

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

---Board Members---

Dale Ellis, President Wilma Marsh, Vice President  
Kenneth Baker, Financial Secretary Patricia Harris, Recording Secretary  
Richard V. Lute, Sr.

3 February 2012

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

Dear Sir or Madam:

Attached please find the annual report of the LaPorte 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 2011, Activities of the Commission for the year 2011; and the Plans of the Commission for the year 2012.

Sincerely,

LaPorte County Pioneer Cemetery Commission

*Kenneth Baker*

*Dale Ellis*

*Patricia Harris*

*Richard Lute, Sr.*

*Wilma Marsh*

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**Budget and Expenditures for Calendar Year 2011**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Office Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ 87.71
Postage	75.00	41.97
Paint-Painting	1,000.00	315.07 +
Mileage	750.00	861.00 *
Landscaping	1,100.00	537.76
Tombstone Repair	12,000.00	11,965.00
Cemetery Maintenance	20,000.00	15,995.00 ++
Fencing & Gates	-0-	4,280.00 * & **
Board Members	1,004.00	1,004.00
Head of Department	5,773.00	5,773.00
Social Security & Medicare	<u>464.00</u>	<u>441.73</u>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 42,666.00</b>	<b>\$ 41,302.24</b>
Special Appropriation from Riverboat Admissions		
Tax for Fencing	<u>3,000.00</u>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 45,666.00</b>	

**Unexpended Balance** ..... \$ 4,363.76

\* Although this item was over individual budget, funds were transferred among accounts (++) to meet specific needs, while staying within our total budget.

++ Cemetery Maintenance costs were less than budgeted because of changes from contracted maintenance to a caretaker in some cemeteries and fewer special maintenance projects.

+ Paint & Painting Costs were less than budgeted due to no available county community service workers.

\*\* See Special Appropriation.

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**2011 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.

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.

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

Stone Restorations – Stone restoration was completed at Hudson Lake, Teeter, and Day cemeteries and stones cleaned and one repaired at Sharp Cemetery by Mark Davis of Stone Saver Cemetery Restoration.

Fencing – Phase #2 and Phase #3 of the restoration of the wrought iron fence were completed at Posey Chapel Cemetery by Rustic Fencing, Inc. Fence was painted and repaired at Day 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 revised and 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.

Cemetery Maintenance – Pioneer Cemeteries without any funding are maintained by a newly 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. Perimeters of Norton, Sharp and Miller Griffin sprayed with weed kill to aid maintenance; work shed at Beattys' Corners painted and a fallen tree removed and others trimmed at Miriam Benedict. Also, brush pile was burned at Beatty's Corners by Coolspring Volunteer Fire Department.

Signage - New sign was installed at Day Cemetery. In addition, a sign telling the history of Pike Cemetery was installed.

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**2012 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, especially Allen Toney Family Burial Ground and Howell Cemetery as well researching and documenting known cemeteries and the burials therein. Also survey of Miriam Benedict property lines and determine access to Miller Griffin cemeteries.

**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. as well as grading entrance at Shippeeburg and placing wood chips there and entrances to Sharp and Rossburg Cemeteries. Spray perimeter of Rossburg with weed kill.

3. Many of our tombstones are in need of repair. We will contract for the repair and restoration of stones at a cemetery to be determined for a minimum of \$12,000.00.

4. Paint fences at Miller Griffin and Foster cemeteries.

5. Continue replacement of fence at Posey Chapel & others as funds permit.

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 and Pike and install others this year as research is completed.

9. Research the possibility of installing a memorial stone at Eahart-Reed Cemetery to memorialize those whose stones were vandalized and destroyed.

**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.