

A workshop was held by the Town Board of the Town of Moreau on October 18, 2012 in the Town of Moreau Office Building, 61 Hudson Street, South Glens Falls, New York, for the purpose of discussing cemeteries in Moreau.

Supervisor Jenkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Town Clerk called the roll.

### **Town Board Members Present**

Bob Prendergast	Councilman
Gina LeClair	Councilwoman
Todd Kusnierz	Councilman
Preston Jenkins	Supervisor

### **Town Board Members Absent**

Robert J. Vittengl, Jr. Councilman

**Also Present:** Jeanne Fleury, Town Clerk; Reed and Mary Antis, Town Residents; Jean Woutersz, Town of Wilton Historian

Supervisor Jenkins welcomed everyone and asked everyone to turn off or silence all electronic devices.

Supervisor Jenkins stated that a lot of the cemeteries in the Town are on private property. The Town is required by law to maintain the abandoned cemeteries so he isn't concerned over using taxpayer's money to maintain them. Right now we are only maintaining three cemeteries.

Reed Antis stated that two people helped him over the summer to clean up the Carr Family Cemetery off Old Saratoga Road that is on the Kays property. It is almost completely restored. Once they are done, he would like the Town to keep up on the maintenance of that cemetery by mowing it two or three times a year and removing weeds and leaves.

Reed Antis advised that he has started mapping the Rice Cemetery with the help of some young people. It will take probably a year or two to complete. Down the road he would like to see some trees removed. There are pine trees in Rogers Cemetery that need to be removed. He said he knows it would be expensive, but he also realizes that this is a lifetime project and he expects to spend the rest of his life restoring the cemeteries slowly. At the present time, he doesn't really need money, he needs people to help straighten stones and clean them. A lot of the abandoned cemeteries are in the woods. This summer he went to the Bitely Cemetery off the West River Road on the Lebowitz Property. The stones are from the 1800's and are broken and they need restoration. They are in the woods. There are headstones in the Olmsted Family Cemetery that need to be cleaned and straightened and there is easy access to this cemetery. There are a few cemeteries off Route 32 that he needs to locate. He said the Town doesn't need to spend too much money on these cemeteries right now, but he hoped to eventually give them some dignity.

Supervisor Jenkins said it would be nice to find someone to volunteer to remove some trees from Rogers Cemetery for example.

Reed Antis stated that in Rice Cemetery there are many downed stones that need to be straightened up. A year ago a tree limb pushed one of the monuments off the base and it weighs probably three hundred pounds and a mechanical device would be needed to upright it.

Reed Antis stated in the Parks Family Cemetery unfortunately somebody did some poor restoration. They put the stones on cement slabs and they are at a 70 degree angle and because the marble is soft the acid rain has washed the stones clean and they are blank. The only one that is good is broken. Daniel Park's stone is located in the Rice Cemetery so that one is okay.

Reed Antis stated that Griswold is being used and he doesn't consider it an abandoned cemetery. The rows are not straight in the southern part of the cemetery. The stones in the northern section are in a state of disrepair.

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He said that we have no record of where people are buried in this cemetery. He thinks there may be 150 spots left for burials. The Town has the responsibility of creating oversight in Griswold Cemetery.

Discussion followed on Town Law Section 291 regarding cemeteries.

Supervisor Jenkins stated that he thinks the Town needs to be notified when a burial takes place in one of the cemeteries under the care of the Town. He said he would change his position and stated that we shouldn't charge, but we do need to maintain records.

Reed Antis stated that there has to be some mechanism in place so there isn't misuse. He also thought that the plots should be mapped out so that when someone comes in to register we will know if that plot is available or not.

Supervisor Jenkins suggested a notice be posted at the site indicating that all burials have to be cleared by the Town Clerk's Office.

Councilman Kusnierz asked why the Town has to be in the cemetery business.

Reed Antis replied that it doesn't.

Councilman Kusnierz said that is his point.

Reed Antis said then the Town shouldn't allow burials at all.

Councilman Kusnierz agreed with Supervisor Jenkins in that a notice should be posted at the entrance to each cemetery.

Supervisor Jenkins added that we should eliminate the fee. He said the Town could ban burials in all cemeteries except Griswold.

Councilman Prendergast said that we need to know how many cemeteries we are going to take over and maintain.

Councilman Kusnierz stated that he would be amenable to creating a three member advisory committee with the people serving on this committee not related to any Town Board Member and this advisory committee will recommend to the Town Board how to spend the money budgeted for the annual care of cemeteries. The committee would also be able to do fundraising. There should be one person from the Village and one person from the Town on the committee.

Supervisor Jenkins suggested an ad be run for an advisory committee looking for volunteers.

Supervisor Jenkins also suggested that the other cemeteries that are no longer used be marked as an abandoned cemetery and no burials are allowed therein.

The workshop was concluded at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Fleury  
Town Clerk

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