

WILLIAMSTOWN CEMETERY COMMISSION

May 28, 2026 * * Minutes - Draft

Present: Matt Couillard CH, Susan Lyons, Daphne Herwig, Matt Walker, Joe Mangan
Guest:

The Meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M. at the Town Office.

Minutes: Minutes from April 23, 2026 were reviewed. Motion made by Matt W. to accept as written, 2nd by Daphne H. All approved.

Budget Status Report Dated: May 28, 2026 – was presented and reviewed.

Warrants: Hill House Estates, LLC – Inv #2637 (\$5,125.00) May Contracted Services; Hill House Estates, LLC – Inv #2638 (\$1,450.00) Village Cem. Stones straightened and East Hill grave filled in and grass marker raised.

Income: Burials: 3 Cremations/Morgan family (\$1,200.00) T. Quintin (\$500.00); H. Hebert (\$500.00); G. Franceschi (\$500.00); Grass Marker installations: Morgan (\$125.00); Franceschi (\$125.00). Total = \$2,950.00

NEW BUSINESS:

Matt C. Has everyone had a chance to review the minutes? Any comments? Anything to add?

Susan L. Yes – under Warrants – I hadn't added in Joe's May Contracted Services invoice. For some reason that invoice didn't come thru with the cleaning one - - so Jennifer was kind enough to add it to the warrant you all signed and issued Joe a second check.

Matt C. Looking over the Budget Status Report - - we have around \$9,000.00 left.

Susan L. Everything looks good - - we took \$1,450.00 out of the Stone Repair budget. We still have money left in Maintenance. I also asked Jennifer for a current Reserve Fund Budget which you all have a copy of. This also notes what we are to use them for. Also noted the income received for burials and installations.

Matt C. Asked for Joe's report.

Joe M. I repaired/straightened (22) stones in the Village and the one stone in East Hill. I did try and re-send the pictures of the stones fixed in Village. It might have been too much data to send all at once. There are still a lot of stones in all the cemeteries that need to be straightened. I was in West Hill and noticed stones there also. The repair in East Hill wasn't a chuck hole – it was actually a sunken grave. I had some dirt in the back of my truck and had to use it all to fill in that one and one the next row over also needed more dirt. I didn't have any seed with me that day.

Matt C. There is also a pretty good hole on the other end of the cemetery – towards the newer section, down by the corner on the right hand side. Discussion followed. Caused by a tree root and a washout. Pretty deep hole that should be filled in. Looks like it would need quite a bit. Should be taken care of.

Joe M. If I filled it in I would probably need a backhoe or excavator, I have at home.

Susan L. So talking about this - - is this something that we could use monies from the Reserve Fund? We have a little over \$8,700.00 in this fund and it can be used for Ledge Work, Road Work and Maintenance. Or looking to see what we have left in this year's budget.

