

Marlboro Cemetery Commission

MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

4:15 – 6:45 PM

Marlboro Town Office

Respectfully Submitted by Hollis Burbank-Hammarlund

Present: Marcia Hamilton, Hollis Burbank-Hammarlund, Sally White

Meeting called to order at 4:15 PM.

This meeting is the first official meeting of the newly-elected Marlboro Cemetery Commission. As such, the first order of business was to elect a board chairperson and to appoint a member to record meeting minutes.

Motion was made by Hollis to elect Marcia as board chair. Seconded by Sally. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Motion was made by Marcia to appoint Hollis to record meeting minutes. Seconded by Sally. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Motion to create a Commission email address for member administrative communications was made by Marcia, seconded by Hollis. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. Email address shall be: marlborograves@gmail.com

A discussion to review the grounds maintenance status of Marlboro's three cemeteries with direct municipal oversight responsibility followed. These include the King Cemetery (old and new) on Fox Road, the Clark Warren Cemetery on Augur Hole Road, and the Marlboro Center Cemetery at South Road/Route 9.

The grounds at:

- King Cemetery have been cared for by Jeff Burt
- Clark Warren Cemetery have been cared for by Alan Young
- Marlboro Center Cemetery have been cared for by Conner Hamilton

Grounds care includes spring cleanup and routine/regular mowing and weed whacking during the growing season, with special attention prior to Mother's Day, The Fourth of July, and Memorial Day. Hollis will reach out to contractors to secure information about cost, billing, and itemization of maintenance tasks for the upcoming 2025 season and will report to the Commission at the next meeting. Marcia will review past invoices and report back at the next meeting.

Additional cemetery care is needed, by other contractors, to repair and reposition broken and fallen gravestones. This latter care (in the Town's 2025 budget at up to \$2,000/cemetery) shall be negotiated on an 'as needed' basis by the Commission.

Motion was made by Sally and seconded by Marcia to move forward with gravestone repairs as needed. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

As per conversation between Marcia and the Marlboro Town Treasurer, invoices for all cemetery care will be submitted to and reviewed by the Cemetery Commission before being paid by the Treasurer. In instances where contracted/anticipated costs for maintenance work and actual costs differ, the full Commission shall review and approve the invoice at a regular or special meeting.

Discussion of two other cemeteries on private land followed. These include the Phelps Cemetery and the Adams Crossroad/Old Hogback Cemetery. Hollis questioned whether town tax dollars can be (or should be) spent on these cemeteries and if the Cemetery Commission has any official authority regarding their care. Questions arose as to access and liability issues and lack of specific funding in the town budget for any public expenditures on these cemeteries. It was decided that for now, these two cemeteries should be cared for by volunteers, with permission from the landowners. This issue may be revisited in the future after additional (legal) clarity is provided from Municipal sources.

Hollis asked about how to handle a recent email inquiry from the daughter of a recently deceased Brattleboro resident regarding who is responsible for 'opening a grave' (digging the hole) in preparation for burial.

Motion made by Marcia, seconded by Sally to advise the inquirer—and all future inquirers—that opening a grave should be discussed with and coordinated by the family of the deceased and whomever they have contracted with for funeral arrangements. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Hollis offered to create a user-friendly flowchart to help the public navigate the burial process.

Hollis described the work underway to complete the new (expanded) King Cemetery and begin plot sales. Pending advice and direction from Forrest Holzapfel at our next meeting, Hollis has volunteered to represent the Commission as a signer to the new King Cemetery deeds.

The next meeting of the Commission was planned for Tuesday, April 29 at 5PM at the Town Office. Items added to the agenda include:

1. Approve minutes of April 9, 2025 meeting
2. Discuss the new (expanded) King Cemetery deeds with Forrest Holzapfel, Town Clerk.
3. Review the specifics of grounds care costs from 2024 (Marcia, Hollis)
4. Review information from grounds care contractors regarding 2025 costs, tasks, schedules, etc. (Hollis)
5. Schedule a site visit of King Cemetery, Marlboro Center Cemetery, and Clark Warren Cemetery to review gravestone repair (and other) work needed.
6. Other (TBD)

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Hollis, seconded by Marcia at 6:45 PM. Unanimously approved by vote in the affirmative.