

# Cemetery Trustee Meeting Minutes

## January 9, 2025

- Meeting opens with Jim Hajjar, Albert “Skip” Belanger, Jillian Benedix, Doug Finan, Bruce Stevens, and Stefanie Lewendon present.

Joyce could not be present this evening as she is out of town supporting her dad. The trustees all send their thoughts and prayers to Joyce and her dad.

- **Motion:** Jim, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jillian to have Skip as voting member
- **Motion** by Jillian, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Skip to accept the December 5th meeting minutes as presented with one changing “State of NH” to “State of NH probate court”. Jim will update the minutes and update the website to no longer show as ‘draft’.
- **Cemetery Activity**
  - **Website** – Stefanie will update the Cemetery Trustees and Alternates on Town elected / appointed officials Town documents
  - **Quaker Cemetery** - Bruce Stevens asked about the care and maintenance of Quaker Cemetery located adjacent to 287 South Road. Skip explained that in the past, the local Quakers (in Exeter) have stated that they do not want any maintenance of the burial grounds done. Skip will approach them again in the spring asking if it is possible to erect a sign to at least mark the cemetery for the benefit of the community.
  - **Tonry flags and wreaths** - Discussion regarding removal of flags and wreaths for winter. Doug Finan, Jim, and Jillian stated they could volunteer to do that if Joyce needs help.
- **Other Business**
  - **Disinterment Conversation** – Next of kin has requested to disinter cremated remains from a family plot in Tonry cemetery for the purpose of scattering the remains on the family plot. Rules and regulations make no provision for scattering of remains in our cemetery. There is a policy statement from Cemetery Trustees dated January 2020 regarding Scattering of Ashes which can be utilized on a special case-by-case basis. Joyce will notify next of kin that he needs to get disinterment permit from funeral director and State of NH (probate court) approval (if needed).
- **Future Planning, calendar**
  - **Alternate Trustees** – Joyce and Jim submitted a request that is in the January

issue of BNL for someone to run for Trustee in March as well for alternates.

○ **Poor Farm**

- **Abandonment Process** – Per NH RSA Section 289:20 Official public notice printed in BNL December edition that will be delivered to homes on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Process states 60-90 days later, Select Board must read the public notice. Will request that be done by SB at their meeting on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>. The Cemetery Trustees will then hold a public hearing regarding the Brentwood Poor Farm Cemetery as part of their February meeting on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Once the public hearing is completed, the Trustees will request that per RSA 289:20 they declare the cemetery abandoned.

*If any descendants were located and grant permission, or if no descendants were located, then, after a public hearing, the municipality may declare the burial ground abandoned by a majority vote of the selectmen or city councilmen present and voting*

**Update** – Joyce and Jim placed notice in January edition of BNL announcing the public hearing on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

- **Requirements for Future New Town Cemetery** – Brief discussion of layout of new cemetery. Doug Finan will provide to Trustees the name of a contact who does cemetery layouts in southern NH and Merrimack Valley. Doug suggest that properly designing the layout of the cemetery will allow for the most effective/efficient use of the cemetery property. The group agreed and also added that a lot of discussion will have to take place regarding what type of burials the cemetery will support (standard lots, cremation lots, scattering area, etc) and how to best layout the cemetery. Brief discussion on how to best provide access/parking and walking paths in cemetery.

The group then reviewed the Stevens property that is going to be donated to the Town of Brentwood for use as a future cemetery. Bruce reviewed the lots from Brentwood recording #D-10833 that show the two lots to be donated. One is listed on Brentwood tax map as lot 221054 (0.64 acres) and the other is listed on Kingston tax map as lot R38-000013 (2.8 acres).

Jim already has walked the property with Bruce and shared some photos that were taken.

Jillian will notify her mom (who works in Kingston town office) and Jim can contact Kingston Cemetery Sexton Phil Coombs if needed to assure Kingston is aware of Brentwood's plan to create the new cemetery.

After discussion and review of the property map, the motion was made by Jim and 2nd by Skip

*“Motion that the Town of Brentwood accept from Bruce Stevens the donated properties listed on Brentwood tax map (Recording #D-10833) as lot 221054 and on Kingston tax map as lot R38-000013 for the sole purpose of a future town cemetery to be known as the Stevens Cemetery. The Town of Brentwood shall incur any legal and survey costs associated with said donation of property.”*

The motion was passed unanimously by the Cemetery Trustees.

Jim will ask to be placed on the agenda of next Conservation Committee meeting to formally share our motion and ask that the Town proceed with the process of accepting the donation of the Stevens property.

**The Cemetery Trustees wish to again thank Bruce Stevens for this incredibly generous donation to our community.**

- **Motion** Jim second by Jillian to adjourn at 6:14 PM.

Next Meeting is on Thursday February 13, 2025, at 5PM at Town Office. We will also hold a public hearing regarding the Poor Farm Cemetery at that meeting.