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- Susan L. Talking about East Hill - - Lenny McCarthy's wife – Molly – wanted to be buried on her family's lot. This is the Winter's family. Asked Joe if he had a chance to look at this to see if there was room for two cremation burials. It does look like there is room past the two upright stones that are there now.
- Joe M. Agreed – I looked at it and it looks ok – as long as the stone/marker going in would be the same size as the ones that are there now.
- Susan L. So, what are the thoughts on filling in the hole in East Hill? We have money left in the Maintenance budget.
- Matt C. Joe - - what would you charge for this?
- Joe M. It would probably take a couple of yards, about \$50.00/yard. Probably \$250.00 to drive out here and back.
- Susan L. To include seeding (laughter).
- Matt W. To be taken out of the Maintenance budget - - all agreed.
- Susan L. I will make a Motion to have Joe fix the hole in the East Hill Cemetery for \$250.00 and have it seeded.
- Matt C. 2nd the Motion - - all agreed and Motion passed.
- Susan L. I have a note here on the Gino Franceschi burial on the Seaver lot. They had talked about doing a grass marker and I sent Lisa a reminder that we needed a copy of it for approval. We haven't received it yet. The burial is scheduled for June 13th. I'll keep an eye on that.
- Also – Peter's Nuisance Trapping - - I reached out to him and he said that he would do it for the same price as last year. The Set fee is \$30.00 per cemetery and \$65.00/groundhog. He wouldn't be able to do anything until the 1st of June as he recently had knee surgery.
- Daphne H. When we were there, we saw at least 5-6 chuck holes.
- Discussion - Right across the fence in the lower section – there is a whole family of woodchucks. There are new holes in the upper section also.
- Daphne H. I was with family in the Village Cem. recently by the Boyce lot trimming up the Lilac trees - - no one wanted to cut them all the way down as they came from my grandmother's garden Also – the Miner stone where the bushes are so close to the stone – they need to be taken down.
- Discussion - - Concern about whether the Cemetery has the legal right to remove them. Not sure if there is any family left to talk with about this.
- Daphne H. When Adam Boyce was on the Commission there was a situation, and he thought that if no family was available to talk with that a notice had to be posted in the newspaper.
- Joe M. Look in your By-Laws - - pretty sure you have the right to remove bushes, et al if they become a problem.
- Daphne H. That's good to know. The stone for Harry Bashaw needs a veteran flag holder. I did put a flag there but the marker is broken. I also want to warn you that there are bald-faced hornet nests in those trees, be careful. Might want to spray them really well before cutting the trees down.
- Susan L. I will take care of putting a flag holder by his marker.
So, what shall we do about Peter?
- Matt W. I will make the Motion to accept his proposal to remove the groundhogs.
2nd by Daphne H. - - all approved, Motion passed.
- Susan L. I will get in touch with him and make sure the paperwork is completed.

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- Daphne H. I have some pictures of a stone in West Hill Cemetery that needs to be taken care of. Also a picture of the weed that is taking over by the stone wall on the farthest side. I think that there might be more stones closer to the wall that the weed is hiding.
- Susan L. Mr. Wiggins still would like to have the tree cut down or trimmed by his relatives' stone. We told him he couldn't do it himself.
- Matt C. We can trim it back.
- Susan L. Mike MacAskill sent us two estimates for the fencing in the Village. We asked him for two proposals. The first one is for the back fence off Circle Street – and the estimate for that job is \$9,346.26. It includes labor, material and disposal and trucking of the old fence. The 2nd proposal is for the fence in the bottom section and the total for that is \$21,255.73. This includes labor, materials, disposal of the old fence and rental of a tractor and post hole digger. (Estimates passed around for both proposals.)
I asked Jennifer today if she knew how much might be available. As the Treasurer she has to go to the Trustee meetings, but she doesn't get the reports. Last year we asked for \$10,500 and had padded it a little which was good as he needed to order extra materials. We wound up with \$100 left over which we used up in another area. Just thoughts, we need to get ahold of the Trustees and let them know that we have another project that we would like to do.
- Matt C. Didn't they tell us last year that there was \$16,000 that we could use.
- Susan L. One thought was to ask them for the maximum – or – maybe it would behoove us to go to their meeting with a second proposal and ask them if they would approve to fund it so we could do it all. There is a lot of money in that account and they don't want us to use it for the budget.
- Matt W. So that would be close to \$31,000 to do both jobs. We could ask for \$32,000.
Discussion - - maybe if we went to the meeting and asked them in person. They call a meeting when needed. The other problem that they are having is that they are down to two members. Phil Winters is no longer on the Board. Not sure how they make a decision with just two?
- Matt C. Mike might be able to use a couple of posts that are on the back side of the shed. He asked if they could use a couple of pressure treated posts for fencing on the back side of the cemetery. (Question if the fencing needs to go to the back side of the shed? Should take a look at it.) There are bees over in that area also.
- Matt W. It might be a good idea to try and do it all now if possible.
- Matt C. We could also ask them to come to our next meeting so we could present the project.
- Susan L. Do you want to try and get ahold of Gary Storrs? Or Orvil Lasell? Not sure who would be the easiest one to get ahold of.
- Matt C. The only problem with the next meeting is that I won't be here.
Discussion to pick a different date for the June meeting. Decision was made to change it to the week before – June 18th.
- Susan L. I can get ahold of both of them and ask them if they would be able to come to our June meeting. Also think that we should do up a letter requesting the funds so there is something in writing that they can refer to. I can do a draft letter and send it to you to look over.
- Susan L. Asked Joe if he had heard from the Page family about purchasing a lot in the West Hill Cemetery? Joe replied that he had not. I will reach out to the daughter again. They are looking for a 5x5 in the new section towards the far wall. There is a family lot across the wall in the old section close to that area. Information has been sent to Mr. Page and his daughter. Mrs. Page passed away in January.

