



City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts
TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC BURIAL GROUNDS

115 Mt. Elam Road
Fitchburg, MA 01420

OFFICE: 978-345-9578 FAX: 978-345-9686

www.fitchburgma.gov

CEMETERY TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 20, 2022

2022 FEB 17 PM 12:03
FITCHBURG CITY CLERK

The Cemetery Trustee Board meeting was held in the West Meeting Room, 1st Floor at City Hall, 718 Main St. An online link and phone number were provided for those who wished to participate remotely.

Call to Order: Chair Judith A. Perla called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Trustee Members Present: Judith A. Perla, Diane R. Ouellette, Andrew J. Hawthorne, Michelle Sciabarrasi

Others Present: Nicholas J. Erickson, PE - Commissioner of Public Works, Trevor Bonilla, IT Manager

Others Present Remotely: - Jaquelyn R. Poirier – Cemetery Superintendent

Public Forum: No one was present, either in person or remotely, wishing to speak.

Welcome Re-appointments: Chair Judith Perla and Trustee Andrew Hawthorne were both re-appointed by the Mayor and approved unanimously by both the Appointments Committee and the City Council on December 7, 2021. Their terms will expire on January 1, 2025.

Election of Officers: Chair Perla opened nominations for the 2022 officers: Judith Perla was nominated as Chairperson. Diane Ouellette and Michelle Sciabarrasi were both nominated for the Clerk position. Nominations closed. Judith Perla elected as Chairperson unanimously, 4-0. Diane Ouellette elected as Clerk unanimously, 4-0. (4 Trustee members present-current board is 4 members). Elections closed.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Andrew Hawthorne and seconded by Michelle Sciabarrasi to approve the minutes from the board meeting held on November 18, 2021. Vote was 4 in favor, 0 opposed. Motion passed. Minutes approved.

Staff Reports: Cemetery Department Report 1/20/2022- Progress report given by Jaquelyn Poirier

Forest Hill

Routine maintenance of grounds

- Equipment maintenance
- Cutting and trimming
- Leaf clean up

- Repaired leaf vacuum hose
- Installed Veteran markers
- Picked up flags, ready to be disposed of for the season
- Checked off site Cemeteries
- Cleaned graves to comply with specifications
- Pick up down limbs from all cemeteries
- Fixed gate at pit
- Added new numbers to infant section
- Cleaned pit
- Cleaned up trash from bike path and cemetery barrels
- Training new employee
- Plowing and shoveling

INTERMENTS	12
INURNMENTS	3
UP RIGHTED MONUMENTS	
UNCOVERED FLAT MONUMENTS	
MONUMENT FOUNDATION MARKING/PHOTOS	4
CATCH BASIN REPAIR/CLEAN	50
FILLED SINK HOLES	
TRIMMED TREES	
TRIMMED SHRUBS	
PHONE/OUTSIDE MEETINGS WITH FAMILIES	35
PAYMENTS - INVOICED/PROCESSED	62
FAMILY GENEALOGY	19

Laurel Hill, South Street, West Street & Dean Hill & Hartwell

Cleanup of branches

Cemetery Staff

- 4 full-time workers
- 1 Summer Help
- 1 Superintendent

Administration

Routine administration tasks

- Cemetery Software – meeting with CompuTemps
- Onboarding new employee
- Maintenance on alarm system
- Columbaria area –design – on temporary hold
- Communication with Facilities Director – mausoleum roof – working on scope of work for RFQ – Office and Garage

Richard Demers - Monty Tech – Jim Hachey- Vocational Director waiting on approval to schedule repair of stairs

- Payment arrangements with families
- Meeting with City Solicitor – new forms

- Meeting with Tom Daly – Rules – License of Burial
- Working on departmental forms
- Meeting with HR, Solicitor, Insurance Company – damage to department pickup truck
- Appointment with Insurance Adjuster – Truck sent to garage for repairs
- Gathered information for Veteran Services Commissioner
- End of calendar year, beginning of calendar year paperwork
- Bemis Associates – helped two days with leaf clean-up
- Coordinated with Purchasing regarding charge card issues
- Attended Finance Committee meeting – Price increases

Trustee Hawthorne asked about the schedule for catch basin cleanouts. Superintendent Poirier stated that they are now on a once a year schedule.

DPW Commissioner Erickson gave an update on the plans for expansion in the Columbarium area. A new DPW Civil Engineer has done a GPS survey of the area and is working on an existing conditions base map that will be used to draft a grading plan that will then be used to draft a proposed conditions plan that also includes the new pathways and wall to be built in that area. The FY2022 earmark money from the state will be used toward the materials for the wall. Chair Perla mentioned that there is a timeline for the use of this money, and that the Commissioner would have to contact Representative Kushmerek if an extension is needed.

