



Tanya D. Lane
Acting Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR ROY ZARTARIAN

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

May 24, 2016

7:00 p.m.

Mayor Zartarian called the Public Hearing re: Ordinance Amendment (EMS Committee) to order at 6:54 p.m.

No public comment.

Mayor Zartarian closed the public hearing at 6:56 p.m.

Motion by Councilor Marocchini, seconded by Councilor Manke; passed 9-0.

Mayor Zartarian called the Town Council meeting to order at 6:57 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Mayor Zartarian
Councilor Anest
Councilor Budrejko
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett
Councilor Manke
Councilor Marocchini
Councilor Nagel
Councilor Serra

Staff Attendees:

Tanya Lane, Acting Town Manager
Ann J. Harter, Director of Finance
Mike D'Amato, Assistant Town Planner
Susan Gibbon, Council Clerk (Substitute)

Mayor Zartarian discussed changes to the meeting, including the addition of matter III - Approval of Agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Klett to move to move Item VIII A. Discussion with Consultant Regarding Results of Meetings with Public re: Town Manager Position to the top of the agenda; seconded by Councilor Anest. Motion passes 9-0.

Motion by Councilor Anest to remove Item VII F. Update on 8-24 Report re: Streetscape Phase VI Project, Constance Leigh Drive from the agenda; seconded by Councilor Budrejko. Motion passes 9-0.

IV. AWARDS/PROCLAMATIONS

A. Police Recognition: Officers Brendan LaChance & Mark Benham

Mayor Zartarian and Police Chief Clark recognized Officers LaChance and Benham for their bravery and exemplary service to the Town in response to the armed robbery at the 7-Eleven store on Willard Avenue.

WHEREAS, Officers Brendon LaChance and Mark Benham are sworn police officers with the Newington Police Department; and

WHEREAS, Officers LaChance and Benham responded to a report of a holdup alarm at the Seven-Eleven convenience store, located at 337 Willard Avenue in the Town of Newington, during the early morning hours of April 22, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Officer LaChance arrived first and observed the store clerk bleeding from a serious laceration to his head. Officer LaChance entered the store and was confronted by two suspects, who were armed with a shotgun and a handgun. Officer Benham arrived soon after and entered the store to assist Officer LaChance; and

WHEREAS, one of the suspects grabbed the store clerk from around the neck and used him as a "human shield" in an effort to keep the officers at bay. Officers LaChance and Benham stood their ground with their weapons drawn in an effort to rescue the store clerk and a customer, who had been in the store during the robbery. The officers ordered the suspects to release the hostages and to drop their weapons and the suspects refused. Rather than continue to risk the safety of the hostages, Officers LaChance and Benham exited the store and took up positions to prevent the suspects escape; and

WHEREAS, Officers LaChance and Benham's quick response and courageous actions lead to the eventual surrender of the suspects without any further harm to the hostages; and

WHEREAS, Officers LaChance and Benham were faced with a life and death situation and placed themselves in extreme peril for the protection of two innocent civilians. Their courageous efforts and devotion to duty reflected great credit upon themselves and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Newington Police Department; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Newington Town Council hereby extends its appreciation to Officers LaChance and Benham for placing themselves in harm's way to help protect the residents of the Town of Newington.

Motion by Councilor Marocchini, seconded by Councilor Klett; passed 9-0.

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (In Person/Via Telephone: 860-665-8736)
(3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON ANY ITEM)**

Denise Lambros, 210 Cedarwood Lane. Ms. Lambros spoke about concerns with the West Meadow Cemetery. She stated that items have been removed from grave sites, very upsetting. She stated that she spoke with Mike Hadvab, the new manager, and he said it looked like a "circus" with items around head stones. Ms. Lambros stated that the town needs to look at the cemetery bylaws and update. Ms. Lambros at that time also handed additional letters to the Town Manager to be added to record/read into minutes – see attached.

Donald Brown, 67 Stafford Avenue. Stated that he is very upset with what is happening at West Meadow Cemetery - items removed from family member's grave. He stated that the Town needs to review the Cemetery bylaws and ordinances.

