

Lori Olberg

From: Jane Knodell
Sent: Friday, August 28, 2015 3:51 PM
To: Lori Olberg
Cc: Jane Knodell
Subject: Fw: Cemetery Commission Resolution

Here is that other communication!! Please post when you can. thanks.

From: btrutor@burlingtontelecom.net <btrutor@burlingtontelecom.net>
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2015 10:40 AM
To: Mayor's Office; Bushor, Sharon; Sara Giannoni; Chip Mason; Ayres, Tom; Selene Colburn; David Hartnett; Maxwell Tracy; Kurt Wright; Karen Paul; Adam Roof; Jane Knodell; Joan Shannon
Subject: Cemetery Commission Resolution

City Council President Knodell:

Our Cemetery Commission Chair Donna Waldron has shared your email with the Commissioners and I appreciate your prompt response. I am appending your email below and am responding to your points. These responses are mine, in my capacity as Cemetery Commissioner, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the other members.

First, your email:

From: Jane Knodell <jknodell@burlingtonvt.gov>
Date: July 10, 2015 at 3:47:28 PM EDT
To: Donna Waldron <waldrondl@icloud.com>, "jshannon@burlingtontelecom.net" <jshannon@burlingtontelecom.net>
Cc: Jane Knodell <jknodell@burlingtonvt.gov>
Subject: Re: Cemetery commission

Dear Donna

First, I want to apologize for not letting the Commission know that this was coming. This is coming from the City Council, not the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department or from Jesse. As Council President, it was my responsibility to reach out to you to explain our thinking, and get your thoughts and concerns, and I failed to do that.

Here's where this is coming from. The City Council held a work session in May to talk about ways that we can eliminate unnecessary and redundant work in City Council Committees. There are two fewer of us than there used to be, and we are aware that several department heads have multiple council committees, commissions, and boards that they work with. All of these groups are staffed by department staff -- setting up meetings, agendas, attending the meetings, getting minutes out, etc etc.

Process is good, but -- speaking for myself -- too much process is . . .

too much process. Our department heads have only so many hours in a day, so if we can reduce process while still benefiting from ample public participation and input, that means we can do more for the citizens of Burlington without spending more money. That seems a good thing.

One idea that came up was having the Parks and Rec Commission take on the responsibilities of the Cemetery Commission. Joan has an idea about how we might move forward on this that might feel better to the Commission, and

ensure we have a strong "cemetary" perspective and sensitivity on the Parks and Rec Commission. I will let her weigh in on that (and of course any other aspect of this issue!).

We are also eliminating one of our own committees, deactivating committees that don't have business that seems a priority right now, and trying to avoid having committees and commissions do the exact same things. Where we now use committees, could we use our commissions? I suspect the answer in many cases is Yes.

I hope this is helpful. Please feel free to share this email with your colleagues on the Cemetary Commission.

Yours sincerely
Jane Knodell

Item 1: 'Too much process'

The Cemetery Commission meets with the Cemetery Supervisor 3 times a year for a 2 hour meeting; 6 hours per year. Generally speaking, the Supervisor consumes 1 hour of the 2 with requests by the Supervisor for Commission action, reports, Q&A with the Commission, and requests by the Commission for Supervisor action. It is unclear to me what efficiencies would be gained by moving these same three hours to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Item 2: Resolution to abolish Cemetery Commission Would you please send me the resolution? I have not seen it. You indicate that it abolishes the Commission but that there is no other side of the coin, i.e., that there is no alternative planned other than "one idea...ensure we have a strong "cemetary" perspective and sensitivity on the Parks and Rec Commission". Supervisor Bridges indicated at our Thursday meeting that the resolution abolishes the Cemetery Commission and hands the alternative to the Mayor to decide. I am quite confused here. Title 18 of Vermont Law is very explicit. The cemeteries, by statute, are to be managed by the City Council or the Cemetery Commissioners. Burlington decided 100 years ago to go with Cemetery Commissioners. Parks and Recreation is not an option by law.

Jane, I hate this! I hate this with a passion. I am sitting here at my keyboard, on a beautiful Burlington Sunday morning, fussing and fretting, nit-picking and playing attorney. I don't want to do this. I want to go to Greenmount Cemetery and look at the rich symbolism carved 150 years ago into the stones of our great-great grandmothers, and think about what they were doing on their Sunday.

Again speaking for myself, what we have here is 'failure to communicate'. The Cemetery Commission is required by law to make an annual report to the City Council and to the citizens. We haven't done that this year, and that is on me as a Commissioner. I failed. At our next meeting I will emphatically recommend that we produce such report with all due haste, and I am quite convinced that you will be satisfied with your Cemetery Commission's efforts and results.

Respectfully,
Barry Trutor
Cemetery Commissioner

cc:
Cemetery Commissioners
Jesse Bridges, Director of Parks and Recreation NPAs