

TOWN OF CANAAN

Office of the Selectboard

Po Box 159

318 Christian Hill

Canaan, VT 05903

Timeline of Events for the South Canaan Cemetery Project

(Excerpts from Selectboard Meeting Minutes)

As of April 27, 2026

Disclaimer: The below timeline are all pertinent records that the Town of Canaan has at the Town Office concerning the South Canaan Cemetery Fence. This is not exhaustive, as there were other communications within the Town regarding the fence, but none pertinent to the approval of funds or approval of the project. The remaining information pertains to grants where applications had been started but never finished. Communications between the contractor David Hodge and Al Buckley or other cemetery commissioners (As stated in the Timeline presented by Triple Bridge Farm) were never documented at the Town Office or at meetings. To the best of our knowledge the timeline includes excerpts from every Selectboard meeting where the fence was mentioned or discussed.

- April 29, 2024 – “Al let the other board members know that the cemetery commission was working with Diana Rancourt to find a grant to replace the cast iron fence around the South Canaan Cemetery. There are 320 feet of fence that will need to be replaced. Mike suggested that he look for grants through the local Tillotson fund as most grants must be matched by local funds and this project was not budgeted for. Al will talk with Diana about this. They will also be looking for someone to purchase the old fence to offset the costs. No further discussion was had.”
- May 13, 2024 – “Al asked on behalf of the Cemetery Commission for \$20,000 to be used as a grant match for the \$100,000 project to replace the rod iron fence around the South Canaan Cemetery. Al stated that Diana Rancourt was working on a grant to replace the fence and needed money as a match. Al stated that he had all of the contractors lined up. Mike and Mark both said they would not vote in favor of giving that much away to the cemetery. Al asked them how much they would. Mark suggested \$10,000. Mike said he would not vote for it, but the motion would still have the majority vote. Mark made a motion to approve the disbursement of \$10,000 to the project, stipulating that if a grant were not received, the money would go back to the ARPA Fund. Al seconded this motion. Chairman Daley asked if there was any further discussion. Al gave another brief summary of the project. Chairman Daley asked if the discussion was done, He began with the vote, and Al interrupted to provide further information about the project. Chairman Daley asked if there was any further discussion, and finally seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed in the affirmative by a margin of 2-1. Mark and Al voted in favor of the motion. Mike voted against it.”
- May 24, 2024 – Communication was had between Al Buckley, Diana Rancourt, and Zach Brown, on possible grants that Diana was working on. The grants included: AARP (Not applied for as deadline has passed), Tillotson North Country Foundation (Awarded \$20,000), Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund (Not applied for as the fence was installed before application had been submitted), Vermont Com Vermont Community Foundation Northeast Kingdom Fund (Rejected), Spark Connecting Community Grant Program (Not applied for as the fence

Phone: 802-266-3370

Fax: 802-266-8253

was installed before application had been submitted), and Vermont Cemetery Association (No grants for the replacement of fencing). Zach mentioned why the installation of the chain link fence the cemetery commission had already purchased and has stored for several years wouldn't work for this project. No written answer can be located. Discussion was also had reminding Al that grants have to be written prior to projects being completed. Once projects are completed most grants will not cover the cost.

