

Town of Chichester
Cemetery Trustees' meeting
January 8, 2024

The Cemetery Trustees met on January 8, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m. at the Historical Society building. Fred Shaw and Brenda Boswak attended.

OLD BUSINESS

Our successful, third year of participating in the national *Wreaths Across America Day* event took place on Saturday December 16, 2023. It was a mild 40-degree day, with nearly 60 attendees at the noon time ceremony. Commander Sergeant Major, Frank Swirko carried out the role of Master of Ceremonies this year with solemn honor, attention to detail and thoughtfulness. He spoke words of recognition for Chichester's only Missing in Action service member, Private 1st Class, US Army, John Kelley, by sharing some details of the military engagement John was involved in. John never returned home from that assignment.

Frank presented a commemorative coin to the ceremony participants, David Testerman as the youngest veteran, Gordon Humphrey as the eldest veteran, and Melissa Dingman as the wife of a deployed service member. Chichester's 218 veterans' gravesites each received a Remembrance Wreath placed by a volunteer. We are very pleased with the support and participation in the event.

Ruthie & Brenda attended the December 13, 2023, Selectmen & Budget Committee meeting to present our budget request for 2024. Brenda prepared a handout with photos and financial information for the board and committee members to review. This included a summary of our goals and accomplishments in the last three years, before and after photos of restored gravestones, breakdown of maintenance expenses, and Cemetery Trust Funds financial information.

We are requesting \$7,000 for 2024 Cemetery Maintenance budget to continue gravestone restoration and maintenance in 2024. We are also requesting a \$6,000 budget line item for 2024 for dangerous tree removal at the cemeteries in addition to our proposed warrant article, 'to request the town of Chichester to assume ownership of *Hook Cemetery*'. There was quite a bit of discussion and several questions asked following our presentation. The Selectmen requested that we submit an estimate for removal of both the dead Ash trees at the *Burying Yard* as well as an estimate for repairs to *Hook Cemetery*.

We believe the meeting was positive and productive.

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NEW BUSINESS

Brenda obtained from Chief Wright a copy of the 2011 accident report relating to the incident at *Hook Cemetery*. We discussed the possibility of meeting with the family member, Diane Loso, who is requesting the transfer of *Hook Cemetery* for additional information. There is still an outstanding bench warrant for the person responsible for the damage to the cemetery. We came to an agreement that the Selectmen should be provided with the accident information prior to making their final decision regarding our proposed warrant article. Brenda will prepare the information to email the Town Administrator to forward to the Selectmen.

Joseph Beachy, Extol Tree Care, LLC in Mont Vernon, has completed removal of several dead trees in *True Cemetery*. Brenda has asked Joseph for an estimate to remove both large dead Ash trees at the Burying Yard Cemetery, as requested by the Selectmen. Brenda has contacted Riel Fence Co. & NH Monuments for an estimate to repair the granite posts and rails at *Hook Cemetery*, as requested by the Selectmen, nothing received yet.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Boswak, Cemetery Trustee, Secretary