Nina Seremet, 259 Cottonwood Road; Ms. Seremet stated that her husband is buried at West Meadow Cemetery. She said that he was in the service, had flag removed from grave, also picture plaque removed. She remarked that it is not fair, discriminatory, that some should be able to keep mementos up and not others.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive. MS. Lyons stated that she appreciates the 3 minute time clock. She saw the chatter on Facebook regarding West Meadow Cemetery and only imagine how people felt; very disturbing.

Christopher Bieszczad, 53 Maple Avenue. Mr. Bieszczad stated concern about the lack of red light at Alumi Road. He stated that the TPZ needs to do something. [Letter submitted via email; read by Mayor Zartarian]

VI. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councilor Budrejko stated that an informational session will be held on June 6th regarding the Alumni Road situation. Councilor Klett inquired about the West Meadow Cemetery Committee and asked why the Town having an informational session; it should be TPZ, not closed, invite all.

Councilor DeIBuono thanked the public for the information regarding West Meadow Cemetery - missed on Facebook. She asked Ms. Lane to look into ordinances, as well as bylaws. She stated that it is the TPZ's intent to come up with plan for consideration.

Councilor Anest stated that they need to appoint a sexton for the cemetery and remarked that staff did a good job when removing items, placed in bags with names. Mayor Zartarian indicated that the Council has received a few complaints regarding West Meadow Cemetery and stated that they will look into situation.

VIII. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken by Waiving the Rules)

A. Discussion with Consultant Regarding Results of Meetings with Public re: Town Manager Position

Randi Frank with Randi Frank Consulting, LLC, Wallingford, CT addressed the Council regarding the Town Manager search process. Informational meetings were held on May 3rd and May 18th with the public and on May 20th with department heads. She discussed findings of sessions with Councilors.

Mayor Zartarian requested that list be made available to public under the Town Manager page on the website. Councilor Klett indicated that she is the Chair of the Subcommittee and thanked Ms. Frank for her time and research. The Subcommittee recommends that the Town move forward with a full search; feel that it is in everybody's best interest. Councilor Budrejko inquired as to how many people comprise the public comments. Ms. Frank replied that there were 20 participants at first meeting; 6-8 at next meeting and department heads and stated that all were very unique, interesting organization; citizen participation, volunteers.

Mayor Zartarian inquired as to the cost and length of the search process. Ms. Frank replied that the search would be 60-90 days with the successful candidate giving 30 days (4 week) notice. Cost is a set fee of \$15,500, plus travel expenses for candidates and advertisement. Councilor DelBuono thanked Ms. Frank for her work. She questioned the idea of doing full search for town manager; do not feel that it is necessary; Council should consider hiring candidate we now have.

Councilor Klett stated that she understands what others are saying; still should go through process to make sure that candidate is the right one for the job. Councilor Manke stated that he doesn't see the need to spend the \$15,500 on a search. Mayor Zartarian stated that he has worked closely with Tanya. She has done a fantastic job running the town, going through the budget and stated that she should get the job.

Councilor Nagel stated that he understands the point made by several councilors; what is important; on second glance, it may not be a good idea to do a search. Councilor Klett asked that has changed in 24 hours and indicated that the Search committee did the work requested.

Councilor Serra stated concern about having this discussion of the search with Ms. Lane sitting in the room, would like to move discussion to executive session without Ms. Lane in attendance. Councilor Anest stated that she sat through all the sessions; overwhelming consensus is to do a full search. She stated that we owe this to the Town residents. She stated that the major concerns were to commit to project and work with all parties; need to do our due diligence. Councilor Klett indicated the 26 attendees offered good ideas.

Councilor DelBuono indicated that Ms. Frank did a great job getting public input and asked why do a search. She stated that Ms. Lane has the qualifications town people looking for. She agreed to discuss in executive session. Councilor Klett inquired why the town would have a search committee meet with public and department heads if the Council is not going to listen to the recommendation. Councilor Nagel stated that Ms. Frank wrote all comments that were said and stated that there is a need to have job description and qualifications for Town Manager, need for clarification. Councilor Klett agreed to the need for a job description.

