
Patrick McCarthy delivered the Right to Know procedures to the Members and the public.

The order of the meeting was changed and is listed below in the order discussed. The City Manager and the Mayor came before the Board and addressed Section V. NEW BUSINESS, A. Review Rules of Decorum with City Manager and Mayor.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 9, 2021

*Vice Chair Palazzo MOVED to approve the March 9, 2021 Minutes as presented.
Seconded by Mr. Muzzy.*

Roll Call Vote

*Ms. Painter, Vice Chair Palazzo, Ms. Hauke, Mr. Muzzy, and Chair Hanchett all voting Yea.
None voted Nay.*

**The Vote on the Motion was unanimously approved (5-0).*

III. CEMETERY SEXTON REPORT

A. Monthly Report

Straightening in the cemeteries was the major project. In Mascoma Cemetery stones were straightened up. At School Street they straightened about 80 stones and have loamed and seeded areas that needed improvement. Some perimeter cleaning was done in Section A of West Lebanon Cemetery. Last month they had nine cremations-6 weekday and 3 weekend, and they had one full burial.

Two seasonal staff have been brought back from last year and are short staffed. They are down on recruits for seasonal work. Thus, in the upcoming month they will be doing their best to get the cemeteries ready for Memorial Day. They will do a full rotation and have the quality of mowing up to par, even with the short staff.

The orange flags in School Street indicate some monument repairs done last year, and other flags mark stones for contractor bids for this year. The section that is proposed for repairs this year is more intense, with more damaged stones. But at the end of this year that cemetery will be complete. Cole Cemetery is complete, and Mascoma Cemetery has a couple of stones that need repair and may get done with other work this year. Then with the fence, everything will be complete at Mascoma as well.

Ms. Painter asked for clarification over the use of the term burial transit permit. City regulations use the term burial permit. She asked if the discrepancy needs to be adjusted in Chapter 46. Mr. McCarthy said they have the same meaning.

Some snowplow workers put snow on some of the monummentation at West Lebanon Cemetery. Mr. McCarthy said there is no other way to plow on the entrance road. He did not observe anything that could be changed. They are plowing the same way as they have in the past, and depending on the amount of snow, it may get closer to the monuments. None of the monuments have been damaged. In the future they want to make sure that the plows are not putting snow on any of the monuments.

The order of the meeting was changed. New Business was discussed next.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Fencing at Valley Cemetery

Mr. McCarthy presented a quote from Springfield Fence Company. There are two existing fences, one runs from the overpass bridge for the rail trail and one that separates the cemetery from Renihan Meadows. They proposed putting in a fence that is 6 feet high and run it down that distance. They talked about adding a gate, in case it was necessary for access for the federal highway. The amount is about \$14,175. The cost would come out of the Board's funds. It needs to be requoted, as multiple companies have to bid, and the cost may be increasing. At one time the Recreation Department said they may be willing to absorb 50% of the cost of the fence.

Ms. Painter pointed out that this fence would be visible to users of the Greenway. What's remarkable about the Greenway, is that when a fence is necessary, they have used a wooden fence. It is aesthetically pleasing and is fitting for a bike path. Ms. Painter asked if the fence could go at a diagonal off the overpass and run it up into the cemetery instead of running it along the greenway. A chain link fence on the Greenway does not seem fitting. And if it has to go adjacent to the Greenway, can it be a different kind of fence.

Mr. McCarthy agrees that a split rail is more appealing, but it may not stop the behavior of biking through. Going through the woods is an option, but it would be more expensive because of the trees. It seems visually obstructive to everyone else who uses the Greenway. And if it has to be adjacent to the greenway, can it be some material other than a chain link fence. This would better serve the numbers of people who use the Greenway and not be a burden due to the discretions of a few bikers.

Rainy Kelly said the points regarding a friendly fence are important for the Greenway and hopefully a fence can be put in that still protects the cemetery. She is surprised at the proposed cost and that they are putting up a fence. This has already voted to erect the fence.

Ms. Painter asked Staff and the Board to consider a way to put up a fence that is more aesthetically pleasing. Ms. Painter asked if they could look into alternatives and to find out if there is a fence that is taller and cohesive or can be moved up into the cemetery. A chain link fence just should not run along the Greenway. Staff and Ms. Painter will look into some fence alternatives and will check with Paul Coates to see if he has suggestions. Timken has put up no trespassing signs along the Greenway and the signs have not been welcomed by the people on the pathway. There are other places that also have no trespassing signs and the garbage is accumulating along the Greenway.

