

Town of Springfield – Cemetery Commissioners
Minutes
Selectboard Hall - 96 Main Street - Third Floor
Wednesday, April 1, 2026

Commissioners present: Ronald Griffin, Scott Page, Cathryn Feickert, Beth Gray, Judy Stern and Barbara A. Courchesne, Ex-Officio.

In attendance: Ben Moffitt, Logan Gabert, Alex Lund and Kelly Stettner.

Meeting called to order: 5:11 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda: None.

Approve Minutes of November 5, 2025: Scott moved to accept Minutes and Beth seconded. All voted in favor.

Spring Cemetery Update and Review: Sexton Logan stated that he has started cleaning up, blowing off some rows, cutting up downed trees, taking care of leaves and doing spring cleanup, and also helping out on the highway. Things are drying out. There were a couple of places where people drove on the lawn that need repair. Ben spoke about the transition replacing longtime employee Jeff Strong and Steve Knapp. Scott and Logan will work together to increase Logan's knowledge of the sexton's responsibilities and the complexities of the position. Ron mentioned that there is a need for more section signs. Once an inventory of the necessary signs has been completed, Barbara will order more section signs from the same vendor. Ron spoke about the expense of an urn garden, and he wants to be certain that there are not any unmarked burials in the considered area of Section CA before moving forward. A quick check of the Oakland Cemify map didn't show any known burials.

VOCA project Summer Hill: Beth will be attending VOCA meeting on May 2nd in Vergennes. Cathryn spoke about the importance of giving back and helping out at VOCA stone repair workdays in other cemeteries, to not only learn about repairs but to also have a presence in the membership for when it's Springfield's turn for a workday. Sunday, July 26th from 8am to noon will be the Commission's first public cleaning session. A list of VOCA's workday sites is forthcoming. Legislative S.275 is a bill regarding vandalism which is still being worked out in committee; it's understood that funding is the problem. Cathryn reached out to Lucas Eivins at the high school again this year regarding student council volunteers.

Cemify Update: Town Clerk Barbara reported that Cemify had completed the integration of the burial look up for Pine Grove, Summer Hill and Oakland cemeteries, which is now posted on the town's website under Cemetery, and gave a brief tutorial to the commissioners. The platform will provide for the public to look up a burial and if you do this on your phone in the cemetery the mapping will direct you to the burial site. A QR code is included on the laminated posted cemetery rules and regulations posted at each of the cemeteries. The town clerk and assistant will be getting training on entering new burials into the program. Barbara mentioned that she was very pleased with Cemify and the work they've done, and they have been great partners on this project. A future goal is to enter into the database veteran indicators on each of the buried veterans. Ron mentioned that this shows the community that the cemetery commission is moving forward and working on making things happen. Scott mentioned that Summer Hill has records of big families that purchased 8,10, 12 grave lots and

there may actually be 2 burials because people moved away but are still owned by the family. Vermont Veterans Association would be a place to start investigating forensic grants. Ben and Kelly questioned looking for regional or county grants or funding.

Raise the Blade: Kelly spoke about a grassroots effort called Culvert Crawlers to educate people about what they can do to benefit land and waterways, which she works on with Ben and Andrew. Raise the Blade is a separate initiative to encourage a healthier grass root system that is draught resistant by providing ways for water to soak into our landscape so that it doesn't end up running into ditches, culverts and streams. Raising the Blade campaign is being borrowed from a Lake Champlain program that encourages property owners to grow grass to 4 inches so that it can be cut back to 3 inches. She is willing to work on public perception as part of the campaign, if the cemetery commission and public works, are interested in pursuing. She is looking for areas that can be allowed to grow three, four inches tall, or three inches tall, and then cut it down to, she doesn't to make extra work for anybody. Sexton Logan mentioned that with all that he already needs to currently mow that it would be difficult to mow differently in this section and that section. Kelly suggested looking for places in the cemeteries that would benefit from, a pollinator garden, or a strip that could be allowed to have perennial native flowering plants. There may be side hill slopes where mowing is difficult that could benefit from shrubbery type plantings where there will not be future burials. Kelly could assist with storm water and pollinator garden, native planting, bird habitat grants. Sexton Logan mentioned that there is a large open area in Pine Groove that gets kind of swampy that grows dandelions where he tries to mow so that it looks clean and respectable for families and not killing the grass. This may be an area for thirsty plants. Ben mentioned that we need to be mindful of not planting where there is potential for a burial site. Chair Scott mentioned that we need to be careful about fill because that can unknowingly carry invasive species in addition to grubs. Kelly mentioned that she is trying to work with the plaza owners regarding their burning bushes. Chair Scott mentioned that the cemeteries don't have great grass growing soil; Oakland borders a sand pit. Kelly will talk to Vtrans about island areas and exits.

Public Comment: None

Ben mentioned that he appreciates the comments and that public works struggles with its budget and does all that it can. He suggested that since it's hard to get the cemetery funding increased under the public works budget, because it's such a small part of public works, that the cemetery commission/selectboard put their own funding article on the warrant the same way highway does for the paving article to make this a forefront issue. Chair Scott mentioned that this could be done through public works. Ron added that this may be a way to funding an urn garden. Town Clerk Barbara mentioned that with Scott selling his business the town is not going to have his historical knowledge and information any longer and he has been operating as the sexton for the town. In the very near future the town is going to need a sexton and a department for that sexton, someone who's on call, someone who's selling lots, someone who's dealing with the families out in the cemetery, marking them off and doing what Scott has been doing, and his predecessors have been doing for over 50 years.

Adjournment: Motion was made, seconded and voted in favor to adjourn at 6:30 p.m. Next meeting will be May 6, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Courchesne
Cemetery Commissioner, Ex-Officio