

**Town of Concord
Cemetery Committee Meeting
November 6, 2019
135 Keyes Road**

Members Present: Mr. Paul Cooke – Chair
Ms. Andrea Solomon – Vice Chair
Mr. Leo Carroll
Mr. Brian Davidson
Mr. Jerry Soucy

Also Present: Mr. Aaron Miklosko -- Highway & Grounds Superintendent
Ms. Patricia Hopkins – Cemetery Supervisor
Ms. Mallory Price – Administrative Assistant
Ms. Susan Bates – Select Board liaison
Members of the public: Patty Bareford, Paul Bareford, Peter Myette,
Elizabeth Parker, Rosemary Jeans, Lydia Lodynsky, Larry Blundell

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- A-1 Six deeds were submitted for signature.
- A-2 The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm
- A-3 It was announced that the meeting was being audio recorded
- A-4 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-5 The minutes of the October 2, 2019 were approved
- A-6 The next proposed Cemetery Committee meeting is Wednesday, December 4, 2019, 7pm

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

D-1: CHAIR COMMENTS

Mr. Paul Cooke praised the erosion control measures on Hillside Avenue. He also shared a thank-you letter and three gift booklets from the Friends of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.

D-2: STAFF REPORT

Mr. Aaron Miklosko reviewed with the new Town engineer, Mr. Steve Dookran, the potential mausoleum area on Maple Avenue, the Chestnut Hollow turnaround, and various drainage areas. Regarding the mausoleum area, the best option moving forward is to have engineering provide specifications in the next few months. Mr. Cooke stressed how the Cemetery Committee would like to be able to sell mausoleum sites next spring. For the Chestnut Hollow area, Mr. Miklosko suggests moveable bollards that will allow Ms. Tish Hopkins to plow if needed, but will keep people from driving on the grass and graves; engineering will likely assist with a more permanent alteration in

the future. Mr. Davidson asked Mr. Miklosko to bring samples of bollards for the Cemetery Committee to review.

Mr. Miklosko met with Ms. Anna Trout of Concord Public Works, who summarized the status of the record scanning project. Some discrepancies were found between the Town Clerks office records and the cemetery records, which need to be resolved. Mr. Leo Carroll asked how we move this forward – Mr. Miklosko said we need to find an outside source to scan and make these records available in online databases. Mr. Miklosko stressed that a professional company would need to be hired, which requires funding. Mr. Brian Davidson suggested this issue be tabled until we reach item D-8 on the agenda, which addresses priorities. Ms. Hopkins said the flag retirement ceremony will take place on Veterans Day beginning with an 8am parade starting at the Prichard Gate.

Mr. Cooke brought up the minutes from October 2, 2019, and questioned whether we voted on raising the stone cleaning budget to \$12k for fiscal year 2021. Mr. Miklosko confirmed it was discussed, but the budget had already been submitted for \$10K prior to October 2, 2019. Mr. Cooke motioned to budget \$14K for FY2022, Ms. Andrea Solomon seconded, all approved. Ms. Solomon moved to accept the minutes, Mr. Jerry Soucy seconded, all approved.

D-3: REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL BURIAL IN CREMATION LOT – DERBY

Ms. Hopkins says this cremation lot in Chestnut Hollow allows three interments of cremated remains. Currently it contains two cremations plus a third interment of a keepsake box. The family asks that they be allowed to add a fourth interment, the son of the two people interred there. Mr. Davidson said this request fits the spirit of the rule allowing additional interments, and he motioned to allow this request, Ms. Solomon seconded, all approved.

D-4: REQUEST TO CLEAN HEADSTONE IN MAIN STREET BURIAL GROUND - BROWN

The family requests they be allowed to hire a professional to clean the headstone of Boaz Brown. Ms. Hopkins has spoken to the cleaner, and he will follow any guidelines she sets forth. The family offered to clean five additional stones as a favor, but Ms. Hopkins recommends cleaning only this one. Mr. Miklosko asked Ms. Hopkins to request a scope of work proposal and proof of adequate insurance from the contractor, as they will be doing work on Town property. Mr. Davidson motioned to allow the cleaning as long as all Town requirements are met, Mr. Cooke seconded, all approved.

D-5: REFORMATORY BRANCH TRAIL PRESENTATION – PAUL BAREFORD

Mr. Bareford presented his Power Point slideshow of the trail area in question, which is near his home, but in the cemetery. His request is that this trail not be widened to allow for bicycles, which are eroding the landscape. He suggested that the Trails Committee and the Cemetery Committee discuss whether bicycles should be allowed on these trails, but expressed his opinion that they should not. Mr. Miklosko reminded the Cemetery Committee that this issue originated because logs and a note were placed to block an area on Town property without permission. Mr. Cooke assured Mr. Bareford that his point has been heard by the Committee and they will decide how to move forward. Mr. Cooke said that any trail changes need to happen via committee discussions, not by private citizens. Mr. Cooke said we will discuss this again at the December 4, 2019, meeting, and if Mr. Bill Robichaud would like to attend he will have the same opportunity to present.

