



## Staff Memo to Council

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**Report To:** Mayor Cole and Members of South Huron Council

**Meeting Date:** May 6, 2018

**From:** Dan Best, Chief Administrative Officer

**Report:** CAO Memo 18.01

**Subject:** Exeter Cemetery Fence Removal

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### Recommendations:

**That** South Huron Council receive the memo of Dan Best, Chief Administrative Officer re: Exeter Fence Removal.

### Purpose:

Council Information

### Background and Information:

Further to the request of Council on April 16, 2018 this memo provides an overview of the information collected by Staff which resulted in the removal of the fence at the Exeter Cemetery.

The disrepair of the cemetery that has been occurring over a number of years and the continuation of spot repairs and maintenance was no longer effective or efficient.

An overview of the history provided by Staff is outlined below:

- Prior to 2012, a staff member (with welding certification), repaired some sections of the fence that still had enough metal to do so.
- October 29, 2012, a contractor examined the decorative fencing surrounding the cemetery and noted that there was more metal missing than there was to repair. He provided options to replace caps and posts and salvage what he could, however this was cost prohibitive as the main structure was

deteriorated beyond repair. As this was a temporary solution, it would appear that no action was taken.

- In 2014 a painting contractor was contacted to determine if the fence could be sandblasted and painted. This was no longer possible due to the significant loss of metal in the fencing as a result of spot repairs through the years. It would appear at this point, removal was the only option.
- As part of the 2015 Cemetery capital budget, Staff recommended replacement of the decorative fencing at a cost of \$90,000.00. Prior to presentation to Council, this project was removed from the budget. It was recommended by the CAO of that time for staff prepare a report to Council providing options for discussion. Staff began preparing a report for the January 18, 2016 Council meeting. It would appear that this report was never completed and presented to Council. At that time, the options being examined at an estimated cost of \$90,000 were as follows:
  - Remove the fence
  - Replace with chain link
  - Block stone (armor stone)
  - Leave as status quo.

No action was taken, and the fence continued to deteriorate. In 2017 as part of a tour of Municipal facilities, a review of the cemetery and the history of the fence was discussed. At that time, concerns related to health and safety, maintenance time and costs related to the structure and grounds were discussed.

The ongoing maintenance of facilities is an operational responsibility. As a result, staff was directed to remove the remaining fence.

The decision to remove was based on the following factors:

- State of the asset – prohibitive to repair
- No regulatory requirements or implications (Cemeteries Act or Heritage Act)
- Financial considerations – staffing, material maintenance
- State of the fence demonstrating a lack of respect for those families who have family or friends at peace in the cemetery

At this time, the intent is to continue to remove all of the remaining fencing and retain the pillars. In the future, there will be an opportunity as part of an overall master planning or facility review to consider what/where capital investments could be examined and considered by Council. Some considerations for future discussions are the following:

- Replace fence with modern materials that can look historical but are maintenance free
- Rather than a fence, establish natural barrier
- Hard surfacing of the roadway which would reduce the amount of gravel maintenance over time.

**Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications as a result of the information outlined in this memo.

**Staffing Implications:**

There are no staffing implications as a result of the actions outlined in this memo.

**Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications as a result of the actions outlined in this memo.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Best'.

Dan Best MPA, BA  
Chief Administrative Officer