

Town of Canandaigua

5440 Routes 5 & 20 West
Canandaigua, NY 14424
(585) 394-1120 ~ townofcanandaigua.org

Established 1791

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Monday, August 8, 2022 at 9:00 AM

MEETING REPORT

MEETING CALLED BY: Karen DeMay, Chairperson, Town Board Member

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Dave York Judy York Mary Schneider
Ray Henry Dennis Brewer Leif HerrGesell

STAFF MEMBERS: Kate Silverstrim-Jensen, Staff Liaison

GUESTS:

(R) notates remote participants.

Meeting was opened at 9:02 AM by Chairwoman DeMay. Overall response from the cemetery tours was positive. It was educational and fun to see each location, and learn how large the Town of Canandaigua is. Mr. Brewer expressed appreciation for the inclusion of information from the Tree Team and for the park staff's attendance. Everyone is interested in getting local students involved in the clean-up work this fall. Town Historian, Leif HerrGesell, noted a future project could be to locate footstones that have been moved or thrown into hedge rows and try to find their original locations, and also to identify stones that have been buried over time and to re-erect those markers.

Landscaping at Hunn and Sandhill are the most in need of attention at this time. Committee Members want to schedule a clean-up day at Hunn in the coming weeks and also to communicate with the school to get student volunteers scheduled for later in the fall to clean up at Sandhill. The first clean-up was scheduled for Saturday, September 10 at 9am at Hunn Cemetery. This will be in lieu of our regular meeting which would fall on Labor Day. The town's bucket truck is now registered, so tree work is anticipated to start in the coming weeks as well.

The 2023 budget request for the committee totals \$13,250 and includes funds for burial costs as needed (\$1,000), the Pine Bank Cemetery Association agreement (\$5,000), headstone preservation through Ellison Conservation (\$5,000), about 1,000ft of split rain fence materials which could be installed at Cooley or New Michigan cemeteries (\$1,250), and public engagement and education materials (\$1,000). This is subject to change as the Budget Officer and Town Board review at each stage of the budget process.

Residents Richard and Donna West submitted photos they had taken of damage to headstones at Academy Cemetery caused by the contracted mowers in the end of July. There has been discussion of changing mowing from a contracted service to hiring in-house staff. Committee members are in support of this change, noting that a staff member will have more care and attention to detail, as well as be able to communicate better information about the status of the cemeteries, such as alerting someone quickly if there are issues. Staff hours can be flexed, so if there isn't mowing to do, they don't have to work that day. It was also felt that through the procurement process, smaller companies that might be better quality are out bid by large companies that can do it for less cost, but generally aren't as careful. Lastly, a staff member could help with more than just mowing, like for example tree work, cemetery beautification, and be extra hands for the parks team. Kate will put together a draft letter of support for this change that can be reviewed and submitted to the Town Board for consideration with the budget process.

Lastly, Leif has been working on an article about several Civil War veterans from Academy and found that one in particular, Ebenezer Williams, was buried in Remington Root Cemetery but his headstone has either been removed or damaged beyond recognition. Research has been very interesting because he has discovered that there were multiple Ebenezer Williams' serving in the military at that time. Leif has sent a request to the VA to get a government issued headstone for Mr. Williams. The process may take several months, but once it arrives, we will need to determine where to place it and may wish to do a small ceremony or event at the cemetery. He will continue to update the committee as more information is available.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will fall on Labor Day, so the group instead will meet on Saturday, September 10, at 9AM at Hunn Cemetery (Intersection of Woolhouse Road and County

Road 32) to perform hedge row clean up. Lunch will be provided. Please bring work gloves and tree trimming tools to help with the clean-up.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 AM.

Next Meeting: September 10, 2022, 9:00AM at Hunn Cemetery.