- May 30, 2024 – Zach, on behalf of the cemetery commission (specifically Al Buckley), submitted a grant application to the Tillotson North Country Foundation. The grant application was to request \$20,000 from the fund to offset the costs of the project. This grant was specifically for Phase I of III. Indicating to the Foundation that this project would span over three years and likely the Town would be seeking additional funding.
- June 13, 2024 – Lori Moran sent an email to Zach that the cemetery commission was selected to receive \$20,000 from the Tillotson North Country Foundation.
- June 14, 2024 – The following ad/notice was published in the Colebrook Chronicle.
“NOTICE-TOWN OF CANAAN The Canaan Cemetery Commission would like to notify the residents of an upcoming project proposal to install a new solid iron decorative fence. To lessen the expense to the town the proposal is over a 3-year period. The fence will cost a total of \$95,000 and the commission will seek grants for the majority. When the time comes to lessen costs and to give in-kind support, which is usually required for grants the commission will be seeking volunteers to decommission the old fence and repair the grounds around it. The Town of Canaan has appropriated \$10,000 from ARPA Funds. The commission is redesigning the original proposal to remove some gates which will also decrease the amount by \$9,000. With the anticipation of volunteers another \$1700 can be cut. This would bring the total cost of the project to \$74,300, which the commission hopes to cover with grants. The Commission would appreciate any support and donations in support of this project. A display of the proposal will be available at the Alice Ward Library by mid-June. Donations can be made either by cash or check. Checks can be made payable to the Canaan Cemetery Stone Account or the Town of Canaan. The donations can be mailed to Town of Canaan ATTN: Cemetery Commission PO Box 159 Canaan, VT 05903 or dropped off at 318 Christian Hill.”
{No Funds have been received to date.}
- July 10, 2024 – Zach, on behalf of the cemetery commission (specifically Al Buckley), submitted a grant application to the Vermont Community Foundation Northeast Kingdom Fund. The grant application was to request \$5,000 from the fund to offset the costs of the project. This grant was specifically for Phase I of III. Indicating to the Foundation that this project would span over three years and likely the Town would be seeking additional funding.
- August 24, 2024 – The \$20,000 check from the Tillotson North Country Foundation was deposited into the Cemetery Stone Fund.
- August 31, 2024 – The Cemetery Stone Fund has a balance of \$22,883.26.
- September 3, 2024 – “Al will work on getting an initial bill for this project so those funds can be allocated before the December 31, 2024, deadline.”
- September 8, 2024 – Jane Mulcahy sent an email to Zach that the cemetery commission was not selected to receive the \$5,000 grant from the Vermont Community Foundation Northeast Kingdom Fund.

- November 12, 2024 – “Al to get a contract for this work or a materials deposit invoice.”
- December 9, 2024 – “Zach outlined the invoice received by Triple Bridge Farm as a materials deposit. Little discussion was had on the invoice itself. Mark and Mike both reminded Al that before the work is to begin all money must be raised for the project. They both agreed that the entirety of the project should not be funded with tax dollars.”
- December 10, 2024 – A check was sent to Triple Bridge Farm in the amount of \$18,000 for “Project deposit for material for wrought iron fence for South Canaan Cemetery”. The invoice was dated November 30, 2024. This invoice was approved by Warrant 25-24, with unanimous approval of the warrant. To pay the invoice \$10,000 from the ARPA fund was transferred to the checking account, the remaining \$8,000 was transferred to the checking account from the Cemetery Stone Fund. This left \$12,000 remaining from the Tillotson Grant.
- December 31, 2024 – The Cemetery Stone Fund has a balance of \$14,911.40.
- March 3, 2025 – ARTICLE 6. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00 to offset the cost of the South Canaan Cemetery Fence replacement project?

A motion was made by Terrie Herr to open discussion on Article 6 and seconded by Odette Crawford. Moderator Wade reread the article and opened the discussion.

Selectboard member Alfred Buckley reported on the cemetery fence and the progress that they have made thus far on the fence project. Buckley stated that the South Canaan Cemetery Fence is in grave disrepair, with many sections of the fence being held together with zip ties. He stated that the cemetery commission had commissioned David Hodge to create new sections of the rod iron fence. Buckley stated that the project would be divided into three sections and would cost a total of \$74,000. Currently, the Town has received \$20,000 from the Tillotson North Country Foundation and another \$10,000 from the Town of Canaan ARPA money. Buckley stated that they are asking for \$10,000 of taxpayer money to help keep the project moving forward. They will also be seeking funds from other grants and from private donations.

Judith Masson asked for clarification on the cost of the project and if it was going to be used all at a single cemetery. Buckley responded that the cost of the project was \$74,000 and that it would only be used to fund the project at the South Canaan Cemetery.

Odette Crawford ran through a breakdown of the project’s current revenues.

Kathy Smith asked if the South Canaan Cemetery Sign could be fixed so that it reads “South” or “So.” Instead of “So”. Buckley stated he would get that changed. Seeing no further discussion, Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 6 passed in the affirmative, with a few opposing the article.

