

Enfield Cemetery Trustees
Regular Monthly Meeting
Sept 13, 2018

Present : Gordon Clough, Don Crate, Fred Williamson, Will Shoemaker

Note: No meeting was held on 8/9, as no member of the public had come forward with an issue, and there was no business to transact.

Fred called today's meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Countryside Cemetery Appropriation

Will Shoemaker indicated that the Countryside Scattering Park project was not complete or underway. He also indicated that efforts to use town resources, as directed by the Trustees, had been unsuccessful due to staffing shortages. He projected that needed labor would not become available this year.

Given this situation, Gordon recommended that the Trustees contract the work out to Thomas Hersey for \$2600, as proposed earlier this year. He provided a copy of the Cemetery Budget and expenses thru July, showing that there was still \$4,255 available.

Fred motioned that Thomas Hersey be engaged, Don seconded; and the motion was approved without dissent.

Will Shoemaker will contact Mr. Hersey about moving forward.

Grounds Crew Staffing

Will indicated that the summer Grounds Crew was now composed of himself and two part-timers limited to 24 hrs/week each. This represents approx 2 FTEs in total. This crew spends 50% of its available time on cemetery work, and 50% on maintaining town common areas and performing building maintenance.

In his experience, a full complement of Grounds Crew included 1 Fulltime Supervisor; 1 Full Time Grounds Laborer; and 2 Partime Laborers. This 3 FTE work squad was the situation up until a couple of years ago, and it was effective and efficient, and flexible.

The current arrangement provides no backup supervisor to direct the part-timers and oversee their efforts when Will is away. We saw the results of this weakness over the Memorial Day period when Will was away (see June 14th Minutes). There is also no fulltime employee for him to train as his replacement, should he decide to move on. And there is no slack built in to absorb illnesses and resignations.

Basic workload has also increased, as the grounds crew is being called on to perform tasks which used to be handled by volunteer organizations.

Essentially, the current crew is being asked to perform increased work with one third less resources.

From the Cemeteries perspective, there is noone besides Will trained in the task of reclaiming and rebuilding broken grave stones. This skill has been passed on for 30 years, and is in danger of being lost. Furthermore the grounds crew is unable to cover “full burials”, which require **Two** members of the grounds crew. This situation can become a problem at any time – we have been fortunate this year in only having a single full burial.

Staffing problems at the transfer station this year have compounded this basic grounds crew manpower inadequacy, by forcing the grounds crew to complete its work in only 4 days (Tuesday thru Friday) instead of 5 days (Monday thru Friday). Will currently works at the transfer station on the weekends and has Monday off in return. This means that Cemetery work, a necessarily outdoor activity, is much more dependant of favorable weather, which we have not had this year. Work has had to be deferred at times due to inclement weather during the 4 available workdays.

Overall, a 33% cut in manpower coupled with a 20% cut in available work time. The Trustees concluded that this situation is undesirable and unsustainable, and that rolling back the staffing cut would be in the Town’s best interest and the simplest remedy.

The Trustees decided that “Enfield Budget Committee” meetings were the appropriate forum to raise this grounds crew issue. And “adding back the FTE that was cut” is the needed remedy.

The Trustees agreed that they needed to attend one of these meetings, and have Will available to provide details if requested by the Committee.

2019 Budget

The group discussed next year’s budget and whether the current \$7,200 was sufficient. Having learned that routine labor costs were covered in other parts of the Town budget, the Trustees felt that \$7,200 was sufficient for supplies and unplanned minor purchases. Will expressed confidence that level funding for next year would not be a problem.

This decision will be relayed to town officials.

Accomplishments

Will noted that difficulty mowing an uneven area of Countryside Cemetery has been eliminated by “Rolling” a large section; that “Mehitable Choate’s” broken grave stone has been rebuilt and reset; and that a long-buried section of wrought iron chain enclosing a family plot in the Enfield Center cemetery has been dug up, cleaned and put back in place.

Tribute to Richard Henderson

On October 11th, the Trustees will commemorate Richard Henderson’s devotion and contributions to the town by placing a plaque mounted on a stone in the Enfield Center cemetery. The wording on the plaque honoring his efforts is to be provided by his family.

As a matter of record, about 35 years ago the Enfield Center cemetery was completely overgrown – and Richard personally cleared and maintained it for a number of years. He was also a Cemetery Trustee for many years and an accomplished local historian.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted - FEW