

Minutes of 9/22/22 Cemetery Commission

6:00 PM

Remote Access Meeting with Zoom
(Under Emergency Order for Pandemic)
Approved at the Meeting of 10/25/22

Members present: Walter Tibbetts (WT), Dina Stander (DS), Susan Millinger (SM). Meeting called to order at 6:14 p.m.

1. Minutes of the August meeting: Motion to accept the Minutes of August 19 was made and seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved by a roll call vote.
2. Headstone cleaning and repair workshop:
 - a. Publicity: The flyer was approved by the Commission members. SM will print 20 copies; DS will distribute them. WT will post on Town Announce; there will also be a posting on Nextdoor.
3. Equipment:
 - a. Maintenance: WT is doing the maintenance himself.
 - b. New equipment: WT found the leaf blower the groundkeepers had requested in stock at Boyden & Perron for a good price (Listed at \$1,930; price for a municipality: \$1,543.99.) This is the newest model, lighter weight and designed to be less noisy. It would be a good addition.

WT has asked the Town Administrator for the Commission's current financial status; he suggests taking some or all of the cost from the expendable part of the trust, with what remains to be charged to the Commission's expense account.

A motion was made to purchase a Billy Goat F1002SPV leaf blower for \$1,543.99, with \$1,000 from the expendable trust fund and the balance from our expense account. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. WT will contact Boyden & Perron and ask them to hold it for the Commission and start the paperwork.
4. New email account and website information:

Some recent changes have been made in Cemetery regulations which need to be added to the website. SM will review the recent minutes to collect them. DS still wants to meet with Gail F about the website.
5. New burials and lot sales:
 - a. Two lot sales are in process.

Valerie Phillips has set a date to meet with WT to complete the transaction.

WT will be getting back to Suzann Heron who is purchasing one or more lots in the green/natural section.
6. Opening and closing green burials.
 - a. So far, Grass Roots of Leverett has dug the graves in the natural section, left the dirt in a pile for mourners to fill in the grave, and returned later to finish up. Funeral

directors are in charge of the burial itself (lowering into the grave) in conventional burials. When families are in charge of the process, what equipment should be provided for their use? The Commission began to consider what will be needed.

- b. Planks are needed to prevent the dirt at the edge of the opened grave falling in.
- c. Hemp or jute strips 3-4 inches wide are sufficient as a means to help lower the body into the grave. These can be left in a grave to decompose.
- d. Storage space to keep the equipment other than the Hearse House: perhaps a shed at the back (south end) of the cemetery, easy for police to see and convenient for the groundskeepers.

7. Future business:

- a. Planting in the natural section: what questions need to be considered?
 1. Will we allow both native and nonnative species to be planted?
 2. The soil there is very sandy: should we provide new top soil throughout the area?
 3. To avoid the need to mow there, should we plant a perennial ground cover/ Creeping thyme is one possibility.
 - b. Delineation of access paths and lot boundaries
 1. Should small natural stones be allowed to mark the corners of lots?
 - c. What kind(s) of gravestones will be allowed? Only flat, flush with the ground? A limited height, like 2 inches? Soil conditions need to be considered.
 - d. Also not yet settled: whether we should allow vaults in the conventional sections.
 - e. Needed: WT's list of the steps to selling a lot, which can be used by any of the Commission members when necessary.
 - f. Needed: a good place for central storage of maps, etc. Can we get a file cabinet for storage in Town Hall?
 - g. Needed: a winter meeting in Town Hall to examine the contents of the existing file drawer.
 - h. Need to begin work on an application to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for a grant for another period of work of repair of historic gravestones. The FY2023 Determination of Eligibility form and Application for Funding form become available . October 21. WT will talk with the chair of CPC, answering his questions. SM has volunteered to draft a determination of eligibility form with help from WT.
8. Date for next meeting: Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at 6 p.m. Note the unusual Tuesday meeting.
9. Adjournment at 7:30: A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously carried by roll call vote.

Submitted by *Susan Millinger*
Cemetery Commission secretary

