



TOWN OF GRAFTON
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**TRUSTEES FOR SOLDIERS
AND SAILORS MEMORIALS**

Andrew Kjellberg, President
William Cutler, Vice-president
Kenneth Sherman, Secretary
Peter Shay
William Drago

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Meeting Minutes, April 7, 2016

The Trust met this day at Memorial Hall, convening at 10:07 AM. All five members were present, as were Adam Costello, Veterans' Agent, and Phil Johnson, Parks & Cemeteries Superintendent.

The \$1,500 budget that had been requested for FY2017 was bumped to \$2,500 after Mr. Drago spoke with Assistant Town Manager Willardson. The request is set to be presented to the Finance Committee on April 25 for its approval; it is an article on the Spring Annual Town Meeting warrant.

Regarding grave markers for veterans, Mr. Drago mentioned that there is a need to find a more durable product than current markers which are made of a cheaply-painted plastic and fade to a dull black after two years in the New England weather. Mr. Costello mentioned that he is able to get all the grave flags families desire as he buys them in multi-gross lots. A recent purchase totaled 14 gross, or, over 1,500 such flags. He also has more than 100 plastic flag holders. He noted that the more he orders at any one time, the less expensive the total order. He is currently working with Brian Stearns, Hudson's veterans' agent, to combine orders and so control costs even more.

Mr. Drago mentioned that most Grafton veterans' monuments need cleaning, repair, or both and that one need for a budget was to better attend to this. Mr. Johnson has been doing this as best he has been able. The Grafton Fire Department has a power water washer, which may be one resource for monument cleaning. Most recent cleanings, he said, have been through area veterans' administration resources. He mentioned that the South Grafton monument, in particular, needs cleaning. Mr. Johnson mentioned that there are many broken bricks in town

monuments that need to be replaced. The Trust, as a body, agreed that a list of needed cleaning and repair be generated.

Mr. Drago mentioned that the town's current plan to rebuild roadways from town center down to Lake Ripple impacts at least two monuments. The Trust then unanimously voted to ask the town to include them in any such plans. Mr. Sherman will send a letter to the Board of Selectmen.

The Memorial Day celebration at the Washington Mills Bridge needs to be coordinated through the Trust, said Mr. Kjellberg, although time is too short this year to get that in gear. Mr. Costello reported that the memorial displays in Town Hall also need repair, cleaning, and updating. One local tradesman has been doing this catch as catch can, but will be retiring within the next year. Mr. Sherman then noted that he knows a master metal worker who might be interested in this work within the next year and took as an action item contacting him.

Mr. Kjellberg noted that both the Korean War/Vietnam Memorial at the center of town and the Sampson Square cannon monument need cleaning and refurbing. Mr. Johnson noted that for stonework cleaning he has used Whitinsville Stone Washington.

In a discussion regarding general war cemetery conditions, Mr. Johnson noted that during a recent visit to a relative's grave, he discovered the metal veteran's marker had been stolen, probably for scrap value of three dollars. A real head-shaker.

It was noted that there are some foreign-born veterans of the US military buried locally and the sense of the Trust was that it should provide appropriate inexpensive national flags for them.

With no one knowing an exact veterans' monument total in Grafton, Mr. Kjellberg asked for volunteers to go out and count and locate them.

Mr. Costello reported that he has in his F2016 budget \$1,081 that has yet to be spent. He didn't know if this was going to be kept separate from the FY17 request for \$2,500, or whether FINCOM intended to include this amount in the new budget. The Trust hopes to learn more at the April 25 meeting. The members noted that there is more than enough cleaning and repair work to be done this year to absorb the existing money.

The meeting adjourned at 11:17 AM.

Respectfully,

Kenneth B. Sherman
Secretary