- April 1, 2025 – A check was sent to Triple Bridge Farm in the amount of \$14,000 for “Material Cost for wrought iron fence at South Canaan Cemetery.” The invoice was dated March 17, 2025. This invoice was approved by Warrant 07-25, with two out of three selectboard members approving the warrant. To pay the invoice \$14,000 was transferred to the checking account from the Cemetery Stone Fund. This transfer depleted the remaining Tillotson Grant funds. The extra \$2,000 came from leftover funds in the Cemetery Stone Fund from past revenues.
- April 14, 2025 – “Al gave a brief overview of the project. He stated that the fence will start to be erected in May. Zach reminded the board that until the \$10,000 appropriation came in October, the Cemetery Commission had no more money for the project. They have currently accumulated \$30,000 in grants and awards and have spent \$32,000. Mike was worried what would happen if the commission was not able to raise the remaining \$60,000. Al said he was confident it could be done. No action was taken.”
- April 30, 2025 – The Cemetery Stone Fund has a balance of \$961.75.
- May 13, 2025 – “The board had a short discussion on the fencing project. No lengthy discussion was had as Al was not in attendance. Mike did express his concerns with the lofty goal of raising another \$60,000 for the project in another two years. No action was taken.”
- May 27, 2025 – “A lengthy discussion was had on the progress of this project. Al commented that the fence was installed, which meant his full attention was on getting funding for the project. Al noted that the project cost more than anticipated.”
- June 10, 2025 – “Zach distributed a final invoice from David Hodge for the cemetery fence. He noted that the Town still needed to raise approximately \$60,000 to cover the remaining cost of the fence. Zach noted that Diana had been working on a grant with the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund. However, since the project is already done in its entirety it no longer meets the qualifications for this grant and many others. A lengthy discussion was had regarding the remaining balance. Al stated that he will be sending out letter and asked for Zach to create a Go Fund Me page.” {No Funds have been received to date.}
- June 12, 2025 – Zach created the Go Fund Me Page (<https://gofund.me/2e0f6d8a0>) for the Fence Project. {No Funds have been received to date.}
- September 29, 2025 – “Zach told the board that he had received a lot of questions regarding the state of the cemetery fence project. Al told the board that he is unsure if more grant funds will be available for the project. Al believes the remainder of the bill will have to be paid with tax dollars. He told the board that he will be asking David Hodge for another year to pay off the amount. Mike and Dillon raised concerns that taxpayers would not want to pay for the remainder of the fence and the fact that the project was never voted on at a board meeting. The board agreed it would have to go on the warrant as another warrant article.”
- October 28, 2025 - \$10,000 was transferred from the general funds (Tax Revenue) to the Cemetery Stone Fund.
- October 31, 2025 - The Cemetery Stone Fund has a balance of \$10,968.13.

- December 8, 2025 – Zach reached out to Vermont League of Cities and Towns on behalf of Chairman Daley.
 - From Zach: “I am writing on behalf of the Chair of the Canaan Selectboard to request general guidance regarding the recent installation of a wrought-iron fence at the Canaan Cemetery. The Selectboard is simply trying to understand the Town’s role moving forward and whether any additional action is needed.

In May 2024, the Selectboard became aware of a request for \$10,000 in grant funding for a cemetery fence replacement project. At that time, a Selectboard member who also serves as a Cemetery Commissioner explained that the remaining funding—approximately \$100,000—would be pursued through outside sources.

The Selectboard voted only on the \$10,000 request and did not formally approve the overall project. Since that time, the same individual applied for additional grants in the Town’s name and raised approximately \$20,000. Voters subsequently approved a warned article for another \$10,000. The fence has since been installed, and the Town has paid approximately \$32,000 related to the project. The other two members of the Selectboard were not aware that a contract had been entered into, nor did the board take action approving a purchase or installation. It appears that the contract was verbal, and the Town did not formally authorize the project as a whole.

