



Telephone (603) 673-8855  
Fax (603) 673-8136

**TOWN OF  
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
Cemetery Trustees**

**P.O. BOX 360 – 1 Main Street  
BROOKLINE, NH 03033-0360**

<http://www.brooklinenh.us>

***Brookline Cemetery Trustees Minutes  
Friday, October 1, 2021***

Meeting held in person at Town Hall

Attending:

Brian Rater, chair  
Ann Somers, secretary  
Judy Cook, member  
Mike Wenrich, sexton

The meeting opened at 11:04 a.m.

**Public input**

There was no public input.

**Minutes**

The minutes from September 17<sup>th</sup> were unanimously approved as written.

**Sexton's update**

**Mike** spoke of time constraints due to his focus on the Transfer Station and the ongoing Brookline Public Works building construction, as well as a continuing high number of burials. His sexton duties continue to take up about a day a week – more than anticipated – and he is feeling the urgent need for additional personnel to manage the current and anticipated work loads. He has not had time to lay out the grid for additional numbering at Pine Grove. **Judy** asked about extending the currently truncated irrigation system to reach all tiers. **Mike** said that would be relatively easy to do, and would fit comfortably within our available funds.

**Cemetery maintenance cost trends**

**Brian** has done considerable research on costs to maintain Brookline's cemeteries over the last ten years. Annual expenditures have varied over time, both over and under budget, with some explanations but no clear "trend."

### **Budget for 2022: adding loam**

We adjusted our budget request for 2022 to include, under landscaping, \$600 for loam and labor to fill in existing depressions (summer foreign students through Judy at \$10/hr). We discussed the town's relatively new use of the Cemetery Trust Funds as a pass-through for scholarship check-writing purposes. The updated budget request is:

1. Mowing/trimming/landscaping -- \$17,600
2. Tree maintenance/replacement -- \$12,000 to remove the aged and deteriorating Pine Grove silver maples. Replacement trees will follow in future years.
3. Monument maintenance -- \$500 for materials, work done by volunteers (Judy and others)
4. Gravel/grading -- \$1,000 (annual to keep the roadways passable)
5. Scholarship -- \$1,000 line item for disbursement (offset with line item for reimbursement)

Of the total of \$32,100 budgeted, we will request from the town \$20,000 for cemetery maintenance, and \$1,000 in reimbursement for the scholarship pass-through. The balance of \$11,100 (plus stump grinding of removed maples and other stumps) will come from Cemetery Trustees funds. **Judy moved, Ann seconded, we voted unanimously in favor.**

### **Trust Funds**

**Brian** has invested substantial time in sorting out the various funds which fall under Cemetery Trustees and have evolved in definition and practice over the years. His goal is to achieve regularity and clarity going forward. We are grateful!

The Perpetual Care Fund is the most time-consuming to manage. Cemetery-funds bookkeeping currently falls to Administrative Assistant Sharon Sturtevant, whose time is paid for under the town's general budget.

**Brian will sort out which funds restrict us to spending only gains, and which allow us to use principal.**

In the course of this research Brian discovered a number of bookkeeping anomalies and inconsistencies that bear investigation and resolution. **Brian will work with Town Administrator Tad Putney toward this end** when the focus on town budgeting season has abated.

### **North Cemetery Stone Wall**

**Mike** is on track to support the effort planned for October 16<sup>th</sup>. **Since Ann and Judy will both be present, Brian will notice the working meeting.** **Ann** will seek volunteers. Subject to weather and scheduling convenience, it will probably begin at 10 or 11 o'clock.

### **Flags for Veterans**

**Judy** has provided for volunteers **Ann and Peter Webb**, and **Greg d'Arbonne** of the American Legion, **packets including maps and a listing of all the veterans identified by location** at Pine Grove. **Ann and Peter** plan to take primary charge of installing the donated flag holders and flags at Pine Grove, while **Judy** will lead the effort at Lakeside.

### **Documentation update**

**Judy** reported that she expects to complete documentation of Pine Grove by the end of October, and **will send to Brian the Word file** to be translated into a more sophisticated file type for long-term use and sharing.

### **Fencing needs at Pine Grove and Lakeside**

### **Renumbering certain plots at Pine Grove**

**Mike** reported that he has had no time to address either of these issues in the two weeks since our last meeting.

### **Repair and cleaning of monuments**

**Judy** reported that she and her husband **Peter** have nearly completed cleaning those monuments which needed it in the northern tier of Pine Grove, designated as T5-W and T5-E (West and East relative to the North-South Sparrow Tucker Avenue). With the help of welcome assistants, they have re-set some of the flat markers which have settled into difficult-to-maintain positions.

### **Cemetery in the Woods kiosk cleanup**

**Judy** stated that time constraints have put this on hold until spring.

### **Cemetery Facebook page**

**Judy** will work on this as time permits, **Ann** will work on providing photos. **Mike** would like to see a presence that engages citizen awareness and involvement.

### **Recovery for re-use of old plots with minimal burials**

**Judy** stated that her attendance at the NH Old Graveyards conference did not produce anything that would apply for Brookline. She will be combing through Brookline's old records to try to learn who should be reimbursed (at original cost, per RSA) for any plots that the town wishes to buy back.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m. The next meeting will be Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. at Town Hall.

Minutes submitted by Ann C. Somers