

Minutes from 8/21/19 Cemetery Commission meeting
6:30 PM

Approved at 9/18/19 meeting

Members present: Walter Tibbetts, Raymond Cusson, Janice Stone

Visitors: Mary Jo Maffi

1. Welcome new member Janice Stone.
2. Minutes of 6/5/19. JS motion to approve, RC second, WT & RC in favor
3. Update on equipment. WT discussed status on push mower & weed whackers
4. Lot sales, discussion on lot pricing. WT told commission he has been selling a lot of lots recently, some from out of town. Spear family bought 8 plots, Weaver 4 plots & a few green burials. Shutesbury is charging \$100/single plot, same since 1999. Should we be charging more now? JS agreed to check with nearby towns on their pricing & report back next time.
5. Updates on Projects
 - a. West Cemetery
 - i. Clean up shavings from stump grinding. Maybe schedule a volunteer work day? This needs to be done soon, & the rest of the stump grinding after this cleanup.
 - ii. Grinding of remaining stumps. About \$600 worth of stump grinding to do. Can we offer wood chips to people somehow?
 - iii. Repairs to door of old crypt. Lock guy came out again, determined he needs to either respace or build a new lock to make it work. He comes from Williamsburg.
 - iv. Survey of cemetery roads & plots. Existing maps not very accurate. This work needs to be done. WT knows a surveyor who could do it, but it will cost to have him come out and estimate the cost of the job. Commission agreed WT should ask him to come out, and Commission will pay the cost for this trip to make an estimate for the work.
 - b. Pratt Corner Cemetery
 - i. Cleanup. Most of the cleanup was done for Memorial Day, but some more is needed (tall grass in areas).
 - ii. Repairs to damaged stone. During cleanup for Memorial Day plaque in ground was broken. Very thin stone was just put in ground without good base. WT has contacted a Sheffey family member about the repair. WT will have Historic Gravestone Services come out to see which way to go. Possibilities include repair the cracked stone & putting in a better base, or inserting a bigger base and attaching this stone to it, or a new stone. No response from family yet.
 - c. Locks Pond Cemetery.
 - i. Clean up. More needed.

6. Possible third grounds keeper. Could use one more person to help with the 2 smaller cemeteries, and at West Cem when needed. How many more hours do we need? Discussion about hiring a lawn care company to clean up the boundaries of the cemeteries once a year. Cut, chip and grind woody material. WT will compare costs of hiring another grounds keeper or a lawn care company for the boundary clearing work.
7. Gravestone Repair Project. WT wrote a sample of what was needed, and spoke with T. Conde about costs. She said she wants the stones evaluated and prioritized. She is willing to do an assessment at West Cemetery at no cost to us. Then we can do an RFB/RFP. She sent him a handout about doing a 2-day hands-on workshop for assessment, cleaning and repair work at West Cemetery with volunteers. Commissioners discussed budget for work at West, including the CPC funds (\$13,000). Also \$1000 each committed by Historical Commission and Friends of Historical Commission for tree work, which we think we can use for this repair work as well. Can check with these groups. Also, a little money left from the Hearse House project, which could be used for putting in some shelves there. WT will talk to T. Conde about getting out there for the appraisal, and will work on the paperwork necessary for the town to start some of this work.
8. Follow up on “Natural Burial” section of West Cemetery. Mary Jo Maffi was present for discussion. She is concerned the present sign in front does not mention green burials, and seems to rule them out since it says all burials must have a vault. Commission discussed needing to update the sign anyway, and could add something about green burials on it. Commission also discussed getting this information on the Cemetery Commission webpage, rather than putting too many details on a new sign. JS asked about a special simple sign for the Natural Burial area, and showed some examples from the web. RC will check with the sign company that made the present sign, and see how much it costs for a new one.
9. Review and organization of old records. WT told Commission there is a file drawer of records in the Board of Health meeting room upstairs in Town Hall. Some records may help augment our records on who bought what plots when. Maybe some time the Commission can meet and just start going through those files.
10. Next Meeting Date. Commission agreed on Wed Sept 18 at 6:30 PM.
11. Adjournment. at 7:40 PM

Submitted by
Janice Stone