Councilor Budrejko inquired how to limit the geographic area of the search. Ms. Frank replied that the town would place ad in the ICMA "International City Manager" publication. Limit to the NE state; also with the CT Town and City Manager Association. Search in CT, MA, RI, NH, VT,

ME and NY. Councilor Budrejko inquired whether there are there a lot of experienced people out there. Ms. Frank replied that they are not looking for quantity of applicants, but quality of applicants: 20 may be good but 10 may be excellent.

Councilor DelBuono stated that she means no disrespect, but still feels no need to do a full search. Ms. Frank stated that she understands the Council's direction. She said she was asked to get input from the citizens and department heads and told the Council to do what you feel is right.

VII. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken)

A. Discussion: Town Hall Renovations

Councilor Anest recommended that Town Hall Renovations PBC meetings be televised or taped to benefit those who cannot attend. Councilor Nagel replied that NCTV is a volunteer organization and that these meetings need to be held in a room with cameras.

B. Ordinance Amendment: Chapter 8, Article XI, Emergency Medical Services Committee

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby adopts amendments to the Newington Code of Ordinances Chapter 8, Article XI: "Emergency Medical Services Committee", a copy of said amendments is attached to the resolution.

Motion by Councilor DelBuono; seconded by Councilor Manke; passes 9-0.

C. Appointment of Auditor

RESOLVED:

Per Section 610 of the Newington Town Charter, the firm of Blum Shapiro, Inc is hereby appointed as auditor for the Town of Newington for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016; and for a three-year term. Said firm agrees to file a complete report for the fiscal year ending June 20, 2016 on or before December 15, 2016.

Motion by Councilor Budrejko; seconded by Councilor Marocchini.

Councilor Serra mentioned that the date is incorrect it should read June 30, 2016; motion by Councilor Anest to change the date; seconded by Councilor Serra. Motion passes as amended 9-0.

D. Facilities Naming: NCTV

WHEREAS, Mr. Edward Pizzella is a long-time Newington resident and has been a volunteer for the Town in various capacities for over 40 years, including as a Town Councilor, member of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals and also served as counsel for the State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Pizzella has also been active in community theater since the late 1960's having appeared in and/or directed in more than 100 community theater productions; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Pizzella has served on several cable advisory committees and was a founding member of Newington Community Television (NCTV) in 1986, also serving as the NCTV Secretary and currently serves as the NCTV Legal Advisor; and

WHEREAS, NCTV is a non-political organization composed of volunteers and provides a valuable service by keeping Town resident informed about local events and producing and airing programming that cannot be viewed on commercial channels; and

WHEREAS, the Newington Town Council Facilities Naming Subcommittee recommends recognizing Mr. Pizzella's dedication and volunteerism by naming the NCTV Studio in his honor;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council hereby dedicates the NCTV Studio in honor of Edward Pizzella in recognition of his many years of valuable service to NCTV and to the Town of Newington.

Motion by Councilor Nagel; seconded by Councilor Serra. Motion passes 9-0.

WHEREAS, Mr. Everett Weaver is a long-time Newington resident and has been active in the community for many years, having served as the Treasurer for Grace Episcopal Church and as a member of the Newington Republican Town Committee; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Weaver, along with his wife Betsy, has also been an active volunteer for Theater Newington for many years, having also served as its President and Treasurer;

WHEREAS, Mr. Weaver and was a founding member of Newington Community Television (NCTV) in 1986 and has been an active member of NCTV for over 30 years, later joining the Cox Cable Advisory Council in order to advocate for funding to purchase equipment for local community access television stations; and

WHEREAS, NCTV is a non-political organization composed of volunteers and provides a valuable service by keeping Town resident informed about local events and producing and airing programming that cannot be viewed on commercial channels; and

WHEREAS, the Newington Town Council Facilities Naming Subcommittee recommends recognizing Mr. Weaver's dedication and volunteerism by naming the NCTV Control Room in his honor;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council hereby dedicates the NCTV Control Room in honor of Everett Weaver in recognition of his many years of valuable service to NCTV and to the Town of Newington.

Motion by Councilor Nagel; seconded by Councilor DeIBuono. Motion passes 9-0.

E. John Wallace Middle School Wing Reconfiguration Grant Funding

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby authorizes the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools to file applications to the State of Connecticut Commissioner of Education for school construction grant funding for the John Wallace Wing Reconfiguration Project.

