

Waterford Selectboard Working Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 29, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

Davies Library

In Attendance: Gary Allard, Sue Hayes, Warner Hodgdon, Ron Gray, Kevin Gillander.
Attendance list attached.

Gary Allard called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Modifications to Agenda

- Add Gravel Crushing Update (Discussion)
- The group took a moment of silence to honor the passing of Fred Kenney, a previous Selectboard member.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Warner Hodgdon made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as amended of the April 15, 2024 meeting. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

Festival Permit (Action)

- Warner Hodgdon made a motion to accept the permit for the Davies Memorial Library to hold an annual festival at the Fire Station on June 7 from 5-8 pm. Ron Gray seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. All Board members signed the permit.

Facilitated Working Meeting between the Selectboard, Cemetery Committee, and the Waterford Historical Society

- Maria Dantos facilitated the meeting. She collected information and prepared questions from all parties. The Selectboard was asked to outline the role of the Cemetery Committee. They explained that the Cemetery Committee was formed to fulfill duties that previously were carried out by the sexton, a position not currently being held. The Cemetery Committee is intended to be an advisory committee that investigates cemetery issues and brings suggestions to the Selectboard when action needs to be taken. The Cemetery Committee handles communication when a cemetery project involves private property. The Treasurer retains control of the committee's money under her scope of responsibilities.
- There is some debate about whether the town owns the property of all the cemeteries. The Historical Society provided deeds for a few of the cemeteries. Gary Allard noted a map that shows the Carr Cemetery being outside of the parameters outlined in the deed, so further investigation is required to know if the town owns the property. A few cemeteries

are landlocked by private property, so permission is required from the landowners to access the cemeteries. The Cemetery Committee is the liaison to the landowners.

- The Historical Society is a member of the Vermont Old Cemetery Association, through which they received aid and were accepted for grants to allow them to restore previously neglected cemeteries before the establishment of the Cemetery Committee. The Historical Society is happy to let the Cemetery Committee take the lead on restoration projects in the future, but they don't want to abandon the projects they have already started. Jennifer D'Agostino, member of the Cemetery Committee, requested the Historical Society share their progress on these projects so they can be adequately informed as they are responsible for reporting such matters to the Selectboard. Maria Dantos suggested that the Historical Society attend one Cemetery Committee meeting every quarter to maintain communication. Both parties agreed.
- The Historical Society shared that requests to VOCA for grants for projects in 2025 need to be submitted by September. They will meet with the Cemetery Committee in July to plan their project and prepare their application. A representative from VOCA shared some information about the organization and clarified that there is no strict deadline to apply for the grant, but their schedule fills up quickly so it is encouraged to apply as early as possible.
- A Carr Cemetery cleanup is being scheduled. The Cemetery Committee will contact the adjacent landowner, Dr. Lahey, to get permission to cut problem trees and see what he wants to do with the wood. Warner Hodgdon said they won't need to involve the Tree Warden, Matt Louis, as long as Lahey agrees to remove the trees.
- Warner Hodgdon noted that the tree-cutting contractor used on previous projects has reached out to him looking to schedule some work that they began planning two years ago while Warner was sexton. This would ordinarily be handled by the Cemetery Committee, but Warner would like to remain involved to maintain continuity and offer his assistance whenever possible. He will work with the Cemetery Committee to schedule the work.
- Jennifer D'Agostino asked about the budget for the cemetery projects. Town Treasurer Heather Gonyaw informed that \$20,000 of ARPA funds have been allocated for cemetery repairs. So far \$3,240 has been spent. \$5,500 is allocated for David to remove trees in the Carr Cemetery. Part of the funds have been dedicated to replacing the fence around Hill Cemetery, but the cost of that project is currently unknown. Warner Hodgdon is guessing around \$5,000-\$6,000. Two other cemeteries need their fence repaired or replaced. Heather will begin working on the budget with the Cemetery Committee in August to get quotes together to bring to the Selectboard for approval.
- The Cemetery Committee brought up a new issue they are facing. Funeral homes used to be responsible for hiring contractors to handle digging and filling burial holes. They no longer provide that service, so the town is responsible for finding a new solution. The Selectboard clarified that it is the individual, not the town, who is responsible for hiring

and paying a contractor to dig and fill burial holes. Because it is not the town hiring the contractor, there is no requirement to send out for bids to decide who the contractor will be. The Cemetery Committee just needs to provide information to individuals trying to arrange burials. The Town Treasurer Heather Gonyaw suggested the town could make an exclusive contract with a contractor to ensure there is a reliable provider for burial services, in which case they would need to send out bids. This idea will be considered more in the future. For now, Warner Hodgdon will share the contact of a contractor to suggest.

- Maria Dantos looked into Roberts' Rules and determined they apply to the Cemetery Committee. The Cemetery Committee is required to warn their meetings and post their minutes. They do not need to hold Executive Sessions because they don't have any employees.
- The Historical Society suggested changing the Cemetery page on the town website to include information on cleaning historic stones. The group decided to refer to VOCA and include a link to their website for their guidelines and suggestions. The Cemetery Committee's email will be added to the page so people can reach out with general inquiries. Information about the use of the ARPA funds for cemetery repair will also be posted.
- Maria Dantos determined there is no conflict of interest in having the sexton for the private Passumpssic Cemetery Association also serving on Waterford's municipal Cemetery Committee.
- The Historical Society has a list of issues they brought to the attention of the Cemetery Committee. The list was sent to committee members who will add the items to their agenda to discuss during their meetings.

Gravel Crushing Update

- Warner Hodgdon confirmed that he and Ron Gray will have an update on gravel crushing during the next Selectboard meeting.

Adjourn

- Warner Hodgdon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kevin Gillander seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Waterford Selectboard Meeting April 29, 2024

Sign In Sheet

Name

Signature

Debra Benoit

Debra Benoit

Susan Hayes

Susan Hayes

Gary Allard

Gary Allard

MARIA DANTOS

Maria Dantos

Heleen PIKE

Heleen Pike

Donna Heath

Donna Rae Heath

Chern Crowl

Chern Crowl

Mark Harpin

Mark Harpin

KEVIN C GYLLANDER

Kevin C Gyllander

PRISCILLA MICHARD

Priscilla Michard

Heather Gonyaw

Heather Gonyaw

Paul Gray

Paul Gray

WARNER N. HODGDON

Warner N. Hodgdon

CEDRIC ALEXANDER

Cedric Alexander VOGA