

GRAND ISLE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

January 13, 2026, 4:30 p.m., Grand Isle Town Office

Meeting was called to order by Valerie Hunter, Chair at 4:30 p.m.

Commissioners present: Brian Allen, Lucille Campbell, Sue Lawrence, Suzanne Sauv .

Val Hunter was present on Zoom.

Guests: none

Additions or deletions to agenda: none

Minutes: Brian moved to accept the December 9, 2025 minutes with a correction. Sue seconded. Passed with all in favor.

Administrative Report – Sue Lawrence

Financials: Reports as of Dec.31, 2025 were presented. Sue noted that out of \$20,000 budgeted for lawn care the amount of \$12,217.50 (61.09%) has been spent.

Lawn Care and Maintenance: no bills

Burials and Lot Sales: One future cremains burial and one possible cremains burial.
No sales.

Old Business:

Discussion of proposed Town Charter with its change of elected Cemetery Commissioners to Commissioners appointed by the 5-member Selectboard.

Sue presented the email from David Rugh, town attorney, clarifying that if the charter as written was passed by the voters and approved by the Legislature, the Cemetery Commissioners would be appointed by the Selectboard. That would supersede Vermont Statute 18 V.S.A. § 5373 which governs election of cemetery commissioners. He referenced the Town of Westford Charter which specifies that the selectboard appoint cemetery commissioners.

Lucille noted that she had compared charters of 13 Vermont towns with both cemetery commissions and town charters. Of those, only Westford appoints the cemetery commissioners, only Springfield specifies that the commissioners are elected, and the rest had no mention of Cemetery Commissioners.

Sue's opinion is to tell the Selectboard at the hearing on Jan. 19 to remove the Cemetery Commissioners from the appointed offices list in the proposed charter.

Lucille was displeased that the Selectboard had not approached the Cemetery Commission prior to writing the charter to ask the Commission's opinion. Brian thought that the Selectboard had not talked with the Library Trustees either.

Val feels that the Selectboard proposed this because they feel there is a problem with getting people to run for office. She stated that the Cemetery Commission has had no problem getting people to run.

Brian said that young people don't want to commit to taking positions.

Suzanne asked who would be in charge of the Cemetery funds if commissioners were appointed. Sue didn't think that the Selectboard was looking to run the cemetery or take over the funds.

Lucille said that this was creating a problem where there was none; that since at least 1907 the five Cemetery Commissioners in Grand Isle have been elected by the voters.

Suzanne said the Cemetery Commission ran "like a well-oiled machine" and if there was a vacancy, the commissioners appointed someone.

A unanimous consensus was that it takes a year or more to become familiar with the functions of the cemetery. Appointed persons may not have the willingness to serve a five-year term.

The final unanimous decision was that the current commissioners want the Selectboard to remove the provision to appoint commissioners from the proposed charter. Cemetery Commissioners should be elected by the town voters. The right to vote, the right to a choice should not be taken from the people.

Lucille will write a couple of paragraphs explaining our position. It will be read at the Jan. 19, 2026 public hearing on the charter and a paper copy will be given to the Selectboard.

New Business:

Cemetery Report for the Town Report was presented by Lucille. Brief discussion and consensus to give it to Melissa as written. Suzanne questioned the section in the report about shrubs and trees. She is concerned that some need to be removed or trimmed. This will be an agenda item in April.

New Town Website: Lucille reviewed notes from the Dec. 15 Selectboard meeting concerning the change-over to the new website. Each board was asked to look at what is posted on their section of the current town website and decide if anything should be added or deleted. Lucille listed the few items on the Cemetery section and asked if anything else should be added. We will add a map of the cemetery and delete old agendas from the archives. This discussion led to the ideas of putting cemetery records and map of graves on the website, using NEMRC for GPS location of graves, using stock money for a professional company to map the cemetery, Eagle Scouts doing some of the work for their projects. This is a February agenda item.

Brian moved to adjourn, Sue seconded. Passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m. Next meeting Feb. 10, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucille Campbell, Recording Secretary