

Town of Canandaigua

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Established 1791

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Monday, November 7, 2022 at 9:00 AM

MEETING REPORT

MEETING CALLED BY: Karen DeMay, Chairperson, Town Board Member
COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Mary Schneiter (R) Leif HerrGesell, Town Historian
Ray Henry, Former Town Historian Dennis Brewer
STAFF MEMBERS: Kate Silverstrim-Jensen, Staff Liaison
GUESTS: Arlene Reeves

(R) notates remote participants.

The meeting was opened at 9:00 AM by Chairperson, Karen DeMay. She thanked everyone for their participation in the Hunn Cemetery clean-up event. We were able to complete cleaning out the hedge row and it looks fantastic. Kate shared that the Parks Department was very grateful for the work completed and they look forward to maintaining the newly cleaned up area. Sandhill Cemetery is also in need of landscape clean up, and with the great weather recently, the group felt another clean up day could be scheduled. This was scheduled for Friday, 11/11, at 10AM at Sandhill Cemetery, weather dependent, and primarily focused on removing buckthorn from around the heritage lilac bush. Being a holiday, it was recognized that not everyone will be able to attend.

Chairperson DeMay turned the floor over to guest, Arlene Reeves. The History Team forwarded an email to the Cemetery Committee which was discussed at the October meeting. One item from this email was a request from Arlene to discuss putting fragments of her ancestor's headstone with other family member's headstones at Hunn Cemetery. Arlene discussed her family heritage through the Van Norman name - her 4th Great Grandfather is actually the person who set aside the

land for Hunn Cemetery. Arlene has Elizabeth Van Norman's headstone, which broke into fragments that were put back together and framed with wood. There was some concern about how the wood would withstand weather conditions in the cemetery, and ultimately, Arlene said that her family has not yet come to an agreement about what to do with it. She will follow up with the committee if they would like to continue to explore placing it back at Hunn Cemetery. In addition, Arlene works with David Bloom to clean and maintain her ancestor's headstones at Hunn Cemetery and discussed how one of the headstones, that of Joseph Van Norman, has faded away quite significantly. Leif explained that this is common with the local bluestone used during that time period. Options such as replacing with granite, or contacting the VA to replace the stone, were discussed.

In relation, Leif discussed with the committee that he has come across a company that makes resin casts which could be used to replace headstones that are badly damaged. Resin is very durable, and the hollow casts could be filled with sand or fixed to an anchor in the ground to keep in place. The cost to make the mold would be a few thousand dollars, but once the mold is made, headstones could be cast for only a few hundred dollars a piece. This is less than replacing a granite headstone, which costs around \$8,000. In exploring options for preserving headstones, the question was asked: Where do we draw the line on spending money to repair or replace headstones? That is a question for this committee to grapple with. Many felt the answer will require public input and group discussion. Arlene added that in her experience, about 30% of historic graves no longer have a headstone, in addition to those that have been moved or destroyed. Looking at the problem as a whole is too large, so it will be better to break the discussion down into pieces. Kate added that there is still a need to complete Article III of the Cemetery & Monuments Town Code, which will provide guidelines for headstones, and could include guidance for repairing and replacing. Everyone felt this could be included in the committee's goals for 2023.

In regard to 2023, Dennis shared that the Special Events Committee is planning their 2023 events now, so if there is a desire to do a joint event like previously discussed, we need to communicate our ideas and start planning very soon. Discussion of 2023 items and events included a re-dedication ceremony for Academy Cemetery, along with the History Team's creation of a

brochure. Also a Halloween event, and an event to honor veterans, whether that be on Memorial Day, Remembrance Day, or Veteran's Day. Karen shared that the First Congregational Church of Canandaigua, which was founded by Zadok Hunn, is currently undergoing a large renovation and will be holding a re-dedication ceremony in March of 2023. Planning for 2023 will be the main agenda item for the December meeting.

Next, Ray shared an article that he brought regarding Rev. Zadok Hunn. It confirms that Hunn served for exactly 7 days in the military. Leif speculated that this was during a time when there was concern of an invasion in the area. It wasn't uncommon for locals to join the military to protect their community during a threat, and to leave service once the threat passed.

Lastly, Arlene mentioned that the brochure for Hunn Cemetery was missing information and would like to see a corrected version. The brochures are handled by the History Team. Leif works with that group and explained that the corrections have already been made and a new brochure is in the process of being printed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:03 AM.

Sandhill Cemetery (at the intersection of Emerson and Sand Hill Roads) clean-up is on Friday, November 11, at 10AM. (Cancelled if it's raining.)

The next regularly scheduled committee meeting will be on Monday, December 5, at 9AM.