

**Minutes from 9/18/19 Cemetery Commission meeting**  
**6:30 PM**  
**Town Hall**

*Approved at the October 23, 2019 meeting*

Members present: Walter Tibbetts (WT), Janice Stone (JS)

Members absent: Raymond Cusson (RC)

Visitors: Mary Jo Maffi

1. Review & approve minutes of 8.21.19 meeting. WT made the motion, seconded by JS to approve the minutes as written. Both voted in favor.
2. Update on equipment. WT discussed status of riding mower. Steering cable went out on older one. WT purchased parts for repair.
3. Lot sales, discussion on lot pricing. JS handed out results of her research on costs of cemetery plots in neighboring towns, and other information on cremations, Green Burials and other related items. She gathered information from Pelham, Leverett, New Salem and Wendell. All have increased their prices for burial plots in the last few years. Presently they are the following for a single grave plot:  
Pelham - \$400. Leverett - \$500. New Salem - \$400. Wendell - \$300 (but only accept remains from people who have a connection to town). Pelham has created 3'x3' plots for up to 2 cremains in cemetery areas that cannot be reached by heavy equipment. WT handed out a page that listed the Shutesbury prices (\$100 resident, \$250 non-resident). WT will check with the Town Administrator to see if the Commission can vote to raise prices without Town Meeting or other approval. JS stated she believes they should raise the prices, and as soon as possible. WT discussed perpetual care funds.
4. Updates on Projects
  - a. West Cemetery
    - i. Clean up shavings from stump grinding. WT has been too busy to organize a volunteer day. Maybe Commissioners can just meet some weekend.
    - ii. Repairs to door of old crypt. WT asked lock guy when he can get the work done. Said the next 2 weeks, but 4 weeks later no response.
    - iii. Survey of cemetery roads & plots. Surveyor has come out to look at site. Two phases to survey. First to determine what is there, establish 3 new baselines on the ground and the center lines of roads, then compute a theoretical layout based on that info. Second phase is setting pins along the road and center of each section, re-establishing road widths (narrower). First phase will cost \$3300. Can be paid for from expendable trust. Commission needs to determine where to get money for second phase. JS made a motion to spend up to \$3400 for Phase 1 of survey of West Cemetery, from expendable trust fund, provided it fits into the uses for that trust fund. WT seconded, and both voted approval. WT will check

with Accountant and Treasurer about the expendable and the non-expendable trust funds.

5. Update on third possible grounds keeper. WT called possible candidate today, no response yet. Commission could use him for management of the two smaller cemeteries.
6. Gravestone Repair Project. WT called T. Conde to help prioritize repairs of gravestones. A new marker just fell over with base.
7. Update of Cemetery Policies. RC is looking into updating the signs at West Cemetery, esp. concerning Green Burial. He is putting together info. Commissioners briefly discussed what should be included on a sign, vs. just on a website for the Cemetery Commission. Present sign includes requirements for corner markers on lots, concrete vault (2001 vote), no new trees or bushes (8/1/2001), and all potted plants & flower arrangements (real or artificial) removed by September 8<sup>th</sup> each year. M. Maffei is concerned about the exclusion of Green Burial by the concrete vault requirement, and JS thinks the last one about plant removal by Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> should be changed. Commission will discuss more next meeting when RC is back. WT will talk to Web Committee about setting up a website for the Cemetery Commission.
8. Other Business. None.
9. Next Meeting Date. Commission agreed on Wed. October 16 at 6:30 PM.
10. Adjournment at 7:45 PM

Documents used during this meeting:

Cemeteries in area and cost for a plot (J. Stone)

Cemetery Commission listing of lots and prices and order form/receipt.

Submitted by

*Janice Stone*