At this point, the Selectboard is simply hoping to better understand:

- whether a verbal agreement by a single Selectboard member creates a binding obligation on the Town;
 - whether the individual’s role as a Cemetery Commissioner provides independent authority to enter a contract of this size; and
 - what the Town’s responsibilities are at this stage, both regarding past payments and any remaining invoices.
 - If there is additional information we should gather, or steps we should take, your insight would be greatly appreciated. If this is outside the scope of your office or you prefer not to offer guidance, that is absolutely fine—please feel free to let us know.”
- From VLCT: “To your specific questions:
 - whether a verbal agreement by a single Selectboard member creates a binding obligation on the Town - No. A singular selectboard member has no authority on their own (unless so delegated by the board in limited circumstances). The selectboard can only act by the agreement of a quorum of its members. 1 V.S.A. § 172, “When joint authority is given to three or more, the concurrence of a majority of such number shall be sufficient and shall be required in its exercise.” (emphasis added). Whether a verbal contract is enforceable is itself a question of fact, but a single selectboard member has no authority to enter into a contract on the town's behalf.
 - whether the individual’s role as a Cemetery Commissioner provides independent authority to enter a contract of this size - Yes, a cemetery commissioner can enter into contracts related to the care and management of cemetery property. 18 V.S.A. §§ 5361, 5362, 5364–5366. Contracts entered into on behalf of the cemetery though should be managed with the cemetery's income or its perpetual care fund. Additional funding must come from the voters, either through a specific funding article or through the budget.

- what the Town's responsibilities are at this stage, both regarding past payments and any remaining invoices. - I can't speak to the town's responsibilities here because we don't deal with specific contract-related questions. They are so fact-dependent that they need to be answered by the town attorney who can review all the elements. Of course, if the cemetery commission is unable to fulfill the contract, the easy way out would be to assume the terms if the voters agree to fund it.
 - Often, unless the money is already accounted for, contracts entered into by municipalities include a non-appropriate clause to ensure that the town is not bound for future payments unless the voters approve the appropriation in each year - it's unclear if that could apply as a matter of law here."
- December 8, 2025 – "Zach distributed a new payment agreement from Triple Bridge Farms. Al negotiated the remainder of the cemetery fence expense of \$62,881.02 to be paid over three years. The board raised concerns on how Al would pay for this. He said that it will have to go to the voters in the budget. The remaining board felt it would be good to have it go as a warned article. Dillon raised concerns on what would happen if the voters disapproved of the appropriation. Zach will reach out to the Town's attorney."
- December 31, 2025 – The Cemetery Stone Fund has a balance of \$10,991.37.
- January 19, 2026 – "Zach distributed the 2026 town meeting warning, that he drafted last week. Zach went through the warning article by article. A lengthy discussion was had on article 3 which is to raise the remaining funds for the south Canaan cemetery fund. Ultimately, although Mike and Dillon expressed their concerns with this project, the board felt the decision on what to do should be placed in the hands of the voters. Zach noted that the only other recourse would be a legal battle, of which he is not sure the Town would win. The board continued through the warning. Al made a motion to approve the 2026 town warning as written. Dillon seconded the motion. Chairman Daley asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed in the affirmative."
- February 16, 2026 – "A lengthy discussion was had concerning this project and article 3 of the Town meeting warning. Both Mike and Dillon expressed their weariness of this and their discontent with how this was handled. The board felt that the article will not be approved. Mike will talk to legal counsel to see what our next steps would be if it is not approved. Zach noted that the board members should show a united front at the table but if they'd like to share their personal opinions on the project that they should do so after recusing themselves and speaking at the audience microphone."
- March 2, 2026 – "ARTICLE 3. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan raise and appropriate the sum of \$52,000.00 to pay the balance of the South Canaan Cemetery fence replacement project?"

A motion was made by Noreen Labrecque to open discussion on Article 3 and seconded by Terrie Herr. Moderator Wade reread the motion and opened the discussion. A heated debate ensued. Robert Brousseau began discussion by asking what the overall cost of the fence was. Selectman Al Buckley stated that it cost about \$96,000. Buckley then gave a justification behind why the fence needed to be replaced, stating that the old fence had fallen into major disrepair and was rotting away. Buckley also stated that the fence originally was supposed to be installed over a three-year period, but instead the contractor went ahead and installed it all in one year.

Buckley stated that this error hindered the Town from applying for any other grants.