Motion by Councilor Marocchini; seconded by Councilor Anest. Motion passes 9-0.

RESOLVED:

In accordance with Article X, Section 8-39 et seq., Project Building Committees, of the Newington Code of Ordinances, the Newington Town Council hereby establishes a John Wallace Wing Reconfiguration Project Building Committee.

Said committee is charged to work with the Town Manager (and/or his/her designee), Superintendent of Schools, and any other appropriate Town staff in the classroom wing reconfiguration renovations at John Wallace Middle School. Such improvements shall comply with the appropriate sections of the Fire Code, Health Code, Building Code and OSHA regulations, regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other health and/or safety code regulations currently in force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the John Wallace Wing Reconfiguration Project Building Committee shall be comprised of ____ (5) members, of which ____ (2) shall be representatives of the Town Council and ____ (3) shall be from the Board of Education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby appoints the following members to the John Wallace Wing Reconfiguration Project Building Committee:

Name	Address	Party	Term

Motion by Councilor Budrejko; seconded by Councilor Nagel.

Councilor DelBuono: Cannot pass a motion without numbers. Councilor Klett: Looks like names for 5 ppl.

Motion amended to read:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the John Wallace Wing Reconfiguration Project Building Committee shall be comprised of five (5) members, of which two (2) shall be representatives of the Town Council and three (3) shall be from the Board of Education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the John Wallace Wing Reconfiguration Project Building Committee shall be comprised of five (5) members, of which two (2) shall be representatives of the Town Council and three (3) shall be from the Board of Education.

Motion as amended by Councilor Budrejko; seconded by Councilor Nagel. Passes 9-0.

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby authorizes the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the following John Wallace Wing Reconfiguration Project.

Motion by Councilor Nagel; seconded by Councilor Budrejko. Passes 9-0.

F. Update on 8-24 Report re: Streetscape Phase VI Project, Constance Leigh Drive [removed from agenda]

VIII. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken by Waiving the Rules)

C. Fee Updates: Planning/Zoning & Zoning Board of Appeals

Mike D'Amato, Assistant Town Planner addressed the Council. He stated that the staff would like to increase the Zoning Board of Appeal application fees from \$75 to \$350. Increase due to increased costs of notices, etc. Councilor Anest noted that other towns' fees are not as high. Ms. D'Amato reviewed the spreadsheet and the costs associated with the Board.

D. Year End Transfers

Ann J. Harter, Director of Finance discussed appropriation transfers from one department to another. The item will be on the next Council agenda for approval.

E. Suspense List

Ms. Harter discussed the Suspense List mentioning that while these accounts are no longer on the receivables tax list, taxes are still collectable. She stated that this is an accounting function only. The Council will take action on the list at the next meeting.

IX. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS (Action May Be Taken)

A. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby makes the following appointment(s):

Town Hall Renovations Project Building Committee - 2016

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Public Rep:	(TBD)	R	Immediate –	N/A

Joseph Harpie			Indefinite	
Public Rep: Chris Miner	119 Revere Drive	R	Immediate – Indefinite	N/A
Public Rep: Anthony Claffey	217 Ashland Avenue	R	Immediate – Indefinite	N/A
Public Rep: Ed Murtha	(TBD)	R	Immediate – Indefinite	N/A
Public Rep:				N/A
NTC Rep: David Nagel	1175 Willard Avenue	R	NTC TERM	N/A
NTC Rep: James Marocchini	237 Reservoir Road	R	NTC TERM	N/A

Motion by Councilor DelBuono; second by Councilor Manke.

Roll Call Vote:

**Zartarian, Anest, Budrejko, DelBuono, Manke, Marocchini, Nagel, Serra - Yes
Klett - No**

Employee Insurance and Pension Benefits Committee

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Specialist: Terrance W. Sullivan	188 Forrest Drive	D	Immed. – 11/30/17	Self

Motion by Councilor Anest; second by Councilor Serra. Motion passes 9-0.

X. TAX REFUNDS (Action Requested)

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$ 322.20 are hereby approved in the individual amounts and for those named on the “Requests for Refund of an Overpayment of Taxes,” certified by the Revenue Collector, a list of which is attached to this resolution.

