

**Peacham Cemetery Preservation Committee**  
**Report to the Selectboard, 20 January 2021**

1. Members
  - a. Becky Jensen
  - b. Karen Lewis
  - c. Annette Lorraine
  - d. Bob Morgan
2. Accomplishments / Activities 2020
  - a. The committee met with the Sextons in the spring and reviewed the state of the cemetery and discussed needs in terms of stones, trees, equipment and the future.
  - b. Cheryl Stevenson resigned as her Sexton role. Her files were returned to the town office and processed for a smooth transition to a single Sexton.
  - c. Passed on to the Selectboard Ron Craig's updated schedule for fees associated with burial.
  - d. The committee revised the Peacham Cemetery Personnel Regulations and submitted it to the Selectboard for approval.
  - e. Volunteers placed flags out for Memorial Day and helped to clear branches and other debris in the spring.
  - f. Worked with Ron Craig through the rest of the year on plot issues.
  - g. Began developing a vision for a Green/Natural Burial area in the cemetery.
  - h. Discussed, but made no progress on, the need for an integrated database with all data and map locations integrated.
3. Expenses
  - a. The committee itself does not have expenses. HOWEVER, the cemeteries in town do. These expenses include:
    - i. Sexton pay (recommended by the committee, set by the Selectboard)
    - ii. Administrative assistant pay (recommended by the committee, set by the Selectboard)
    - iii. Stone maintenance (contracted, previously \$5000/year)
    - iv. Tree maintenance (contracted, previously \$1500/year)
    - v. Equipment and building maintenance ((previously \$500/year)
    - vi. Surveying (required by law for new plots, areas; contracted, as needed)
    - vii. Cemetery Improvements
    - viii. Flags and other supplies (previously \$1000/year)
    - ix. Mowing (contracted; falls into another area of the town's budget)
  - b. For 2020 very little was spent on the cemetery.
    - i. There were no contracted services performed. Many stones that need repair or cleaning were neglected.
    - ii. Mowing normally contracted to the Work Camp crew was done by Peter and Ron Craig on a less frequent schedule due to COVID-19 restrictions.

- iii. There is tree work that should be done that will need to be done in 2021 or future years when funds allow.
    - iv. When the new Green/Natural Burial area is approved surveying may need to be done.
    - v. When the town hires an administrative assistant to work on a cemetery database and to help with the sales and plot location, we will need to have funds to pay for the person.
  - c. Income is generated by the “sale” of lots and corner markers. There is also an endowment that is available to cover some expenses.
- 4. Concerns for the future
  - a. The committee plans to establish guidelines for a Green Burial area in the cemetery. The guidelines will need approval from the Selectboard and buy-in from the Sexton and the town. Once approved, the area will need to be platted and prepared for future burials. This will be the major focus area for 2021.
  - b. The cemeteries need a written work plan – which headstones need repair, which lots need markers, what trees need work, where to plant new trees. This should be a priority for the sexton, with help from the committee, in the spring.
  - c. A database needs to be created that will link all information related to the cemeteries. It is hoped this project can be started this year with the help of volunteers. The ideal database would include:
    - i. Information currently on the Sexton’s cards (including sketches / measurements as to where things are buried)
    - ii. Deed information (names, addresses, deed book/page)
    - iii. Other legal document links
    - iv. Map location
    - v. Photos of headstones
    - vi. Headstone information should be planned for in the database creation, but may get added at a later date.
    - vii. The database would be accessible via the web, but editable by only select personnel.