

Minutes of 8/28/2024 Cemetery Commission
6 P.M.
Approved at the Meeting of September 18, 2024

Members present: Walter Tibbetts (WT), Dina Stander (DS) and Susan Millinger (SM).

The Meeting was called to order at 6:12 p.m.

- 1) Minutes of the July 17, 2024 meeting: Motion to approve these minutes as amended was made, seconded and unanimously passed by a roll call vote.

- 2) New burials and lot sales:
 - a. The check was received from Ayers Hall for the Gurman burial.
 - b. WT is meeting with the Curtis Brown family who bought a one-plot lot 3 or 4 years ago and now want to set a stone flush with the ground. WT has to check that the stone is to be set in the correct place.
 - c. Ed Smith, a contact of DS's, but not a resident, is interested in a green burial plot. The Commission approved his request because of his Shutesbury connections. He will meet with WT to choose a plot.

- 3) Groundskeeper Update: Carl Louder continues to do an excellent job. He and WT walked West Cemetery together so Carl could see what needs to be cut, trimmed, selectively cut, etc. Carl wants to clear the small stuff out of the wall that runs south from the Hearse House, which is needed. He and WT discussed a tree in bad shape which needs to be dealt with. It's too big a job for Carl, so Steve Sullivan, the tree warden, will be contacted. WT is pleased that Carl is good at communicating with him.

- 4) Update on ground penetrating radar and mapping project: Bob Perry referred to us another firm to do the West Cemetery work. The proposal we got from Thomas Cunningham suggested that he didn't fully understand our situation; he thought we wanted the whole cemetery surveyed with ground-penetrating radar, and his map was incorrect. WT will send him the correct information, the maps we have, and some necessary historical background. Cunningham's firm, C&M Subsurface, does scanning, but his experience with cemetery mapping is limited. He plans to subcontract that part of the work. Bob Perry sent information on another person he has worked with, who may be the intended subcontractor. The Commission needs more information.

- 5) Gravestone Restoration Project: No update.

6) Update on Meeting with the Pelham Cemetery Commissioners: SM met the Commissioners at West, showed them our green burial section, and answered what questions she could. They were invited to our August meeting if they had other questions. WT got in touch with the Pelham Commissioners, who told him they would contact him if needed.

7) Discussion of a Cremation Burial Worksheet and Price List: This worksheet could also be given to funeral directors. WT will draw up a draft for the next meeting and talk to the accountant about the pricing.

There is no general consensus about the price of opening a grave among cemetery managers or commissions; cemeteries set their own prices. Clark charges somewhere in the vicinity to \$800 to \$1,000 to open a full grave.

The Shutesbury Commissioners agree a small fee is appropriate for a cremation burial but if possible, it should be per hour not event, given WT's recent experience. WT will consult the accountant about legalities.

8) Other Unfinished Business: none

9) New Business: DS will deal with the survey received from a student from the University of Bangor in Wales about cemetery customs in the U.S.

10) Items not anticipated 48 hours before the meeting: None

11) Date and time for the Next Meeting: September 18 at 6 p.m.

12) Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously approved in a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Submitted by
Susan Millinger,
Cemetery Commission secretary