Motion by Councilor Anest; second by Councilor Serra. Motion passes 9-0.

XI. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Action Requested)

A. Regular Meeting, May 10, 2016

Motion by Councilor DelBuono; second by Councilor Marocchini. Councilor Anest abstained. Motion passes 8-0.

XII. WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC

Helicopter rides at the Extravaganza are selling out fast.

XIII. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Nagel: Working on 9/11 Memorial, hope to have done by Memorial Day parade.

Councilor Serra: Attended the Parks & Rec meeting; concert series

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (In Person/Via Telephone: 860-665-8736)
(3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON ANY ITEM)

None

XV. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Klett stated that she is not concerned about taking power away - Town Council should hold policy meetings. Councilor Manke thanked Dave Langdon and Tanya Lane for the photos of soldiers up in the atrium of the town hall at no cost to the Town. Councilor Anest thanked Councilor Manke for taking on the project. Councilor DeIBuono thanks to Councilor Manke; now have names & faces with backgrounds. She said that American Legion helped with the financing.

Councilor Nagel stated appreciation for three events: (1) Police thank you breakfast held by the P&R Department; (2) Volunteer Dinner; and (3) Recognition of students at scholar breakfast. Also mentioned that there will be a Memorial Day service at the town hall atrium.

Mayor Zartarian stated that he attended meeting with mayors of adjacent towns to discuss working cooperation and collaboration between the towns.

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: LEGAL/REAL ESTATE

Motion by Councilor Klett to go into Executive Session at 9:06 p.m. Second by Councilor Manke. Passed 9 – 0. All Councilors. Acting Town Manager Lane and the Town Attorney were present.

Motion by Councilor Klett to adjourn Executive Session at 10:16 p.m. Second by Councilor Manke. Passed 9 – 0.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilor Budrejko to adjourn at 10:17 p.m. Second by Councilor Manke. Passed 9 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Gibbon

Council Clerk (Substitute)

5/24/16

To Newington Town Council:

I am writing this due to a recent issue that happened at West Meadow Cemetery. My husband passed away just over a year ago and my kids and I have put small items on his grave that remind us of things we shared together as a family. My daughter and I went to visit the grave site and all of these sentimental items were missing. We were very upset and my 18 year old starting crying thinking why would someone steal these meaningful items? We went over to the office to report it and find out that the maintenance cleaned it up and put it in a plastic bags behind the building. We were told that if we put it back on my husband's grave site, that they will keep removing it and will eventually throw it out.

We are fairly new to this cemetery and if there were any changes in the rules, the office should have posted a sign or mailed out a notice. There were no signs, letters, or even a phone call informing us that these items were not allowed and should be removed. This cemetery is beautiful, well maintained, why make changes? All I have is a solar light that sits in the dirt, a gnome with my husband's favorite team and little things that sit on his headstone. We keep that area cleaned and even weed if necessary. This is really heart breaking to me and especially to my kids who looked up to their dad and feel that leaving something so small they felt like he knew they were there. A cemetery is a place to go to talk to loved ones, to put those sentimental items on their graves that help us remember what this person enjoyed while they were alive.

Sincerely,

Barbara Schiralli

88 Cypress Road

Barbara Schiralli

To Newington Town Council,

My name is Jean Fuzie, I live at 148 Goodale Drive, Newington. I have only been a resident/homeowner in town for 11 years. Before moving here, my husband and I would visit my daughters and their families in Newington. We accompanied my daughter one day to visit a grave at West Meadow Cemetery. We had never been there before and it made quite an impression on us. It was such a quaint and warm, park like cemetery. When we moved to Newington, we considered the VA cemetery but instead bought a plot here in town. Little did we know that my husband would pass away a few months later.

The issue at hand is the articles brought in by visitors to the gravesites. Here is where I voice my opinion as I see it. There is nothing wrong with people bringing items to their loved ones graves as long as it is not overwhelming and it is kept tidy. In areas where people have overgrown bushes, plantings etc. they should be notified and given a period of time for them to correct it. If no response, then do what is deemed the next step, trim, cut or remove the bush. As far as the statues, plants, flowers or whatever is concerned, the people should have been given notice not have the crew bull dozing through and collecting the items from gravesites. People actually thought that the items were stolen.

