

LA PORTE COUNTY PIONEER CEMETERY COMMISSION

COURTHOUSE SQUARE  
LA PORTE, IN 46350

---Board Members---

Edward A. Marks, President Stephen Grott, Vice President  
Susan Webster, Financial Secretary Patricia Harris, Recording Secretary  
Larry Pinkerton

5 February 2021

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 2020, Activities of the Commission for the year 2020; and the Plans of the Commission for the year 2021.

Sincerely,

La Porte County Pioneer Cemetery Commission

*Edward A. Marks*

*Stephen Grott*

*Susan Webster*

*Patricia Harris*

*Larry Pinkerton*

Enc.

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**Budget and Expenditures for Calendar Year 2020**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Office Supplies	\$ 250.00	\$ 97.88
Postage	75.00	54.55
Paint-Painting	1,000.00	1,000.00
Mileage	750.00	607.43
Landscaping	915.00	836.89
Tombstone Repair	12,000.00	12,000.00
Cemetery Maintenance	20,000.00	18,513.69
Fencing & Gates	-0-	-0-
Board Members	1,325.00	1,325.00
Head of Department	6,387.00	6,387.00
Social Security & Medicare	476.00	589.94
Claims	<u>100.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 43,278.00</b>	<b>\$ 41,512.38</b>

**Unexpended Balance** ..... \$ 1,765.62

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**2020 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 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 nine 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 final phase #4 at Foster cemetery repaired by Mark Davis of Stone Saver Cemetery Restoration and phase #1 at Miller-Griffin cemetery repaired by Helen Wildermuth of Stonehugger Cemetery Restoration.

Fencing – Rossburg Cemetery fence was painted; damaged Posey Chapel Cemetery fence repaired, new fence and gate installed at Sharp Cemetery.

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.

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. Trees downed by storms were removed at Miriam Benedict, Webster, Nickel Plate and Morgan cemeteries with the aid of the County Highway Dept. and caretakers. Additional dead trees Miller Griffin and Norton cemeteries were removed, large shrubs trimmed at Low Cemetery and Downing Cemetery path cleared.

Signage – Replacement cemetery signs for Sharp, Pike, Coulter, Beattys Corners and Eahart Reed were installed as were storm damaged history and cemetery signs at Webster.

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**2021 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 as researching and documenting known cemeteries and the burials therein. Clarification of property lines of Webster Cemetery.

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 of phase #2 at Miller Griffin Cemetery in the amount of \$12,000.00. Repair two stones each at Coulter, Shippeeburg and Norton cemeteries and a damaged stone at Webster.
4. Inspect fences for needed repairs and painting.
5. Continue to replace signs at cemeteries as funds permit. Replace Rossburg sign.
6. Continue to work with the LaPorte County Community Service to provide labor for fence painting, etc.
7. Contract needed tree work – remove pine tree at Miller Griffin Cemetery and large Branch at Norton Cemetery.
8. Remove dead tree stumps at Eahart Reed Cemetery.
9. Request County Surveyor to survey Miriam Benedict and Webster cemeteries.
10. 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, Miriam Benedict, Webster, Teeter and Winchell and plan to install others as research is completed.

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.