



Cemetery Advisory Board

Thursday, November 2, 2023

at 9:30 a.m.

43 Bombardier Road, Municipal Building

Town Manager's Conference Room

MINUTES

Cemetery Advisory Board Members Present: Allen Beaupre, Beverly Hayden, John Mayville, Jay Nadeau, Peter Staniels

Others Present: Kristin Beers, Town Clerk; Don Turner Jr, Town Manager; Patrick Healy, VT Cemetery Association (departed at 10:35 a.m.)

- Don Turner called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
- Public Forum – none in attendance
- Al Beaupre made a motion to approve the prior meeting minutes from May 15, 2023. Jay Nadeau seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- Patrick Healy, guest speaker from the Green Mount Cemetery in Montpelier shared a presentation about Green Burials (natural burials).
 - He was involved as an opponent of Green Burials back when they were being discussed in the legislature.
 - His cemetery has been doing natural burials for the past 6-7 years, they have done approximately 18-24 natural burials to date.
 - The objective is to compost the body as fast as naturally possible.
 - Important to involve the family, pre-plan, provide detailed explanation of the process, ask and answer all possible questions like, will there be a smell? Stains? Animals digging?
 - He has not seen any disturbance of these graves by any animal.
 - Know all the logistics – size of lots (4-foot wide, no shallower than 3.5 feet but too deep slows decomposition process) backfill material, winter burials, maintenance of lot/section, family participation, marking of graves.
 - He likes to lay down straw at the bottom of the grave as a nice presentation for the burial service.
 - Start slow and be able to make changes – don't rush into this process.
 - In Green Mount cemetery's natural section, they plant wildflowers and mow once in the fall (to reduce the leaves, mice, and ticks, etc).
 - In the traditional sections, they keep these natural burials flat/level (no hump) to allow for the mower (only trim to about 4 inches, not enough funds to maintain a country club appearance and better for the turf/sod) but touch up as the grave site settles.

- Recommends adopting clear procedures for grave digger, maintenance/mower.
- Regarding enforcement of rules, recommends a positive approach “natural decorations only” versus “no plastic decorations”.
- Regarding home burials, he discourages them for a number of reasons – land ownership changes, use of land changes, many people regret the decision and then have to deal with disinterring a body.
- Plans were made to meet again on the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm. The next meeting will be on December 13th.
- The group will reorganize at that time, by electing a Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk.
- The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m. with a motion by John Mayville. Bev Hayden seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristin Beers*

APPROVED MINUTES:

_____ Date: _____
Chair

DRAFT