



Town of Hooksett

WARRANT ARTICLE REQUEST FORM

Revised 1/31/2024

Date of Request: July 25, 2023

Date of Town Meeting: March 2024

Name of Department Submitting Request: Cemetery Commission

1. Please provide the wording of the proposed article.

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000.00** for the purpose of repairing headstones and monuments in the Heads, Martins and Riverside Cemeteries. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until these projects are completed or in three (3) years or June 30 2027, whichever occurs first. The estimated tax rate impact is \$.003. Recommended by Town Council (5 Yes – 1 No); Recommended by Budget Committee (10 Yes – 0 No).

2. Voters' Guide Explanation.

This article is asking for \$10,000.00 in tax dollars to make repairs to certain headstones and monuments that are broken, fallen or falling over in Head, Martins, and Riverside Town cemeteries. These headstones and monuments are those where the Cemetery trustees cannot locate any next of kin to make the repairs. A recent change to the Town cemeteries regulations allows appropriate funds to be used for these repairs.

3. If this article is not passed at Town Meeting or approved by the Town Council, what affect would this have on your department goals and programs?

Delays to start making long overdue repairs to broken and fallen headstones/monuments, corner stones, etc. This is a new initiative by the cemetery trustees to correct a problem many decades old.

4. Is any further information necessary for the deliberation?

The cemetery regulations will finally be updated/revised in a few months to allow the Town to use appropriated funds to make needed repairs to headstones and monuments where the owners or next of kin of the owners cannot be located. Prior to making that change in the regulations, it has been the responsibility of lot owners to maintain and repair headstones, monuments, corner stones, curbing, etc.

DRA's response to this article in an email dated 9/7/2023 from Michelle Clark.

"The article seems standard for an appropriation for maintenance to be done at the cemetery. As written, I don't see where there would be a question from the DRA. Bear in mind that, DRA does not evaluate the details that you are describing. The AG's office, Charitable Trust Division oversees the RSA's regarding cemetery maintenance and funds. The information provided from Terry Knowles with corresponding RSA in the follow-up email mentioned seems appropriate. Conversely, if you still have questions, I suggest contacting the AG's office and/or your town counsel."

Charitable Trusts' Unit Dept of Attorney General response in email dated 8/11/2019 from Terry Knowles; "I have known a number of towns over the years which included the repair of headstones in the Cemetery Trustees' budget. Towns have also raised and appropriated money for the repair of headstones after an incident of vandalism. To my knowledge there has not been any legal challenge to a town doing so."