The discussion continued with several questions ensuing on who approved of the fence. Buckley stated that he would take the blame. Selectboard Chair Michael Daley stated that the board never approved the project. Residents raised concerns about who would be liable if the Town did not pay and if the article did not pass. Chair Daley and Town Clerk and Treasurer Brown did their best to answer the questions. Both stated that they are unsure of the exact course of action, stating that they had received advice from VLCT but had not received an opinion from the Town's attorney. Daley and Brown gave an overview of grant funds received and what bills had been paid.

Martha Vanderwolk requested clarity on where the financials were accounted for as she did not see them anywhere. Brown gave a brief report on where the money was spent and where it was accounted for in previous years. Brown also gave a report on how the balance of \$52,000 was derived from. Several residents urged the board to follow their purchasing procedures moving forward, so the Town does not have a similar situation in the future.

Residents once again asked for clarity on who authorized the purchase of the fence, how checks were distributed, and if a contract was ever in place. Daley and Brown clarified that no contract had been filed in the Town and that only money that had been received was paid to the contractor. At this time Gayl Tjornehoj asked why Town records were being kept at a private home and not in the Town office, after Buckley made note that he had an initial proposal at his home. Buckley stated that it was only a copy.

Daniel Johnson asked what the next steps are if the money is not appropriated tonight. Brown gave a detailed answer with board members Mike Daley and Dillon Begin adding their thoughts. Ultimately, Brown stated that this would turn into a legal issue, if the contractor did not want to compromise with the Town. Brown also clarified that no contract, verbal or written, had been executed at a meeting. The discussion continued circling back on issues previously raised. Mario Giroux offered his advice to discuss the issue with the contractor before going to legal counsel. Daniel Johnson echoed this sentiment.

A discussion continued and the idea of postponing the vote until later at a special meeting was addressed. During this discussion, a question was raised about what the Town's purchasing policy stated. Brown gave an overview of the policy and the levels of spending and their respective requirements. Renee Marchesseault asked if the policy was followed. Brown stated that it was not.

G. Thomas Trammell Jr. made a motion to postpone Article 3, indefinitely. Daniel Wade seconded the motion. Discussion continued on the merits of postponing the meeting. Fears were raised of a lack of attendance and also that no amount of time would change the circumstances surrounding the article. Moderator Wade gave clarification on procedures to either postpone the vote or to vote it down and what the next steps of these motions would be. Seeing no further discussion, Moderator Wade called for a vote on the motion to postpone Article 3 indefinitely. The motion failed.

Moderator Wade called for a vote on Article 3 in its entirety. The motion failed. Article 3 failed with one abstention from G. Thomas Trammell Jr.

Discussion continued after Moderator Wade announced the results of the vote. Krista Rodrigue asked for clarity that the money would not just be expended without voter approval. Chair Daley assured her that another meeting would have to be called, as there is no money in the budget to pay for the fence. Gayl Tjornehoj clarified that now the fee would be \$52,000 and any legal fees that are incurred. The board stated that it was possible.

Vernon Crawford asked for clarity if the article could be readdressed after it was voted on. Moderator Wade stated that it could be as long as the body has not moved on to the next article. Without objection, Crawford continued his thoughts. Crawford would like to reopen the article to amend the amount to a lesser amount, to pay off the remainder of this year's bill. Brown stated that the Town would need to appropriate approximately \$10,000 to cover the cost of the bill.

Vernon Crawford made a motion to reopen Article 3 for discussion. Georgiana Carr seconded the motion. Moderator Wade reread Article 3. A discussion once again ensued on what the board should do following the failure of this article. Vanderwolk suggested that the article should not be reconsidered, as there are no answers to the questions the Townspeople have. A motion to call the question was moved and seconded. Moderator Wade called for a vote on reconsideration of Article 3. The motion failed with one abstention from Daniel Wade.

Article 3 was not reopened and has failed.

- March 3, 2026 – The Cemetery Stone Fund has a balance of \$11,003.63.
- March 16, 2026 “David was in to give a detailed overview of his position and to request that the board come up with a solution to get him paid. He distributed a timeline of events from his perspective. He asked Zach to read them out loud, which he did. During the discussion, the board had the opportunity to ask several clarifying questions. Alan raised concerns surrounding the pricing of the materials and other items in the quote that David distributed. David reported the changes that were made from the original quote and compared it to the work actually completed.

