Present:
Chair Bill Davis, Betty McGahey, Lester Seal, Gerry Comer
Excused:
Lee Dearing, Karen Jones, Cathy Morrison
Staff:
Charlotte Shifflett – Cemetery Director
Guests:
Kevin Whitfield, Harry Armbruster

The meeting began at 6:00 pm and was called to order by Bill Davis/Chairman and continued since the By-Laws state 3 members constitute a quorum. Charlotte Shifflett led devotions followed by Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Bill Davis/Chair introduced Gerry "Bootie" Comer as the new council representative. He welcomed him into the group and is looking forward to working with him in the future.

"Bootie" emphasized he is looking forward to working with the commission and is anxious to learn about cemetery operations.

Old Business:

Members

- Joyce Stevens is fine with becoming an Honorary Member.

Bathroom in Elk Run Cemetery

- Kevin and Bill met with John Sease regarding drawing a plan to construct a bathroom in the cemetery but were unable to justify the cost of the quote.
- Plans have been located for the bathroom constructed in Riverside Park. We could use this as our model.
- No funds are available to begin construction.
- A decision needs to be made on the placement of the bathroom.
  It would be cost effective to locate where existing utilities may be accessed.
- Has anyone approached Vo-Tech about accepting this project thru the school?
- The town could market the building as a Welcome Center and include maps and history of the cemetery as well as bathrooms.
- Lester Seal knows of some excess 8" block and will approach the owner for a possible donation.
- Lee has nice sink vanities and commodes.
- Cathy Morrison knows a plumber who will donate some time.
- Be sure the building has a nice facade. Kevin suggested it be constructed out of the same type blocks that are laid in the park so it would tie in with the town's look.

Lester Seal made a motion to pass the minutes from June 12, 2014, seconded by Betty McGahey.

Vote 3-0
Bill Davis, Betty McGahey, Lester Seal
Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS:

Officers

- The agenda calls for members to be given an opportunity to nominate new officers to serve.

Betty McGahey made a motion that Lester Seal serve as chairman, seconded by Bill Davis.
Vote 3-0
Bill Davis, Betty McGahey, Lester Seal
Motion Carried

- Lester Seal accepted the nomination.
- Bill Davis offered Lester the opportunity to preside over the remainder of this meeting and Lester agreed to accept the challenge.

Honorary Member Status:

- Discuss Mrs. Nicholson becoming an honorary member

Betty McGahey made a motion to promote Mrs. Nicholson to become an honorary member, seconded by Bill Davis.

Vote 3-0

Bill Davis, Betty McGahey, Lester Seal

Motion Carried

Vacancy

- Currently, the commission consists of six (6) members which leaves a vacancy.
- The vacancy will need to be advertised before accepting volunteers.

Pathforward: Charlotte will place an ad for interested persons to apply.

Capital Outlay

- Lester Seal inquired what the $11,000 was used for in capital outlay?
  Pathforward: Charlotte will advise Lester where the funds were used.
  ** These funds were for the new fence around the front of the cemetery.
- Lester had a second question as to where the $2,000 donation originated.
  ** Charlotte noted this was the second check received from Mary Elizabeth Kite's will.

NEW SURVEY

By: David Ingram October 2014.

Kevin Whitfield attended the meeting to share the recent project undertaken by the town to find the unidentified graves. He has been told about the "Dollar Grave Section" located in Elk Run Cemetery. The work performed was justified by the fact it freed up about 1,000 spaces for future sales.

- The first step was to work with a company offering ground penetrating radar.
- This procedure was able to locate 142 unmarked graves.
- The surveyor plotted the front of the cemetery (Sections 6 and 7).
- WA Hartman offered the town a good deal to purchase markers for the unknown graves. Management would like to express their gratitude towards W A Hartman for working with the town to obtain the stones.
- Each grave displays a marker simply stating "Unknown". Approximately 2/3 of these are set.
- The money spent was justified by the fact that it opens up an opportunity to increase revenue thru grave sales.
- Kevin was offered a "Thank You" for his determination in getting the job done! It has been a subject for many years but was never acted upon.
- More tree removal is forthcoming in the cemetery.