2021 Year in Review – Cemetery Projects: Chair Perla asked Superintendent Poirier to compile a list of cemetery projects that were completed in 2021, and anticipated projects for 2022, to be presented at the next meeting.

Review draft for License of Burial: The draft of the License of Burial is currently being reviewed by the City Solicitor before being finalized.

City Council Approval of Cemetery Price Increases: Chair Perla informed the board that the Cemetery Price increases were sent to the City Council as Petition # 214-21. The Finance Committee approved the new price list on December 14, 2021 and forwarded it on to the full City Council. The City Council approved the new price list on December 21, 2021. Discussion: Superintendent Poirier would like to set a date for the new pricing to take effect and is anticipating March 1st. Andrew Hawthorne stated that there should be time to notify all funeral directors in the area. Superintendent Poirier will work toward that date.

Cameras for Laurel Hill – Trevor Bonilla: Trustees asked Mr. Bonilla to review the current proposal for a camera system to monitor Laurel Hill Cemetery. He expressed several concerns with the proposal. One issue was the high cost of the system. The equipment is not proprietary and could be purchased from other vendors at a lesser cost. Other issues were the extensive customer responsibilities outlined within the proposal and the vague language that did not fit with the location. The need for electrical power, poles within the cemetery, and networking equipment was also not addressed in this proposal. He felt that the Trustees should seek further clarification on all of these issues.

A lengthy discussion followed about cameras that the Board of Health and Police Department just purchased that might be a better option to deter vandalism within the cemetery. These cameras are equipped with motion sensors, flashing lights, and can be programmed to broadcast a voice warning telling people to leave the cemetery grounds. Mr. Bonilla will send more specific information about the cost of these cameras to

Commissioner Erickson. Trustees would like to explore other less costly options to monitor Laurel Hill Cemetery. Chair Perla thanked Mr. Bonilla for his input, and he left the meeting at 9:57 a.m.

Meeting Schedule for 2022: All Trustees have received a copy of the meeting schedule for this year.

City Solicitor for ROL for Stratton Players: Trustees reviewed a draft of the Release and Indemnity Agreement to be used for the Stratton Players performances held within Forest Hill Cemetery. Trustee Hawthorne also had questions about charging a permit fee for performances and made a motion to have the cemetery department require a percentage of the donations received. There was no second to this motion. Chair Perla will contact the City Solicitor to see if this would be an allowable practice.

Trustee Sciabarrasi excused herself from the meeting to handle a business matter at 10:13 a.m.

Budget Review: Trustees had several questions about upcoming FY23 budget preparations. Diane Ouellette asked about the money originally budgeted for the shared Principal Clerk, since that position was not filled in FY2022. Commissioner Erickson stated that the unused money would be returned to the city's General Fund. Andrew Hawthorne asked if the money that was originally budgeted for the purchase of cemetery software in the IT budget was still available. Commissioner Erickson will check with Trevor Bonilla on the status of that money.

Announcements: Chair Perla asked Trustees to submit agenda items by Friday of the week before a scheduled meeting.

Diane Ouellette updated the progress of the Laurel Hill Inventory Committee. Although the physical part of the inventory has been completed, research and data entry is still in progress. Superintendent Poirier thanked the team, on behalf of the city, for all of their hard work.

Events: The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 9 a.m. in the West Meeting Room at City Hall, 718 Main St.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Diane Ouellette made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Andrew Hawthorne seconded the motion. 3 in favor, 0 opposed. The motion passed and Chair Judith Perla adjourned the meeting at 10:20 A.M.

Meeting Schedule 2022:

- February 17th
- March 17th
- April 21st
- May 19th
- June 16th

NO MEETINGS in July & August

September 15th

October 20th

November 17th

NO MEETING in December

Respectfully submitted,

Diane R. Ouellette

Clerk, Trustees of Public Burial Grounds

Distribution:

Cemetery Trustees

Jaquelyn R. Poirier, Cemetery Superintendent

Nicholas J. Erickson, P.E., Commissioner of Public Works & City Engineer

Gary Withington, Superintendent of Streets

Honorable Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale

Natalia Oliver, Mayor's Chief of Staff

Joan David, Administrative Aide to the Mayor

Amanda Alford, Provisional City Clerk

Bernard J. Schultz, Ward 1 Councilor

Amy L. Green, Councilor-At-Large

Tricia Chabot

Peggy Page