

**Town of Concord
Cemetery Committee Meeting
March 16, 2017
135 Keyes Road**

Members Present: Mr. Paul Cooke - Chairperson
Ms. Carol Harney
Ms. Whitney Kocher
Ms. Andrea Solomon
Ms. Gina Nasson

Also Present: Mr. Daniel Rowley – Highway & Grounds Superintendent
Ms. Patricia Hopkins – Cemetery Supervisor
Ms. Mallory Price – Administrative Assistant
Mr. Jeff Adams

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- A-1 No deeds were submitted for signature.
- A-2 The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.
- A-3 Review of Agenda (Additions can only be made if not anticipated by the chair at least 48 hours in advance and the item cannot wait until a future meeting)
- A-4 The minutes of the December 7, 2016, meeting were approved and accepted, all were in favor.
- A-5 The next proposed committee meeting is April 5, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

D-1: CHAIR COMMENTS

None.

D-2: STAFF REPORT - ROAD, STONEWALL, AND DRAINAGE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE, DEBT AUTHORIZATION REQUEST UPDATE, TREE INVENTORY AND MANAGEMENT PLAN PROJECT UPDATE, MOWING AND SPRING/FALL CLEANUP BID, SPRING CLEANUP, SURVEYORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY UPDATE

Mr. Daniel Rowley reported that the road, stonewall, and drainage system improvement project will continue after Memorial Day. There were some issues with the binder course of asphalt used for

paving the roads, and that needs to be fixed first. This phase of the road project is expected to be complete before the end of the summer. The Engineering Division has contacted with a firm to complete instrument survey work for Phase 2, which will be funded by the Cemetery Fund. The survey work will begin in April or May, weather permitting.

The Debt Authorization request for Phase 2 was presented by Mr. Rowley at the Finance Committee Public Hearing on February 27, 2017, and the next step is to present at Town Meeting.

The Tree Inventory and Management Plan Project was presented to the public at the Public Works Commission meeting on March 8, 2017. The project will begin after leaf-out, which is expected to be in mid-to-late April. It is expected to take six to eight weeks for data collection and an additional month to complete data compilation. The project should be completed by the end of July. It will assess public shade trees, set back trees, trees in the three cemeteries, and trees in a number of town parcels. The total number of trees inventoried could be as high as 20,000 trees.

The Cemetery mowing and spring/fall cleanup contract will expire at the end of July 2017, and we will advertise for bids in the next month or so. It is a three year contract which is renewable each year for the three year period. Mr. Cooke asked if the Town has to take the lowest bidder, which Mr. Rowley confirmed we do as long as all the criteria are met. Ms. Patricia Hopkins said her plans to start the spring cleanup were put on hold with the recent snow storm. She has cleaned up all the plow damage and loam has been ordered which will be delivered when the snow has melted.

Ms. Hopkins shared a picture of where the Surveyors Historical Society will place the GPS disk behind Thoreau's headstone. The Cemetery Committee will have a chance to see the design and check the wording before the disk is forged.

D-3: CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' TERM EXPIRATION DATES

Mr. Paul Cooke stated that the terms of three Cemetery Committee members expire on the same date. Ms. Andrea Solomon, Ms. Gina Nason, and Mr. Cooke are the three members. All three want to renew their terms, but one is allowed to do a one year term first and then renew for three years. This option will prevent all three terms from expiring at the same time. Mr. Cooke offered to do the one year term, but said if Ms. Nason or Ms. Solomon wanted to do it they could think about it and we could discuss it at the next meeting.

D-4: MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Rowley presented a 2001 Cemetery master plan as well as the most recent update to the plan, which was in 2004. While nothing specific was mentioned about mausoleums, Mr. Rowley showed a design for a cremation garden intended to be constructed in the bowl area near the Melvin Memorial. This design did not allow for drainage reconfiguration, which is an issue in the area. It appears that nothing further was done past this design which was completed in 2004. Mr. Jeffrey Adams asked whether there would be a new master plan for 2017. Mr. Cooke stated that he thought we should have a master plan before the Cemetery Committee votes on Mr. Farb's request for a mausoleum. Mr. Cooke said we do not know at this point when we will be able to do that, but he told Mr. Adams the Cemetery Committee has not forgotten about Mr. Farb's request and we have given it very serious consideration. Mr. Cooke added that now that we have found an old master plan, it is a good starting point. Mr. Rowley said each committee member will be mailed a copy of

the 2001 master plan and the 2004 update to the plan. Members agreed that they will review the master plan and will discuss it at the next meeting.

