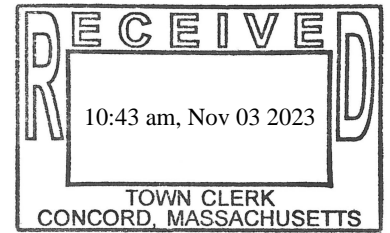


**Town of Concord
Cemetery Committee Meeting
September 6, 2023
In Person and Via Zoom**



Members Present: Mr. Brian Davidson
Mr. Rod Riedel
Mr. Geoffrey Walton
Mr. Jerry Soucy
Ms. Priscilla White-Sturges

Also Present: Mr. Aaron Miklosko – Highway and Grounds Superintendent
Ms. Patricia Hopkins – Cemetery Supervisor
Ms. Justine St. John – Program Analyst for Highway & Grounds
Ms. Kelly Mikkonen – Administrative Specialist for Highway & Grounds
Ms. Andrea Solomon-Liaison from Friends of Sleepy Hollow
James Bing
Evan Sawyer

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- A-1** The meeting was called to order at 4:00PM
- A-2** It was announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.
- A-3** 16 deeds signed.
- A-4** Next Meeting will be October 4th, 2023 at 4:00PM
- A-5** Meeting Minutes for May 3rd were presented for acceptance. Geoff Walton made a motion to accept the set of minutes as presented and Brian Davidson seconded the motion. It was voted as follows (5-0):

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

Meeting Minutes for June 7th were presented for acceptance. Geoff Walton made a motion to accept the set of minutes as presented and Brian Davidson seconded the motion. It was voted as follows (5-0):

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

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

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

Mr. Miklosko advised it has been a very busy summer. There is a preliminary date of September 18th to have the foundation for the mausoleum dug and poured. Town staff and the engineering contractor will be monitoring that progress, and then the timeline for installation will be in the spring. He reported that nine full burials and fifty-five cremation interments took place and nineteen single grave lots and three cremation lots were sold during the months of June, July and August.

He advised that Town Staff has identified some areas in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery that could take advantage of the Fall Tree Planting Program and they will be evaluating that further. Over the summer, Town staff also engaged with a landscape architect to develop a plan for landscape restoration near the Melvin lot. Mr. Miklosko plans on sharing that with the group after it has been reviewed by staff. Staff will also be working with Wright-Pierce to move forward with stone wall construction details to get that project out to bid. The landscape contract is coming to an end with Einsteins, and staff will be going out to bid for new contract at the end of the season. The headstone restoration project is continuing. Weather conditions and scheduling conflicts delayed the progress over the summer but she will continue into the fall and hopes to complete most of the work. Town staff has been working with the Engineering Division to design some drainage from the Pines to Chestnut Hollow. Tree maintenance and tree pruning has been on-going in the cemeteries.

Additionally, this summer, a CPA grant was reviewed by staff for a metal structures assessment. Mr. Miklosko has been working with Mr. Riedel on this project. Mr. Walton inquired about perpetual care funding for Cemetery, and what kind of funding might be available for projects like these from accounts the Town already has. Mr. Miklosko advised that for this year, 100% of the FY24 budget is coming from Cemetery Fund and gave a brief overview of funding mechanisms for Cemetery Operations and Capital projects. Town staff is aware that there has to be enough funding to make sure the cemeteries are able to continue to be self-funded in perpetuity. Mr. Walton would like to have a better understanding of the needs/demands for the future regarding the Cemetery budget.

D-2: MONUMENT REQUEST-SAWYER BING FAMILY:

Ms. Hopkins spoke to this request. Mr. Bing submitted the application of a man lying with a Stegosaurus as the artwork for the headstone. The dimensions proposed are within the requirements of a flat stone and does not need additional permission. This is permission for the artwork. Mr. Bing explained that the Stegosaurus were a favorite of his wife and he wanted to capture that on this stone.

