

**LAPORTE COUNTY PIONEER CEMETERY COMMISSION
COURTHOUSE SQUARE
LAPORTE, IN 46350**

---Board Members---

Richard V. Lute, Sr., President Edward A. Marks, Vice President
Kenneth Baker, Financial Secretary Patricia Harris, Recording Secretary
Harriet M. Lute

2016 Activities

Monthly Meetings – Structured monthly meetings for board members.

Availability to the Public – We are available 10:00 – 3:00 p.m. first Friday of each month and other times by phone or e-mail. A new Cemetery Commission brochure is available to various groups and interested persons.

Cemetery Visitations – We incorporated with two of our monthly meetings, visitations as a board, to eleven pioneer cemeteries. This was done to acquaint all members with the La Porte County cemeteries and to determine individual cemetery needs as an aid to determining priorities on maintenance, repair and restoration and inspect contracted work.

Historians/Liaisons Volunteers – Volunteers watched over our cemeteries and reported any act of vandalism or cemetery need.

Stone Restorations – Stone restoration phase #2 was completed at Maple Grove Cemetery and broken stones repaired at Hudson Lake cemetery by Mark Davis of Stone Saver Cemetery Restoration.

Fencing – No fence work was done this year.

Documentation/Photographs – We continued to photograph and document tombstones before they become illegible or vandalism occurs. We have also continued to seek out locations of old cemeteries not known to us previously and then research and document. We are working with the County Commissioners and Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church to secure quit claim deeds for Miriam Benedict and Faith Methodist Cemeteries.

Written Reports on Cemeteries – Board members are assigned certain cemeteries that are to be checked by them for caretaking condition and other items throughout the year and they then report their findings on a Cemetery Inspection Report Record.

Request for Bids and Contracts – We continue to use standardized forms for Request for Bids for Cemetery Maintenance and Contracts for Cemetery Maintenance as well as for Uncontracted Maintenance of Cemeteries and for Stone Restoration, etc.

Cemetery Maintenance – Pioneer Cemeteries without any funding are maintained by a contracted firm who is doing excellent work. Others that had caretakers and/or some funding for maintenance were aided with funds budgeted by the Cemetery Commission. Perimeter of Miller Griffin was cleared to aid maintenance of area; access paths to Downing and Sharp cemeteries were sprayed for weeds and new mulch applied; driveway of Beattys' Corners cemetery was sprayed for weeds.

Signage – New cemetery signs were purchased for Webster, Shippeeburg, Downing, Nickel Plate, Morgan and Lambs Chapel cemeteries.

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Budget and Expenditures for Calendar Year 2016

<u>Category</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Office Supplies	\$ 250.00	\$ 42.36
Postage	75.00	49.31
Paint-Painting	1,000.00	347.50
Mileage	750.00	594.50
Landscaping	1,000.00	618.00
Tombstone Repair	12,000.00	12,000.00
Cemetery Maintenance	20,000.00	17,805.98 *
Fencing & Gates	-0-	-0-
Board Members	1,325.00	1,325.00
Head of Department	5,773.02	5,772.00
Social Security & Medicare	464.00	542.81
Budget adjustment	<u>100.00</u>	<u>-0-</u>
Totals	\$ 42,737.02	\$ 39,097.46

Unexpended Balance \$ 3,639.56

* Balance left as there were no major repairs or storm damage.

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2017 Cemetery Commission Plans

Monthly Meetings – Structured monthly meetings for Board Members.

Availability to the Public – Available to public 10:00 am – 3:00 pm first Friday of each month and otherwise by e-mail, phone or mail.

Cemetery Visitations – Continue to visit various cemeteries as a group to acquaint all members with the La Porte County cemeteries and to set priorities.

Historians/Liaisons-Volunteers – Continue to have volunteers watch over our cemeteries and report any act of vandalism or cemetery need. Encourage the continuation of transcribing all gravestones, photography, writing histories and identifying veterans graves with the aid of volunteers.

Discovery and Research – Seek out the locations of old cemeteries not known to us previously and then view, research and document, as well researching and documenting known cemeteries and the burials therein. Clarification of Miriam Benedict property lines and possible deeding of same to La Porte County. Possible deeding of Faith Methodist and Beatty's Corners cemeteries to La Porte County as supporting congregations are dissolving.

Continued Preservation of Our Cemeteries – Caretaking is extremely important in our cemeteries as it can affect the safety of individuals visiting the cemeteries.

1. Communication with sexton/caretakers to allow them to make the needs of their individual cemeteries known to the board and discuss ways to prevent vandalism. Enter into written agreements with them detailing the work to be performed in the cemeteries stating a specific amount to be budgeted for the work from Commission funds.

2. Contract with lawn care services for cemetery maintenance for those cemeteries who do not have caretakers. Seek aid of County Highway Dept. for needed removal of trees, etc. and supply and delivery of wood chips for entry paths, etc.

3. Many of our tombstones are in need of repair. We will contract for the repair and phase #3 restoration of stones at Maple Grove Cemetery for \$4,645.00 and Foster Cemetery for \$7,355.00.

4. Brush and paint Coulter Cemetery fence.

5. Inspect other fences for needed repairs and painting.

6. Continue to replace signs at cemeteries as funds permit.

7. Continue to work with the LaPorte County Community Service to provide labor for fence painting, etc.

8. We have begun a program of historical research to install signs at the cemeteries telling about their history. We have installed signs at Eahart-Reed, Norton, Coulter, Hudson Lake, Tuley, Maple Grove, Pike, Beattys Corners and Miriam Benedict and install others as research is completed. Some older signs at Coulter & Miriam Benedict may have to be replaced. Install new cemetery signs at Webster, Shippeeburg, Downing, Nickel Plate, Morgan and Lambs Chapel.

Written Reports- Continue using the Cemetery Inspection Form, a written report for board members to report on the condition of our cemeteries throughout the year.

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3 February 2017

Indiana Historical Bureau
140 N. Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Sir or Madam:

Attached please find the annual report of the La Porte County Pioneer Cemetery Commission to be filed with your office under Indiana Cemetery Law IC 4-23-7-3. The attached contains the Commission budget and expenditures for the year 2016, Activities of the Commission for the year 2016; and the Plans of the Commission for the year 2017.

Sincerely,

La Porte County Pioneer Cemetery Commission

Kenneth Baker

Patricia Harris

Harriet M. Lute

Richard Lute, Sr.

Edward A. Marks

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