

**Town of Concord
Cemetery Committee Meeting
February 1, 2023
In Person and Via Zoom**

Members Present: Mr. Brian Davidson
Mr. Rod Riedel (remote)
Mr. Geoffrey Walton (remote)
Mr. Jerry Soucy (remote)

Also Present: Mr. Aaron Miklosko – Highway and Grounds Superintendent
Ms. Patricia Hopkins – Cemetery Supervisor
Ms. Justine St. John – Administrative Assistant for Highway & Grounds
Ms. Andrea Solomon-Liaison from Friends of Sleepy Hollow
Mr. Alexander Hoar-Amherst MA
Ms. Pam Rooney-Amherst MA (remote)

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- A-1** The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm
- A-2** It was announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.
- A-3** 5 deeds submitted for signing.
- A-4** Next Meeting will be March 1, 2023 at 4:00PM
- A-5** Meeting Minutes for November 2, 2022 and December 7, 2022 were presented for acceptance. Rod Riedel made a motion to accept both sets of minutes as presented and Geoffrey Walton seconded the motion. It was voted as follows (4-0):

Rod Riedel – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Geoffrey Walton-Aye
Jerry Soucy-Aye

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

D-1: CPW STAFF REPORT-OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE UPDATE:

Mr. Miklosko advised that in the month of January, five full interments and two cremation interments occurred. Ten single grave lots and two cremation lots were sold. He provided an update regarding the columbarium project. An RFP was produced, and vendors were solicited. The Town received one quote back from Hardy-Doric. The process will be moving forward to open a purchase order for the contractor to engage with staff and committee members on design services for a columbarium for Sleepy Hollow. Mr. Miklosko provided an update regarding the progress towards a potential mausoleum sale. CPW staff have received the final engineering plans from the applicant, and they are being reviewed internally by CPW Engineering Division and a structural engineering consulting firm.

Mr. Miklosko advised the general operating budget for FY24 was submitted in the late summer/early fall and has gone through the review process. A Cemetery Specialist position was added. He stated the Town is going to adjust the funding source for the Cemetery budget. Previously there was a 70/30 split, 70% coming from the Cemetery fund. He believes the Town is shifting it so a larger percentage will be paid by the Cemetery fund.

Ms. Hopkins has been working in the cemeteries plowing, cleaning up downed branches, and general cleanup. Tree work was also completed last month, including trimming and removals.

D-2: LOT REPURCHASE-BERGSTROM FAMILY:

Ms. Hopkins spoke to this request. It is a two-grave lot at 14 Hawthorne Avenue and the family has requested to sell one grave back. Mr. Walton asked how the price is determined for re-purchasing. Ms. Hopkins advised the Town purchases graves back at ½ their current rate. The current rate for this lot is \$2,200, so it will be repurchased for \$1,100.

Jerry Soucy made a motion to approve the repurchase of the lot. Geoffrey Walton seconded, and it was voted as follows (4-0):

Rod Riedel – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Geoffrey Walton-Aye
Jerry Soucy-Aye

D-3: MERIAM FAMILY REQUEST-GRAVESTONE GIRLS:

Ms. Hopkins spoke to this request. Members of the Meriam Family are requesting permission for the Gravestone Girls to complete a cast of Joseph Meriam’s stone. It is the oldest stone in Concord. Ms. Hopkins is familiar with this contractor and has observed their processes during previous requests. Past committees have approved similar work over the years. Mr. Miklosko added that the Town will require the contractor provide a certificate of insurance before beginning the project. Mr. Soucy expressed concern about the public sale of such items in the future, leveraging it into a money-making venture. He is satisfied that it is a family member requesting it.