David clarified that he extended the payment schedule to an additional year, as Al told him that grants would no longer be available for the fence. David also stated that the only thing that he did, that was not approved by someone, was to install the gates. He stated that this was a necessity to ensure that the fence would be installed properly. He stated that if they were no longer wanted, he would remove them. Alan raised concerns about future arrangements and felt that a contract should have been signed. Dillon felt that with the new information, the best course of action would be to inform the taxpayers and place the decision in their hands.

Ben Champagne asked for clarification on what the total allocation of money was. Dillon told him that there was a \$20,000 grant, \$10,000 from ARPA funds, and \$10,000 from tax appropriations. Ben asked how much David had been paid to date. Zach and Dillon stated he's been paid \$32,000. Alan clarified that that was not for labor. David clarified that there was some labor. Alan raised a question on why the paint cost approximately \$400 a gallon. David explained that the epoxy primer paint that he uses is high quality and will not chip or rust. Al conferred and stated the cemetery commissioners viewed another fence he installed, 18 years ago, and it looks like new.

Ben asked what the original quote was for. David stated it was \$94,000. David also stated that he came under budget with the installation. Ben asked for clarification on when this was approved and what the town's plans were to pay for the fence in the beginning. David chimed in that it was supposed to be paid by grants. A short discussion occurred surrounding whose

responsibility it was to get the grants, to break down the payments, and to have a contract signed. Zach gave a detailed summary of the board's discussions and actions, reading from minutes that he had compiled.

Alan asked if this was the final price or if there was any room for negotiations. David stated that this was the final price, minus the gates that have not been billed yet. David stated that he would be happy to take the gates off so they will not factor into the total cost. Alan and Al commented on grants. Al stated that he was not aware that grants could not be applied for once the project was completed. Zach clarified that Diana and himself told Al that they could not be applied for, if the project was completed, early on. Zach gave an overview on other fundraising efforts, including: a Go Fund Me page (which is active) and donation request letters to businesses (Al stated that he never sent these out).

Ben asked for clarification, he asked if the board ever approved the entire project. Dillon commented that the board only approved of up to \$40,000. He stated the board's position was not to have the entire fence installed until all of the money was raised. Dillon stated the board was never informed until after the fence was installed that the entire project was completed. David stated that he was not informed of this decision until the final day of installation when Al came up and told him that grants were off the table. Zach stated that although this has nothing to do with David, the board never approved the entire project.

Ben asked if the Town followed a purchasing policy during this project. Dillon stated that they did not. Ben then shifted focus on whether the Town has any unencumbered funds or capital reserve accounts they could pull from to pay for the fence. Zach gave a detailed report on all reserve funds and clearly stated that they were all encumbered. Zach stated that all cemetery expenses are processed from two funds: the cemetery stone fund and the general account. He stated that the current payment plan for the fence would completely deplete the cemetery stone fund. Ben asked if there was surplus. Zach explained that the only fund that is not fully funded, every year after tax dollars come in, is the general fund. He noted that when there are delinquent taxes, they reduce the amount of tax dollars the general fund receives. This, of course, is opposed to the highway, library, special appropriations, and the school who receive the entirety of their tax revenue. He stated that for this purpose any money that is not spent from the general fund at the end of the year is used to offset the fact that all tax revenue was not received. Zach also stated that at town meeting the voters made it clear that no money should be dispersed to pay for the fence without their approval. Ben later suggested that the board look at their other budgets to see if any of their surplus money could be appropriated for the fence.

Dillon and Alan continued to advocate that the best solution would be to go to a town vote. David mentioned that if he did not get amendable terms from the board soon, he will either have to start charging interest, discuss this with legal counsel, or both. Gayl asked for clarification on the total cost owed to David and what his plan is for charging interest. David explained that he is willing to honor the payment plan and will only charge interest on the invoice that is due in the current year. Additional interest on the remaining principal will be accrued in the following years. David stated that he is amenable to this plan, but he would need something from the Town showing good faith. He is willing to let the Town take until the required town meeting to come up with a plan. Al asked if the Town could pay David the \$10,000 raised from last year. Zach stated that the directive from the Town is to not spend another penny on the fence until they have a chance to review all of the facts. However, he stated since the money was already raised and appropriated, if the board desires for him to draft a check he will. Alan felt that the Town should wait. David left the meeting.