D-5: PET BURIAL INQUIRY

A resident has asked if her two cremated horses can be buried with her. Ms. Hopkins told her that our regulations only allow for the burial of human remains, but that she would present this request to the Cemetery Committee. There are no laws in Massachusetts for or against pet burial in human cemeteries, but because our regulations specify "human remains", our Committee will not be changing its policy. Mr. Rowley said some states have passed laws allowing it, but that has not happened in Massachusetts. Ms. Solomon commented that the impact of allowing this type of burial could seriously affect our cemeteries with the sheer numbers of Concord residents who have pets. Ms. Hopkins suggested to the inquiring resident that she investigate a cemetery in Littleton that does allow for this kind of burial.

D-6: PLANTING PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Friends of Sleepy Hollow planting project may need to be delayed until the fall of 2017, due to the current snow and other work planned for the spring. Ms. Carol Harney agreed to let the Friends of Sleepy Hollow know the revised schedule.

D-7: HEADSTONE REPAIR AND RESTORATION PROJECT

Mr. Cooke commented about the many headstones near the Assessor's office that are in disrepair and the need to look at maintenance of these and other headstones. Ms. Hopkins said heirs are responsible for maintenance, but for some of these no heirs will be found. In the past the local team of Fannin-Lehrer had been hired each year to complete \$10,000 of maintenance and repair to headstones. This has not happened the last two years and the Cemetery Committee discussed the need for a plan before proceeding. Mr. Rowley and Ms. Hopkins will assess the condition of the headstones in the Old Hill Burial Ground and determine what work is needed. Once the assessment is completed and a plan is created, research will be conducted on the needed work and specifications written so bids can be obtained. The issue of ongoing maintenance was discussed and how that would be funded. Mr. Cooke stressed that Sleepy Hollow is a historically significant cemetery and we need to do what we can to keep it in good repair. He asked if a survey of all the headstones needing repair in Old Hill Burial Ground and Sleepy Hollow Cemetery could be done in the spring and Ms. Hopkins said it could, then we could get bids for the work in the summer. Ms. Harney added that this project could be of interest to the Friends of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.

D-8: MELVIN MEMORIAL RESTORATION PROJECT

Mr. Rowley said the technical specifications for the restoration of the Melvin Memorial are ready to be advertised. He added that due to the ongoing road work in the Cemetery, we might need to wait until the spring of 2018 to begin the restoration project. Mr. Cooke hoped the work could go on simultaneously, but Mr. Rowley is concerned about the work area needed for both projects and the

limited space in this section of the cemetery. Mr. Rowley said the Melvin Memorial must be free of snow to get bids, and we could advertise in the fall of 2017 with the work expected to take place in 2018.

D-9: FRIENDS OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

Ms. Harney will remind the Friends of Sleepy Hollow about the tree labeling project they had expressed interest in. She will also alert them that the planting project will take place in the fall of 2017, and the possibility of being involved with the headstone repair project.

D-10: PHOTO REQUEST – SARAH WALDO HEADSTONE AND LOT

Author, Amrita M. Salm, PhD., wants to use four photographs of the Waldo family lot and stones in a book she is writing about Sarah Waldo and she seeks permission from the Cemetery Committee to do so. Ms. Hopkins showed the Cemetery Committee four pictures she had taken, which would be used in the book. The Cemetery Committee has the authority to grant this request for commercial use. Mr. Cooke wanted to be sure that credit for the photographs would be listed in the book. Ms. Solomon moved to approve this request, Mr. Cooke seconded, and all were in favor.

D-11: COMMITTEE COMMENTS

None.

D-12: PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mallory Price, Administrative Assistant
Highway and Grounds Division

Approved,



Paul Cooke, Chairperson
Cemetery Committee