Brian Davidson made a motion to approve the purchase request of the Bing family. Geoffrey Walton seconded, and it was voted as follows (5-0):

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

D-3: LOT TRANSFER REQUEST-LEAHY FAMILY:

Ms. Hopkins spoke to this request. Years ago, only residents could purchase a lot in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. If someone lived in town and then moved away, they would ask a friend to purchase a lot for them, but it would still be in the Concord resident's name. There are still several lots owned by friends of families. Several years ago, a vote at Town Meeting changed the requirement and allowed former residents to purchase lots. Ms. Hopkins explained that a past project had been to try to contact the residents who did complete these transactions to make sure the name of the person who was intended to own the lot was on the lot card. This was an intensive project administratively and it was not completed. The lot before the Committee is one of those lots that was never transferred back to the intended owner. Kathleen Friend had a son who had passed away in 1999, and she no longer lived in Concord so she could not purchase a lot, so Ms. Leahy did. The owners of the lot want to change ownership to Ms. Friend who does currently meet the standard of former residents as owners.

Brian Davidson made a motion to approve the updated design as presented. Mr. Walton seconded the motion. It was voted as follows (5-0):

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

D-4: DISCUSSION-CEMETERY MASTER PLAN

Mr. Riedel spoke of the Master Plan that was revised and approved in 2018. He is proposing that the committee review and update it this year. He requests members review the Master plan and identify three sections they would be interested in reviewing to update. He suggested Town staff review Appendix E to see what has been completed, what is no longer relevant and what might still need to be completed. Mr. Miklosko had prepared some current staff priorities such as staff hiring, landscape restoration at the Melvin lot, the stone wall restoration project, bidding out landscaping contract, the columbarium concept plan, the on-going headstone restoration program, and a drainage project from the Pines to Chestnut Hollow. He also had additional priorities including the mausoleum project, consulting with a contractor to lay out lots in the new section of the Knoll, along with the daily operations of running the cemeteries. Mr. Riedel's goal for the Master Plan is to review it a few times a year to see what goals are being accomplished and to help inform additional goals. He would like perspectives from two committee members on each section. Mr. Walton asked about creating a dashboard or getting an update on the number of plots currently available. He also asked whether a survey has been conducted on different options in Sleepy Hollow. Ms. Hopkins advised there was one completed in 2018, which was also distributed at Town Meeting in 2019. Mr. Riedel suggested they could consider distributing a questionnaire for public comments after the Master Plan is drafted to make sure they are as open and transparent as possible.

D-5: CHAIR COMMENTS:

Mr. Riedel advised he attended the George Dugan ceremony this summer and it was very well done. He expressed concern that the Concord Museum had circulated a program for "Women of Sleepy Hollow" walking tour and felt they should have to check with Cemetery staff prior to advertising

something like that. Ms. Hopkins advised there are tours there all of the time and if they start to head in a direction where there are funeral services, she turns them around. There is always operations staff watching from a distance that can move or redirect people that may unintentionally interrupt a funeral. Mr. Miklosko explained that it could be difficult to define what qualifies as a tour and that would be a challenge to regulate. Staff reassured Mr. Riedel that the areas are monitored, and visitors are directed away from any areas where they might be intruding on a service.

D-6: COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

Mr. Walton inquired about the filming permit that was issued in June and how it went. Ms. Hopkins advised all went well. She stated the crews took extra caution in the area and used tennis balls on bases of equipment to not cause any damage.

Mr. Davidson asked about the bench installation for the Gold Star Families by the Friends of Sleepy Hollow. Ms. Hopkins advised it will be September 20th from 1:30pm-3:00pm.

D-7: DISCUSSION-PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Brian Davidson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:56PM. Geoff Walton seconded the motion and it was voted as follows (5-0):

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved,

Justine St. John
Program Analyst, Highway & Grounds Division

Rod Riedel, Chair
Cemetery Committee