I think you should take into consideration that these people have lost loved ones and this is a way to feel close, honor and respect their loved ones.

Should you need to speak with me, I can be reached at the number below.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Jean Fuzie

860-667-0690

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jean Fuzie".

May 22, 2016

Dear Town Council Members,

I'm writing to express my concerns over the new cemetery management for West Meadow Cemetery. Mainly the new orders put in place for no plantings, no adornments to headstones, etc.

While we don't personally own any plots at this cemetery, we speak from experience about visiting loved ones at their resting place and leaving a token behind or flowers or planting in the spring and tending to their 'garden' all summer.

My husband lost his grandson to 'SIDS' at just 3 months old about the time we first met. On many of our visits to the cemetery for Holidays, Birthdays, etc. we would leave behind a shiny penny on his headstone. As time went on, those visits also included his dad and then his mom. Taking time to keep their stone clean, and bringing them flowers.

We all know the 'pennies from heaven' story, but sending 'pennies to heaven' somehow provide comfort and give us a feeling that our grandchild knows we are there and thinking of him. We believe this of all the little trinkets that are left on the headstones, that they are a sign between loved ones as well as providing comfort to those that are left here. And not just adults, but this helps children as well to feel connected with their loved one.

We certainly understand how things could get out of hand and that rules need to apply for the greater good of the entire cemetery, but perhaps a compromise is in order, rather than such a stark change from what has been a common practice for so long and a decision factor for many in deciding the final resting place for their loved one.

Thank you for your consideration.

Debra & James Fortin
31 Barkledge Drive
Newington, CT 06111

Good evening, my name is Denise Lambros, I live at 210 Cedarwood Lane. I am here to discuss some concerns I have about West Meadow Cemetery. Recently, I went to the cemetery to visit my father's grave and noticed all sentimental mementos were removed. All of the mementos at my dad's grave were on the mulch and one keychain on the base of the headstone. I called and spoke with Mike Hadvab, who is currently the property manager, and asked if we could meet and discuss what is going on at the cemetery. During our meeting, Mike told me he is the new cemetery manager and he felt that it looked like a "circus" with all of the items around each headstone.

My parents, sisters, my husband and myself all own plots within this cemetery. My father and brother in-law are currently buried there. I frequently visit the cemetery and have never felt that it looked like a circus. All of these years visiting the cemetery, I have always felt the love that people have for their family members that have passed.

To go to the cemetery one day and see the mementos, then to go the following week and everything be gone, I felt was very cold and hurtful. I asked Mike if he could not continue doing it this way and at least give visitors notice of this policy. His response was "people don't read signs." I feel if the cemetery by laws are going to be followed word for word it cannot be done overnight without some warning. I am not looking for the rules to bend, but do think that the bylaws are a bit outdated and need some updating.

I have always thought of this cemetery as a quaint hometown cemetery that you can visit and recognize family, friends, and neighbors. This cemetery is extremely busy and well loved by many and I hope you will consider looking into this matter.

Dear Newington Town Counsel,

My name is Sharon Cashman, I live at 272 Goodale Drive, Newington. I am writing to let you know how I feel about what has been going on at West Meadow Cemetery. I have my dad and brother in-law buried there and my husband and I own a family plot there. It was very upsetting when I went there and a small trinket that my 4 and 5 year olds put on their grandfathers grave was missing. I found out from other people at the cemetery that the grounds crew were removing all items and putting them behind the main office shed (photos attached).