Pet Cemetery

- Kevin Whitfield/Town Manger wanted to inform the group how the discussion of a pet cemetery became a topic throughout the town. A Council Retreat was held on April 8, 2015. During discussions it was noted that auditors had implied the cemetery would be out of Perpetual Care Funds within the next five years.
- A pet cemetery was mentioned, during a brainstorming session, as a way to replenish funds.
- The whole idea of a pet cemetery was taken out of context in the media.
- The pet cemetery idea was never intended to allow pet burials to be mixed in with Elk Run Cemetery interments!
- Town Manager/Kevin Whitfield met with a TV 3 reporter to discuss finances and ways to make improvements.

Bench:

- Is the owner of a grave space allowed to place a bench on their space? Charlotte replied "there are several located on graves throughout the cemetery". One owner is placing a

bench instead of a headstone. This became possible after a revision was made to the By-Laws in Jun 2007. Ref. Section 14, (c) C(1).

Vacancy:

- The current By-Laws state the commission may consist of seven (7) members. The Chairman reiterated that an opening exists on the commission and reminded Charlotte to advertise the opening in a local newspaper.

Opinion:

Kevin polled the group and asked for their general opinion on appearance of the cemetery?

- The current group of mowers takes pride in their work.
- The mowers maintain and take care of the equipment.

Chad Smith, Ian Rudolph, and John Jenkins accepted the mowing jobs again this season.

Roads

- Kevin emphasized the roads are in need of repair and will be addressed at a later date.

Flowers:

- Charlotte questioned other commissioner's and inquired as to whether they have had any calls regarding missing flower arrangements? She shared that she accepted three phone calls recently and was informed the arrangements were sitting atop the stone and wires had been cut to free them. All three incidents took place before mowing season so being discarded by a mower was not an option. In addition, these arrangements were purchased at a local flower shop and were quite expensive. The callers were very distraught.

Funds:

- The fact that Perpetual Funds are depleting fast was discussed.
- Lester Seal noted interest may be used but the principal should not be touched.
- Why does the town use the principle?
- What debt did the town forgive?
- Lester believes at the current sales for graves and open/close fees the cemetery will not run out of money within the next ten years.
- A grave currently sells for $600.00 with $100.00 going into the real estate fund and the remaining $500.00 goes into the perpetual care account.
- The commission does not anticipate purchasing any real estate in the near future.
- The real account was depleted of funds when the 10 acres was purchased.
- For anyone wishing to finance a grave, that may become possible very soon.
- Some action may be taken to offer an incentive such as selling two graves at regular price and getting the third grave at a discount of $300.00
- Our prices remain well below neighboring cemeteries in other localities.
- The commission has fought hard in the past not to increase rates.
- There may become an absolute need to increase prices at some point in the future.

The Chairman proceeded by thanking everyone for their input.

With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting date will be scheduled for June 25, 2015 at 6 pm in the Council Chambers located at the Elkton Area Community Center on Blue and Gold Drive.

Submitted by: **Charlotte**

Cemetery Commission Members

..... *Chairman Albert "Bill" Davis*
..... *Council Repre. Gerry "Bootie" Comer*
..... *Lee Dearing*
..... *Karen Jones*
..... *Betty McGahey*
..... *Cathy Morrison*
..... *Lester Seal*

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSION

Whereas: Lillian Nicholson has served as an active member of the Elk Run Cemetery Commission for the Town of Elkton for approximately ten years.

Whereas: Lillian Nicholson's health prevents her from being able to attend meetings.

Whereas: Lillian Nicholson has participated and been a voice for the Cemetery Commission, with the privilege to vote. As an Honorary Member she shall be entitled to attend any and/or all meetings of the commission, she will be allowed to join in discussions, but her position will be that of a non-voting participant and she shall not be counted as a part of a quorum at any scheduled meetings.

Whereas: Becoming an Honorary Member gives Lillian Nicholson an opportunity to mentor newly elected officials by providing mission, history, policies, and operating practices of the Elk Run Cemetery Commission, if they desire.

Whereas: Elkton Town Council has the recommendation from the Cemetery Commission members to appoint Lillian Nicholson to become an Honorary Member until her resignation.