D-6: FALL CLEAN-UP RESIDENT COMPLAINT

Ms. Lydia Lodynsky has lived across from the cemetery for 11 years and asks the Cemetery Committee to consider other options for the seasonal clean-ups, as she is concerned about leaf-blower noise, pollution, and particulate matter. Mr. Carroll asked Mr. Miklosko if the clean-up is done by a contractor due to expense, and that was affirmed. Ms. Solomon said that this expedient

method makes the clean-up process quick, which is necessary to do before snow falls, and Ms. Hopkins said the volume of leaves is an impediment to visitors. Mr. Davidson said alternative equipment is not yet powerful enough to clear a piece of land this size, but he understands the importance of being green. Mr. Miklosko said at the time of the recently proposed gas powered leaf blower ban, costs for an electric clean up were three times higher than the gas-powered clean up contract, which is close to \$100K. Mr. Miklosko said the Town has a sustainability department and a director and we work closely with her. Ms. Hopkins says the history of clean up in the cemetery during her 32 years here has always included leaf blowers, initially with Town staff and an MCI crew, then with a contractor. Mr. Miklosko stated that at some point staffing and budgets were reviewed and changed, and a contractor was hired. Mr. Miklosko reminded the Committee that the initial complaint had three components: the date we chose, use of motorized equipment, and leaf blower debris. Mr. Mikolsko asked how many other complaints have been received about this issue and there have been none. He added the Town has to weigh the number of complaints vs. the work with which we are tasked, and no drastic decisions can be made without exploring the options. Mr. Cooke hopes we can find a cleaner way of doing clean-ups and asked what can we do to address Ms. Lodynsky's immediate concern. Ms. Lodynsky said she realizes nothing will happen this year, but hopes the Cemetery Committee will consider more environmentally sound practices for maintenance. Mr. Cooke offered to contact the sustainability director to see what practices can be changed moving forward as we know these environmental changes are looming. For the upcoming Invitation for Bid for the next contract, Mr. Cooke would like us to include a section for a quote for non-gas powered equipment as well as the traditional equipment quote.

D-7: CEMETERY BUDGET REVIEW:

Mr. Cooke appreciates seeing the cemetery budget, as the Committee has not before reviewed it in his time here, and he would like the Committee to see it each year. Mr. Davidson asked for ratio clarification of the general fund/cemetery fund percentage: why does it state a 30/70 breakdown when it is supposed to be 35/65 – Mr. Miklosko will confirm with Finance what the actual funding plan is and the rationale for it. Mr. Cooke noticed the cemetery fund balance is going down each year, so he looks forward to Mr. Miklosko's findings. Mr. Carroll wondered if the large capital outlay of \$40K to fix the roads is what has changed the percentage? The cemetery fund is comprised of the interest from the perpetual care fund, which is about \$60k per year, and whatever money is brought in from sales and fees. Mr. Carroll asked whether the cemetery receives gifts, and Ms. Hopkins said any gifts are directed to the Friends of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery or to the Melvin Memorial.

D-8: MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

Each committee member listed their top three priorities from the Master Plan priority list:

Mr. Soucy: columbarium, mausoleum, green burial

Mr. Carroll: erosion control, stone walls, old stone restoration

Mr. Davidson: old stone restoration, Old Hill wall, columbarium

Ms. Solomon: columbarium, deed record maintenance, spoils storage

Mr. Cooke: mausoleum, erosion control and landscaping, old stone restoration

Mr. Miklosko said we will reach out to our bidders for re-quotes for headstone restoration for Spring 2020; we have \$10K available for this restoration, plus another \$30K for master plan improvements above routine maintenance. Mr. Davidson asked if we could get grants for this any of this work, and Mr. Cooke moved that Mr. Davison be designated to look into this, and Ms. Solomon seconded, all approved. Ms. Solomon thought Ms. Hopkins' spoils area need is something that should be relatively easy to solve, and Mr. Miklosko said they will look for an appropriate area. Regarding stone walls, Ms. Hopkins said she and former Superintendent Daniel Rowley measured

and assessed all the walls about three years ago, and Mr. Miklosko suggested we contact stone wall repair professionals who can reference that assessment to build a working document and priority list. Regarding the wall near the church, an inspection needs to be done, possibly by our town engineer, then specifications need to be written, then it needs to go out for bid, and funding would need to be approved; it is a very big project. Ms. Hopkins states she already has a waiting list for a columbarium, and suggests we have a columbarium representative come present to the Committee who can give us some estimates. Mr. Miklosko estimates a columbarium will be several hundreds of thousands of dollars including design, site work, installation, and landscaping.

D-9: COMMITTEE COMMENTS: (relative to issues contained in this agenda or feedback received from resident(s) since last meeting) None.

D-10: PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

D-11: SUMMARY OF FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

Mr. Miklosko will research bollards for the Chestnut Hollow area and present samples, he will confirm ratios regarding the cemetery budget question confirming the two revenue sources, and will look into a spoils area for Ms. Hopkins' dirt. Mr. Cooke will call Ms. Kate Handley regarding the sustainability group in Town and will attend a meeting, which may influence our IFB for the next clean-up contract. We will review the list of priorities to advise Mr. Miklosko where to put his energies. Continuation of discussion of the Reformatory Trail issue. Ms. Hopkins will share the list of headstones needing repair with Mr. Davidson.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mallory Price, Administrative Assistant
Highway and Grounds Division

Approved,



Paul Cooke, Chairperson
Cemetery Committee