History of Cemetery Commissions and Commissioners:

In 1863, the Vermont Legislature passed an act providing that public burial grounds might be put under the control of commissioners rather than a selectboard(known to us today as Councilors) if so voted by the town.

In 1864, the "town" of Burlington voted yes for commissioners and a cemetery commission, with commissioners elected by the voters.

Lawrence Barnes, F M Van Sicklen, T H Canfield, G G Benedict, and Samuel Huntington were elected the first commissioners. The commissioners were described as conservative in their management and faithful to their trust of maintaining the burial grounds of loved ones. They have, with limited means at their disposal, succeeded in giving outward expression to the feeling of respect and loving memory which our citizens hold to those who have passed away.

Of important note is the twelve year service of another commissioner, Captain Dan Lyon, whom for twelve years had practically entire charge of laying out and beautifying Lakeview Cemetery and improving Elmwood.

This information has been taken from the Annual Report for the City of Burlington, published in 1890 and available with Google Books online.
The question I googled was how long have cemetery commissions existed in Burlington, VT? It is clear the commissioners dedicated themselves to the care and management of the cemeteries in VT. In some ways, we have let our early commissioners down because we are not taking heartfelt care of our cemeteries as was mandated in those early years by the individuals and groups that donated money to the cemeteries.

Volunteerism has been a strong feature with Vermonters for decades, centuries. Volunteers give of their time, energy, and effort for what is valued, appreciated, and loved.

The current commissioners feel the same passion and responsibility for our cemeteries as our first commissioners felt. We give freely of our time, and we currently meet only four times a year with special meetings scheduled when appropriate. Meetings usually last an hour and a half. Where does the efficiency factor come in?

Our Mayor applauds citizen participation and involvement. So do the commissioners!

The cemeteries are consecrated land in our cities. We do not fit under Park and Rec. we know there is not a firm plan if the resolution passes. What we have now works. I reiterate, we are talking four meetings a year. The Commission also benefits from the historical knowledge and information about our cemeteries that Annie Dalton shares at our meetings. How will this beneficial knowledge continue to be shared?
We can't afford to have our cemeteries floundering without a commission (that oversees their destiny and protects them). Don't forget 1863 was the year the Vt Legislature passed the act to exercise the option of establishing the cemetery commissions. Burlington voted yes in 1864 to do just that! 1863-2015 surely is a passage of many years! Commissions have not been absolved for many years! That in itself is a powerful statement.

So the questions come up..