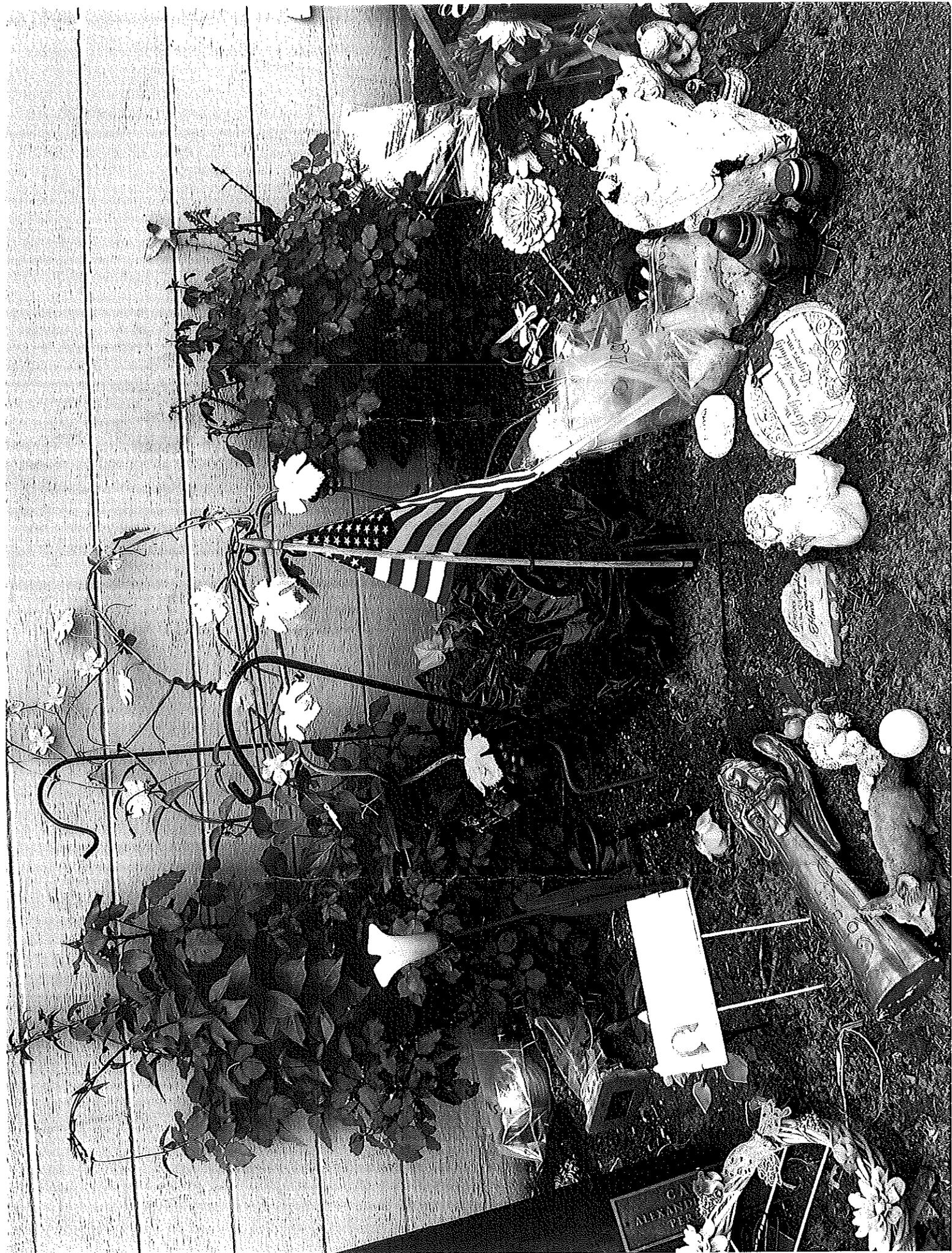
I called to speak with the town manager and spoke with Tonya; she said she would get to the bottom of this. I then got a call from Bill DeMaio and he stated that they were doing spring cleanup. I mentioned to him that was by March 15 and this was now April. We go to the cemetery every week and we keep our area clean, we do our own weeding around the headstone and footstone. Mr. DeMaio had mentioned that some people come once a year and put out a big display and never come and remove it. I don't think everyone should be penalized for the few that abuse the rules. Allowing people to put a small trinket on the mulch or headstone should be acceptable.

The hardest part with this policy is how do you handle the children's section and veterans section? I was told that nothing will be allowed anywhere throughout the cemetery. Does this mean no flag for my father and brother in-law who fought for this country and has earned the right to have an American flag placed on their grave?

I hope that you will consider looking into this matter and that we can all come up with a mutual solution that makes everyone happy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon E. Cashman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.





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ALEXANDER
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By the family of
ALEXANDER PER
1910-1980

ALEXANDER PER
1910-1980

ALEXANDER PER
1910-1980

ALEXANDER PER
1910-1980