

# Town of Bath Planning Commission Minutes

## February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

1. **Call to order:** Larry Landon at 5pm
2. **Roll Call:** Larry Landon (X), David O'Connell (X), Susan Webster (Phone), Elizabeth Skinner (X), Steve Keith (X),
3. **Review and Approval of Minutes:** David O'Connell January Minutes  
January minutes approved through common consent
4. **Comprehensive Plan Development Discussion**
  - a. 2017 Comprehensive Plan Public Works Task Review  
Elizabeth Skinner the Chair of the Cemetery Committee was the Interviewee. Cemetery committee was not really reflected in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan. The approach to the interview was to explore possible Cemetery Committee Objectives/Strategies that they could use as management guide. See "Cemetery Committee 2017 Comprehensive Plan Review" attached

b. Other Current Cemetery Committee topics

**(1) Long Term Financial Plan**

- \* Need Outside source of funding, Internal Perpetual Fund is inadequate.
- \* Tree Board & Warm Springs Watershed Assoc considering helping by taking control of an unused portion of the cemetery (about 5 acres) as preserved forest.
- \* Cemetery Committee membership is low
- \* Re-Start Cemetery Committee: 1) Kick-off Event, 2) Fund Raising Objectives, 3) Volunteer Coordinator, 4) Annual Calendar
- \* Bath Civic Trust  
Could support Cemetery and other Bath Special Project areas.

**(2) Alternative season mowing options**

- \* Much of the Cemetery cost realized in the town budget is mowing cost.
- \* Mowing cost using outsource seasonal contractor is \$40k-\$45k.  
Speculated on a new competitive contractor could lower cost by \$10k requiring a new uncertain quality & relationship.
- \* Full Time caretaker might cost \$35k-\$40k but you have to find a person who is the right fit.
- \* Volunteers to deal with labor intensive areas that require weed-wacker work.

c. Potential Future Cemetery Committee tasks (Comprehensive Plan 2027)

- \* This was discussed in 2017 review.

5. **Status of Tasks:**

6. **Any New Business:**

7. **Tasks For Next Meeting**

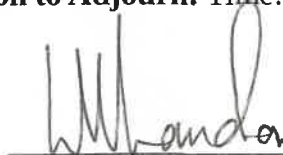
- a. Schedule Streetscape Committee for upcoming Planning Commission Meeting.

8. **Next Meeting:** Thursday, March 7 at 5:00 PM


9. **Motion to Adjourn:** Time: 6:45pm approved with common consent.

Attest:

Chair:

  
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Recorder:

  
3/14/2024

**Town of Bath Cemetery Committee 2017 Comprehensive Plan Review**

Note: "Cemeteries" applies to Greenway, Old English, Dutch and any other cemeteries for which the Town is responsible.

**Goal 1**

**Identify and expand the conditions and opportunities that will improve sustained economic development by increasing local engagement**

		Status
Objective 1A: Increase local engagement opportunities for economic development of the cemeteries.		
Strategy 1A.a	Town Council will suggest an organizational structure and governance for Cemetery Board. * Standing Committee was established	Complete
Strategy 1A.b	Town Council organizations will collaborate to obtain financial support for identified Cemetery requirements.	Ongoing
Strategy 1A.c	Maintain a community resource inventory to include skills and abilities of residents to help maintain cemetery property. (Memorial Day, picnic, fundraiser)	Need status
Objective 1B: Develop partnerships with community organizations to help maintain and fund cemetery properties.		Ongoing
	* Foxglove supports the Dutch Cemetery	
	* WV Cemetery Alliance ?	
	* WV State \$: None	
	* WV SHPO: No historical significance	
	* Consider reach out to : American Legion, Daughters of American Revolution	
	* MC Grants: No, considered a Town Obligation, County has many other competing cemeteries	
Objective 1C: Work with regional governments and private entities to stimulate use of, maintenance and development of cemetery properties.		
Strategy 1C.a	Increase awareness and promote services provided by the Town of Bath cemeteries. Consider coordination with Travel Berkeley Springs and Historic Landmarks Commission. * Consider leveraging Find-A-Grave.com	Ongoing
Strategy 1C.b	Maintain a sortable online inventory of current and vacant plots to promote visiting and future interments. * Project would take 3 months. Not currently electronic (paper form)	Ongoing
Strategy 1C.c	Work with existing promotion organizations to amplify the image and promotion of Bath and Berkeley Springs.	Ongoing
Objective 1E: Develop short and long term growth and finance strategies for the cemetery.		
Strategy 1E.a	Utilize state organizations and local finance experts to establish a capital improvements program.	Ongoing
Strategy 1E.b	Engage community and business leaders in the creation of a five year plan to increase sustainable economic growth in of the cemeteries.	Ongoing

**Goal 2**

**Develop a framework of actions to insure community safety, health and welfare**

Objective 2A: Develop and enforce appropriate plans and policies to ensure the safety of visitors and volunteers while at the cemetery.		
Strategy 2A.b	Research and consider implementation of programs to inspect and encourage adequate safety of visitors.	Ongoing
Objective 2B: Research and encourage opportunities to support renewal and redevelopment of the		
Strategy 2B.b	Research available programs and funding to support renovation of existing properties. * English Cemetery: DAR, Hunter's	Ongoing
Objective 2C: Expand protection of groundwater seepage.		
Strategy 2C.a	Update maintenance and groundwater infrastructure improvement plan for cemeteries. * Working with Warm Springs Watershed Assoc	Ongoing

**Goal 3**

**Examine public services and facilities provided by the town to fulfill the needs of the residents and non-residents.**

Objective 3A: Provide information to residents about current and historical cemetery services.		
	* Used plots: about 8,000	
	* Available plots: about 500	
Strategy 3A.a	Consolidate and provide historical cemetery information into a searchable internet based catalog (example: Find-a-grave.com or town managed program)	Ongoing
Strategy 3A.c	Conduct a campaign to raise awareness of local cemeteries and community history. Recommend working with Morgan County Library and Berkeley Springs Museum.	Ongoing
Objective 3B: Improve and protect cemeteries, buildings and other infrastructure.		
Strategy 3B.d	Research programs to support and identify funding sources for maintaining cemetery infrastructure. (example: private sponsorship, grants and community contributions)	Ongoing
Objective 3C: Enhance Town of Bath governing and funding measures for cemeteries.		Ongoing
	* Poor communications of burials, permission not required to open a grave. (Maintenance Issue)	
	* Ordinance needed to require notification	

**Goal 4**

**Enhance the Town of Bath while maintaining a unique sense of place and community.**

Objective 4B: Develop and implement a program of community events that use and support the cemeteries with the intent of raising community awareness. Examples include Memorial Day Clean-Up and Picnic, All Hallow's Eve Walk, Goats for Graves, Veterans Day grave recognition, build a picnic area, Guided Historic Luminary Walk at Christmas, etc,		Ongoing
	* American Legion	
Objective 4C: Coordinate with partner organizations to expand and develop programs for cemetery support. Recommend Morgan County Genealogical Society, Foxglove Garden Club, Berkeley Springs Museum, Town of Bath Historical Landmarks Commission, Bath Development, Travel Berkeley Springs, etc		
Objective 4E: Develop a cemetery signage program.		
Objective 4F: Support programs that maintain the historical nature of the cemeteries.		
Strategy 4F.c	Pursue grants to maintain historical structures within the cemeteries.	Ongoing