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- Susan L. I did get ahold of Dirty Rock and their current price is \$9.75 per stone. As a reminder, they still clean corner markers for free so do not include them in the 100 count. The last time we did business with them was in 2024 and their price then was \$9.50 per stone.
- Daphne H. I have a question about cleaning stones. The Boyce stone really needs to be cleaned. I have a nephew in MA that does this - - they use a product called D2. I told him I would have to ask about this. They do use different products.
- Matt W. The D2 is used more for marble stones.
Joe M. Doesn't work well on granite stones.
Susan L. We do have families that have outside companies clean stones - - Discussion - - Do we have to get permission? If it's your own stone – liability wise – its your responsibility. If it gets damaged then it's your decision.
- Susan L. Henri Dessereau is still cleaning stones. He was supposed to be adding dates to the Hebert stone and cleaning that also. Joe did you notice if that had been done - - you did the cremation burial for her right.
- Joe M. I did not do the burial for the Hebert funeral. My daughter did it.
- Susan L. Getting back to Dirty Rock - - we do have to wait until July anyway until we get the money from our new budget.
Matt W. I think we can table it for a month.
All agreed.
- Susan L. One more fun piece of information to pass on. Rich Turner, who is a town person and is also our Town Tree Warden. The Urban and Community Forestry Program reached out to offer some free trees for planting in a public space. He met with them on a Saturday and helped dig up an Elm tree and a Ginko tree. Since they were bare root they needed to get back into the ground asap. (I read his letter to the Board). Rich made the decision to plant these two trees in the East Hill Cemetery as their family land borders it and it would make it easier for him to water them. I have pictures to show where he planted them. One is in the old section by the stone wall between some maple trees. The second one is in the cremation garden towards the woods. He apologizes for not talking to the Cemetery Cmsn before planting and said that they could be moved and transplanted if need be.
- Discussion followed - - concern about the Elm tree being too close to the stone wall - - and the size of the tree once grown.
What is the pleasure of the Board?
- Daphne H. I will make the Motion to have Rich T. remove the Elm tree by the stone wall and give him permission to transplant it to the back corner of the cremation garden. The Ginko tree in the back section can be left as is. 2nd by Matt W. All agreed – Motion passed.
- Susan L. I will let Rich know of our decision.
- Joe M. I want to ask about the cleaning price - - my price is only .25 off from my quote per stone and all the free work that I have done for the Town – helping with jobs and all that – work in East Hill – it would be nice to consider my price. It is obviously your choice – my work on the card file too – getting you set up with the card file. (S – the card files were already set up.) J. We had to go back and straighten stuff out. It was a lot of work on my part. If it was like a huge number difference.
- Matt W. I see what you are saying - -
Daphne H. Do you have a problem with doing some and having Dirty Rock do some?
Joe M. A little bit - - we usually do it to fill in – on rainy days.

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Matt C. We can consider your request but can't do anything until July.
Anything else?

Susan L. Did the big flag get put up in the Village Cemetery?

Matt C. Yes – my father helped me. I found one grave in both Village and East Hill that needed a flag. It was the same one in East Hill also – my great uncle – Ray Menard. Daphne mentioned that she had extra flags and thought that she might have missed someone.

Susan L. I always give a few extra in case some might need to be replaced. Just for confirmation - - if I give everyone an hour for putting the flags out – does that seem like enough time?

Matt C. Any other business? None. Do I have a Motion?

Susan L. I'll make a Motion to adjourn. 2nd by Matt W. All agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Next Meeting: June 18, 2026