A lengthy discussion ensued on how the article was presented, how the article will be presented, and steps moving forward.

- March 16, 2026 – “Alan began discussion by stating that he did not feel that policy was followed and felt that this project was a misappropriation of town funds. He asked Al if multiple quotes were obtained. Al stated that there were two, but the other person backed out as he could not do the job for what David had quoted. Ultimately, Alan believed that this was a grand misstep in procedure and believed that someone should be held accountable. Alan asked for Al’s resignation. Al responded that he would take it under advisement. No further discussion was had on this matter. Moving forward, Zach asked the board how they would like to warn the meeting for the town vote. He stated that ultimately, he felt this bill was going to need to be paid, so it is now up to the board to decide how it should be done. He backed the plan that was tried on March 2nd to warn for the entire amount and have it over with. The board discussed multiple options including paying it in full this year, paying it over three years, or taking it to counsel. Zach stated that they would need to hold a special meeting this week to warn a special town meeting to vote on the fence. The board came to a consensus to hold it on March 18, 2026, at 4:00 P.M. Zach asked the board that when they present this to the Townspeople they are very up front about all options and outcomes. Al made a motion to have the article only raise \$10,000 to pay for the 2026 balance. Alan seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. Ben Champagne felt that the town needs to have a contract drafted. He strongly stated that it is a municipality and the voters should have a right to a contract. A lengthy discussion ensued. The board felt that we will present both options: promissory note or no promissory note to the townspeople. They also stated that it should have been done from the beginning and from now on that is how jobs of this magnitude will be done. Zach did warn that adding extra steps may not be in the best interest of the Town. He did agree that a note should have been drafted, but that it should have been drafted from the beginning. He was concerned that this may add one more step to the process, stretching this out further. The board will present all options to the townspeople.
- March 30, 2026 – A lengthy discussion ensued. Alan made a motion to pass a resolution of censure and policy reaffirmation. Al seconded the resolution. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. Dillon and Alan signed the resolution.
- April 7, 2026 – A lengthy discussion was held on the cemetery fence. Zach told the board that David Hodge would like to know what the board plans are and how they are proceeding. Zach also distributed a packet that David has put together that he would like distributed at the April 27th meeting. The board reviewed the packet and approved its distribution. Alan made a motion to enter executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) to discuss the board’s plan of action. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin called for any discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. The board entered executive session at 5:27 P.M. Zach was invited to stay. Alan made a motion to exit executive session. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin called for any discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously in the affirmative. The board exited executive session at 5:55 P.M. The board decided to recommend to the voters to pay the fence off in one year, as previously warned, or to pay it as described in the Town’s article. Any monies received from donation or purchasing of the old fence would go to offset the total cost. No grants are available for the project. Dillon will contact David Hodge to let him

know the plan and to clarify a few points regarding the gates and interest charges. On a separate note, Dillon presented a plan from David Begin to utilize the old fencing. David intends to create a memorial park in Beecher Falls and would like to install the old fence around the perimeter. David is offering to purchase and pick up all of the old fence for \$1,000.00. Dillon told the other member of the board that this would be approximately double of what the scrap value is. Alan made a motion to approve the sale of the old fence for \$1,000. Al seconded the motion. Chairman Begin asked if there was further discussion; seeing none, he called for a vote. The motion passed in the affirmative, Dillon recused himself from the vote and did not speak on the motion.

- April 13, 2026 – Dillon updated the board on his discussions with David Hodge last week. He stated that the invoice that David created with interest is not an actual bill yet. It is just for reference. If an amicable payment plan is not met at the April meeting, then this is the interest that will be charged moving forward. Dillon also clarified on the gates. Dillon stated that if the gates were removed the Town would just not be charged for them. At the last meeting Dillon noticed that some of the iron bought initially was used for the gates. However, David clarified that this was not a substantial amount and the rest was purchased afterward. Dillon felt that all town committees should receive a copy of the purchasing policy so that another situation like this does not happen again. Al agreed. Zach will work on this.