



**Town of Montague**  
**Department, Board, Committee, Commission**  
**BUDGET NARRATIVE**

**FY 22**

*Complete this form electronically! Be clear and concise!*

Department: Cemetery Commission Submitted by: Judith Lorei

- 1. Please describe and provide the rationale for any substantial changes in your FY22 line item budget submission.**  
The Cemetery Commission is requesting a \$5,000 yearly increase to cover the costs of managing the Highland Cemetery and to provide improved maintenance of the town's seven historic cemeteries (see special article request, non-capital expense).
- 2. Did you receive funding for any special articles in FY21? What is the status of those expenditures/investments?**  
No.
- 3. Did you receive funding for a discretionary account in FY21? What have you purchased to date, at what cost? Looking forward in FY22, what do you expect to purchase at what cost?**  
No discretionary funding in FY21. No expected purchases in FY22. Requesting funding for operating costs.
- 4. To-date in FY21, has your department experienced any notable successes, such as improving or providing new programs or services, or implementing new technologies? If so, please describe.**

The Cemetery Commission is now a fully appointed 3 member commission. Over the past year, we have accomplished three significant tasks:

1. Conducted the research to establish a new town cemetery in Q1 and Q2. Since summer, 2020, we have worked with the board of the Millers River Cemetery Corporation and town officials to lay the groundwork for a warrant article that will ask the town to approve transfer of the Highland Cemetery to the town.
2. Assessed the headstones in all of the town's cemeteries to determine condition of the stones and the need for repairs. This is a massive undertaking. We have a goal of completing this project in spring, 2021. When the project is complete, we will know the amount of funding we will need to for headstone repair.
3. Sought the services of an expert in historic cemeteries and headstone maintenance and learned how to properly clean the headstones. We coordinated volunteers to clean the headstones of 3 town cemeteries in fall 2020. The headstones in the town's other 4 cemeteries will be cleaned in the spring.

- 5. Are there challenges to your department's ability to meet its goals and objectives that are due to its FY21 operating budget? If so, offer your recommendation(s) for improving the situation.**

We are requesting an increase in the cemetery budget for a few reasons:

1. The transfer of the Highland Cemetery to the town will come with increased expenses for maintenance, as this is an active cemetery and it is significantly larger than our existing seven historic cemeteries. The costs will be offset by plot sales, but at this point we do not know what to expect for yearly revenue.
2. The Commission is more active than it has been in years. We are raising the profile of the cemeteries and the need to care of these town treasures. We have been faithful to keeping the cemeteries mowed and trimmed, but we've neglected the other aspects of the cemeteries that need attention, such as care for the headstones, stone walls and fences that surround the cemeteries, and the trees and plant life within them. An increase in the budget will allow us, over time, to address maintenance needs now and in the future.