Jerry Soucy made the motion to accept the Meriam Family request to allow the Gravestone Girls to make a cast of Joseph Meriam’s headstone, with the caveat that the Gravestone Girls produce proof of liability insurance. Rod Riedel seconded, and it was voted as follows (4-0):

Rod Riedel – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Geoffrey Walton-Aye
Jerry Soucy-Aye

D-4: HOAR LOT REQUEST:

Mr. Alexander Hoar presented his request for permission to install fencing on the Hoar lot in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery that was removed sometime after 1906. He researched options to have a replica of the fence created, but it seemed to be cost prohibitive. He located a company that had fencing that he felt would be appropriate, and he would like permission to have it installed by a contractor. He provided committee members with his proposed design. Mr. Miklosko advised there are only two other lots in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery that have existing fences that were in existence prior to

current Rules and Regulations. There is not a fence on the Hoar lot currently, however there is a photo from 1906 that shows the fencing did exist. Mr. Miklosko wanted to remind committee members that according to current Rules and Regulations, a fence would not be allowed, which is why this request is before the committee. Mr. Davidson added that this regulation is in Section 5. He also advised that the contractor would need to work closely with CPW and provide a certificate of liability insurance.

Geoffrey Walton made a motion to accept Mr. Hoar's request to replace the fence at the Hoar lot with the caveats that the fence be what was demonstrated today or more in line with original photo of his submission and the work is done in conjunction and approval with the Town of Concord Public Works Department and Cemetery Division. Jerry Soucy seconded, and it was voted as follows (4-0):

Rod Riedel – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Geoffrey Walton-Aye
Jerry Soucy-Aye

D-5: DISCUSSION-37 LEXINGTON ROAD:

Mr. Davidson spoke to the subject. He is aware that there is construction anticipated at 37 Lexington Road and Old Hill Burying Ground is an abutter. He urged committee members to review the plans and raise any concerns. He advised he had no concerns at the moment. Mr. Riedel reviewed the plans, and his one concern was that there could be an impact on the timing for stone wall repairs along 29-37 Lexington Road. He anticipates CPW will manage the stone wall repair project and will address any issues of timing. Mr. Riedel also advised that the CPC grant proposal for stone wall repair and rehabilitation in the cemeteries will be included in the Town Warrant with proposed funding of \$340,000. Mr. Miklosko advised that CPW Engineering Division members have attended a meeting with department members to review this project from a planning and zoning standpoint. He will speak to them and relay Mr. Riedel's comments and concerns. No additional comments or concerns raised.

D-6: CHAIR COMMENTS:

Mr. Davidson spoke about observing a Historical Commission meeting where there was general discussion surrounding the need to recognize the first people of Concord. The Cemetery was mentioned as having historical significance regarding indigenous peoples and it was suggested that it should be acknowledged in some way. Mr. Davidson advised the Cemetery Committee that when the Knoll was created, a stone and marker were placed and two areas were reserved in honor of the First Peoples in Concord, so this has already been done. Mr. Davidson also acknowledged the planning for the 250th Anniversary of the battles of Concord and Lexington. He was wondering what the impacts could be for the Cemetery or if there is anything that should be considered. Mr. Miklosko advised he has spoken to this 250th Committee and he is the point person for CPW for planning. Mr. Davidson asked if there was a way Cemetery could or should participate as there is a lot of history in the cemeteries, including Revolutionary War soldier graves. Ms. Hopkins advised the History and Education Sub-Committee is working on this and she has provided them with all the information requested at the moment.

D-7: COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

Mr. Soucy wanted to thank CPW staff for moving the columbarium project forward.

Mr. Riedel spoke about trying to tie in the initiative to plant 250 trees to locations in the Cemetery that could take advantage of this. Mr. Riedel spoke about the CPC grant, and proposed the Committee not move forward with another grant request for the next cycle, until some of the stone wall work has been completed. He inquired whether there is money in the budget for an evaluation for the metal structures in the cemeteries. He advised the results could be helpful toward another grant.

D-8: PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Solomon advised she did not have an update from the Friends of Sleepy Hollow, but they will be meeting in the next two weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

Geoffrey Walton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:01PM. Jerry Soucy seconded the motion and it was voted as follows (4-0):

Rod Riedel – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Geoffrey Walton-Aye
Jerry Soucy-Aye

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved,

Justine St. John
Administrative Assistant, Highway & Grounds Division

Brian Davidson, Chairperson
Cemetery Committee