- B. Review of Draft Outline for Proposed Amendments to City Code Chapter 46 to Regulate Natural Burials (With the addition of a second monthly meeting, this item will only be discussed if time permits at the close of "New Business" items)**

Vice Chair Palazzo MOVED to have a 5-year moratorium on developing regulations to establish a natural burial cemetery in Lebanon New Hampshire.

Seconded by Mr. Muzzy.

The reason he is making this motion is his concern about the effect on Lebanon regarding costs and risk. He believes good answers have not been received. He has asked questions and they have not received good answers, from any of the visitors and consultants that have come before the Board. Mr. Palazzo sent a list of questions to Mr. Healy and he did not get answers about costs during his presentation. They were unable to answer the questions. Mr. Healy's advice was to go slow.

Ms. Painter said she is sorry that he is frustrated without getting answers. In some ways the Board has just been kicking this down the road. She asked why 5 years was chosen. He responded that it would give time for this methodology to develop.

Ms. Hauke said it does not make sense to set the moratorium for 5 years. She does not believe this Board would vote to add green burials. There are over 300 cemeteries doing this kind of burial so more information can be obtained, but it does not need to be a 5-year waiting period. Ms. Painter asked Ms. Hauke if she would recommend a different time frame. She would not like to put a time limit on this, but she does not believe this Board would agree to green burials in the near future.

Judith Bush, a member of the public, said that Mr. Healy's comment to go slow is a way to say learn by doing. By virtue of doing it, and getting experience, they would come to an understanding of how this should be managed within Lebanon. A lot of learning would be involved.

Ms. Painter said 5 years is too long and that amount of time was chosen out of frustration. The Board is making this harder than it has to be. Ms. Hauke reminded the Board that they were tasked with exploring green burials as an option. She believes by putting on a 5-year moratorium, they are not doing what they were tasked to do. Ms. Maville said they Board was not specifically tasked. When the discussion was first brought up to the Council, one of the suggestions was to consider green burials. They were tasked with revising Chapter 46. Board chose to not include green burials at the time as it was going to take a long time. There are still a lot of questions. If the next step should not be to draft regulations, because there are too many questions, then that is understandable. If there are in fact a number of cemeteries who are providing green burials, maybe it should be addressed in the future if more conversations are needed.

Maybe it is not wise to set a time frame at this point. The regulations do not have to be crafted at this time. There may be room for continued discussion without drafting the regulations. Also, the previous Motion can be amended to change the first Motion.

Ms. Painter MOVED to amend the motion to temporarily discontinue the discussion of green burial policy but allow room for educational or learning about green burials for the Board.

Vice Chair Palazzo chose not to amend his motion and asked for it to be voted up or down. His motion does not pertain to discussions, or educational learning about green burials.

Mr. Muzzy still agrees with the original motion.

Painter, nay, Tony yea, Caitlyn, nay, David yea, Fran, yea.

Roll Call Vote

Vice Chair Palazzo, Mr. Muzzy, and Chair Hanchett all voting Yea.

Ms. Painter and Ms. Hauke voted Nay.

****The Vote on the Motion was unanimously approved (3-2).***

With that being passed, the Board cancelled the May 25, 2020 meeting and future meetings to revise green burial regulations.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review Rules of Decorum with City Manager and Mayor

The City manager and the Mayor came before the Board. They provided Rules of Decorum to enhance the relationships between board members and the public. They are hoping to address some issues that have been brought to the City Manager's attention. The Rules were developed by the City Manager and brought to the Board for their consideration. He read the Rules of Decorum to the Board and asked for feedback about the rules that were provided. The Mayor added that this is not a way to single out any specific board, members or public attendees. They are making this move to develop and apply these rules throughout the City of Lebanon. The Board was asked to adopt the Rules of Decorum.

Mr. Muzzy moved to adopt these Rules of Decorum.

Seconded by Vice Chair Palazzo.

Roll Call Vote

Ms. Painter, Mr. Muzzy, Vice Chair Palazzo, Ms. Hauke, and Chair Hanchett all voting Yea.

