

Tasks: All; WT, DS

Minutes of 7/26/2023 Cemetery Commission draft

6:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting with Zoom

(Under Emergency Order for Pandemic)

Approved at the Meeting of 7.26.23

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

1) Minutes of the June 28, 2023 meeting were amended, in particular with addition of new information about the contact from the Pelham Cemetery Commission. *Motion to approve these minutes as amended was seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.*

2) New burials and lot sales: It has been an active month.

- a. In the past month two new headstones were installed, there was one cremation burial and one traditional burial. Dorsey set the stone on the cremation burial; Taylor set a stone on a nearby lot.
- b. Dorsey Memorial was called about adding a date to an existing headstone.
- c. The family looking for a grave in the Locks Pond Road Cemetery is considering a different lot. And there has been a new inquiry about a lot in the Locks Pond Road Cemetery.
- d. A surprisingly development: a vault was requested for a cremation burial. WT had a lot of extra digging to do as a result. The vault was set by Wilbert Vaults, which sets most vaults in Shutesbury cemeteries.

3. Update on expenses at the end of June 2023 (FY23)

\$4,438 allotted for wages of which \$1,353.09 (30%) was used, leaving \$3,084.91 (30%)

\$1,631 was allotted for other expenses; \$1,077.55 (66%) has been used, leaving \$553.45.

The expendable trust contained \$11,855.59 at the beginning of FY23; it ended with \$10,855.39, having spent \$1,000 on the leaf-blower, according to WT's recollection.

4. Need to hire new Groundskeepers: WT has not been able to ask Linus Mearian, the third Groundskeeper, if he is willing to replace Suzan and Mike beyond the time he spends on the two smaller Town cemeteries, but WT will find out. WT wants to check with Linus before talking to the Town Administrator about the next steps if Linus is not interested. Suzan and Mike are willing to stay until the end of the season.

- a. Groundskeeper work: Despite the hard work of the current groundskeepers, bush keeps encroaching, WT trimmed the righthand side of the driveway at West Cemetery, taking eight pickup loads up to the pile in back, and even that was not quite all the encroaching bush.
- b. WT has also been servicing and doing necessary repairs of the mowers and brush cutters.
- c. In short, WT has been acting as another groundskeeper, and the Commission needs to be able to pay him for this work. Because of GC 268a section 21a, a vote at Town Meeting will be necessary to let him, as a member of the Commission, also be paid for working for it. The Commission will need to prepare a warrant article for the annual Town Meeting. WT will contact the Town Administrator to see what the proper procedure is. The August Agenda should include the need to make a motion to initiate this.

5. New BOH regulations: WT will write a note to the BOH, and run it by the other Commission members, requesting a friendly clarification of the BOH's new regulations about green burials.

6. Other unfinished business:

a. The website: SM needs to prepare a list of additions to the Cemetery website passed in the meetings of FY23 so that the website can be brought up to date.

b. Motion to accept the minutes of April 20, 2023 as amended was made, seconded and passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

c. The contract for the CPC grant: WT has signed the contract; the question is where to send it? WT decided to put the original in the Select Board mailbox, and send an email to the Select Board ccing the chair of the CPC. When the Select Board has also signed the contract, we can schedule Tamara Conde for the gravestone restoration work.

d. Update on ground-penetrating radar: DS has emailed a company which does this work; she hopes to have information including prices at the August meeting. WT emphasizes that his priority is the plots marked unknown on the maps; the general consensus is that the ultimate goal is to have all three town cemeteries surveyed by such technology.

7. Date and time for the Next Meeting: July 26 at 6 p.m.

8. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously approved in a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by
Susan Millinger,
Cemetery Commission secretary

New Business:

9) DS asks: Could there be green burials in the Locks Pond and other Town cemeteries? The Board of Health is working on new regulations about the siting of green/natural burials in connection with the cemetery of the Jewish Community of Amherst; these when finished may well affect Town cemeteries. At present, green/natural burials can only take place in the green/natural section of West Cemetery.

10) Maintenance of equipment:

a) The groundskeepers have requested orange cones which they can employ when working near Leverett Road. They have borrowed 5 from the DPW; WT will buy more. WT has also ordered oil? For the small mowers. He commented that

experience has shown it is easier to buy online than use local firms.

b) Since it is also increasingly difficult to get local firms to adequately maintain Commission equipment. WT proposes that the Commission consider a warrant to pay WT for equipment maintenance.

7) Date for next meeting: Wednesday, June 21, 2023, at 6 p.m.

8) Adjournment at 6:38. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously carried by a roll call vote.

Submitted by *Susan Millinger*
Cemetery Commission secretary

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