None voted Nay.

****The Vote on the Motion was unanimously approved (5-0).***

B. Infant Grave Monuments

Mr. McCarthy presented his Infant grave monuments research with granite companies. The Board has a few diagrams, and some language for the monuments. The quotes he has are for 10" wide x 4" thick x 8' long. The prices were \$1898 with the engravings. If it is shorter, 4.5 feet long, the price is less, slightly over \$1200, but using them would involve a lot of work to build a substantial way to secure them. The longer granite would be safer and sturdier and less vulnerable to getting broken or pushed over. The cost of the monuments would come out of the interest from the Trustees Perpetual Fund. Ms. Maville is checking on the process for getting the money out of the account. Mr. McCarthy shared his screen with images of the monuments for the Members to see. Mr. McCarthy will email the images to the Members and they will vote after further review.

C. Annual Assessment of Cemeteries

The new Beehive program is setup. It is likely best to have the Members do the assessment the way it has been done in the past. The Members visit the cemeteries, list what needs work and attention, and compares it to last year's agenda. Then they prioritize the work. They will use the same categories to review, that were used in previous years. Staff will enter the information into the Beehive Program. Ms. Painter mentioned the 5 categories that the Board Members used in previous years. She would suggest that they use the same form again and Ms. Painter will resend the form to the Chair.

D. Infant Garden Bench Placement

Patrick McCarthy said the Odd Fellows requested placement of the bench by the Logan Fountain. It will be put by the drywell that houses the pump. It should make that area look better. It will be attached to cement to keep the bench in place.

E. Columbariums

The RFP has gone out for bids on placing two columbariums in the Glenwood Cemetery. One bid was offered by Norwalk Wilbert and the second by a company out of Georgia. They are similar, but the niches are slightly different. They both have 64 niches; Norwalk's has individual shutters for burial information. The other company has groups of 4 written on the same shutter. The price difference is about \$2000. It seems more appealing to have single shutters that are not required to be shared. They are hoping to have them installed by August or September. Staff would have to put in concrete forms for mounting the columbariums. The Members would have to determine the fee schedules and would need to be put in place before they are ready to go.

It was recalled that the Board previously voted, June 9, 2020, to have two columbariums and to place them around the fountain. That was needed to hit the CIP threshold and it was a balanced look with the fountain in the center. It is important that a view of the fountain is not blocked from any of the areas in the cemetery. The fountain should be viewable from all the existing grave sites and it is not interrupted by the columbariums. Jim Donison said the CIP proposal showed the location of the columbariums, and it is important to follow through on that proposal and the bid. The bid is based on delivery in late July. The line of site was clear, all the way through. The fountain would be viewable from everywhere because the columbariums are only 5 feet high and the fountain is 9-10 feet tall. It is important that the view of the fountain is not blocked by the columbariums for anyone already buried in the cemetery.

Sarah Riley, a member of the public, spoke about the conversation during the June 9, 2020 meeting. The Members discussed there was some discussion about them being placed around the fountain, but she believes the location was not specifically determined.

In the future, the Board will be informed when the Sexton is moving forward to request a bid. It was confusing for some Members and they do not understand how this moved through the CIP process without the Board being aware of it.

***Mr. Muzzy MOVED to follow through with the vote of May and June 2020, the location and two columbariums to be located in Glenwood Cemetery, on either end of the fountain.
Seconded by Vice Chair Palazzo.***

Roll Call Vote

Vice Chair Palazzo, Ms. Hauke, Mr. Muzzy, and Chair Hanchett all voting Yea.

None voted Nay.

Ms. Painter abstained.

****The Vote on the Motion was unanimously approved (4-0-1).***

F. Bank Repairs at Valley Cemetery

The bank repair will be done next week. They will replace the soil where there is erosion. There has not been any recent bicycle activity and hopefully can get the bank back and get it some growth of grass to hold back that embankment.

VI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - NONE

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Palazzo MOVED to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Muzzy.

Roll Call Vote

Ms. Painter, Vice Chair Palazzo, Ms. Hauke, Mr. Muzzy, and Chair Hanchett all voting Yea.

None voted Nay.

****The Vote on the Motion was unanimously approved (5-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Billings
Recording Secretary