



City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts

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CEMETERY TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 21, 2019

Call to Order:

Chair Judith A. Perla called the meeting to order at 8:53 a.m.

Trustee Members Present:

Judith A. Perla, Diane R. Ouellette, Andrew J. Hawthorne, Andrienne G. Clark, Nancy Maynard

Others Present:

Jaquelyn R. Poirier – Cemetery Superintendent, Gary Withington – DPW Street Superintendent

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made by Nancy Maynard and seconded by Andrew Hawthorne to approve the minutes from the board meeting held on February 21, 2018. 5 in favor, 0 opposed - Motion passed. Minutes approved.

Public Forum:

No one was present wishing to speak.

Staff Reports:

Cemetery Department Report 3/21/2019- Progress report given by Jacquelyn Poirier

Forest Hill

- Cleaned mausoleum
- Cleaned office trailer
- Helped with cleaning DPW, Wastewater and Water department
- Rubbish removal in cemetery and along bike path
- Filled sink holes in graves
- Repaired plow damage to grass
- Picked up downed limbs
- Cleaned graves to keep in specification
- Equipment and vehicle maintenance
- Snow plowing and shoveling
- Starting spring clean-up
- (7) Funerals since last meeting

Laurel Hill

- Cleaned up downed limbs
- Cleaned debris

South Street/West Street & Dean Hill & Hartwell

- Cleaned up downed limbs
- Cleaned debris

Cemetery Staff

- 2 full-time workers
- Light Duty - 1 LMEO – 1 1/2 days a week
- 1 LMEO position posted with HR
- 1 Superintendent
- Employees attended driver safety class and trained on MIIA simulator

Administration

- Applied for Veterans markers in Washington
- Met with families at need and pre-need for burials; consult with grieving families, ownership rights of lots, transfer of graves
- Sales - graves, veterans' foundations, veterans' flag holder, brick, cremated remains table rental, columbarium
- Sent collection letters – making payment arrangements
- Meeting with funeral providers
- Helped Lunenburg, Norwell and Leominster cemeteries with rules, interments and cemetery questions
- Genealogical searches
- Coggshall schedule
- Master Plan Phase II - Ray Dunetz, – waiting on funding
- Working with Engineering in columbaria area – high water table – monitoring wells – with help from the DPW installed a drainage pipe into culvert to divert water – need to install another drain pipe in the summer the water table not low enough to support graves
- Working with Purchasing on trailer lease
- Working on building leaks at Mausoleum – Met with roofing company to determine if it is a warranty issue. Found that exterior limestone block wall needs repointing – water is getting through gaps in mortar – DPW will help in spring repointing repairs
- Met with masonry contractor – found numerous repointing issues at Mausoleum. Waiting for estimate
- Working with Monty Tech with mausoleum renovations – they are willing to work on flooring and stairs outside – Special flooring is in, Monty Tech is storing waiting to start work
- Met with Eagle Scout Matthew Sadowski – Donation for Adopt a Veteran - Laurel Hill – waiting on flag holders from company – should be delivered in a few weeks
- Eagle Scout candidate Devon Sauer – he has completed his sign at Laurel Hill (picture below)
- Worked in engineering – new section R – 28 new graves – on the left-hand side of memorial cremated remains section – expected to open in spring – Engineering will reset grave numbers
- Councilor Joel Kaddy has offered to train cemetery personnel in the spring on how to fix broken stones with different techniques depending on stone composite
- Ordered Memorial Guard – testing and time analysis to determine cost
- Inventory of equipment
- Working on quote for rights of burial with each grave
- Section Q – issues with water table – 3 feet frost – 3 days to open a grave
- DPW Commissioner and Engineering working on GIS map of potential cemetery sites. Identifying 10 + acre lots – in process - working on criteria – access to lots, any wetland issues, grades of land

- FY20 Budget – waiting on feedback from Auditor and Mayor
- Planning for spring/summer season

MEMORIAL DAY PREP

- Confirmed with 1st Sgt. Paul Jornet – ROTC will be helping again this year to place flags
- Spoke with Beth Chandonait – AMVETS – they are willing to help with flag placement again this year
- Contacted Troop # 41 and FHS ROTC about flag placement – both will be helping again this year
- Coordinating with Veteran’s Agent – have ordered flags for all cemeteries
- Ordered portable toilets for Forest Hill and Laurel Hill for flag placement



Old Business:

Japonica Films

Japonica Films is withdrawing their request to film in Forest Hill Cemetery due to the fact that the person they were interested in is not interred here. Nancy Maynard made a motion to give the request leave to withdraw. Andrienne Clark seconded the motion. 5 in favor, 0 opposed. Motion passed.

Cemetery Software Funding

Trustees discussed the possibility of purchasing the new software in phases rather than the full software package. Superintendent Poirier explained that this would create a double work load by having to duplicate data entry in both systems until the full software package could be purchased and installed. Still waiting for funding.

Forest Hill Master Plan B - Phase 2

The Cemetery Department is working with Engineering and DPW to lower the water table in the area behind the columbaria and potentially add grave sites. This could increase the time before having to expand. DPW Commissioner Laakso and Engineering working on GIS map of other potential cemetery sites in the city.

Office Trailer Quotes

Purchasing is still waiting to hear back from the trailer company regarding current trailer pricing.

Mausoleum repairs

Monty Tech will be scheduling a date to install the new flooring in the mausoleum. DPW will be repointing the areas in the walls that were leaking.

FY20 Budget

The proposed FY20 budget is being reviewed by the Mayor, Auditor, and the Mayor's Chief of Staff.

New Business:

Memorial Day Preparations

Flag placement for Memorial Day is scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 2019 in all Fitchburg Cemeteries. Superintendent Poirier has received contacted 1st Sgt. Paul Jornet – Monty Tech MCJROTC, Beth Chandonait – Amvets, Boy Scout Troop # 41, and FHS ROTC. All are willing to help us again this year. Monty Tech MCJROTC will place flags at Laurel Hill Cemetery in the morning (time not yet set), and volunteers will start at Forest Hill Cemetery at 3:30 p.m. Snacks and water will be available for volunteers. Portable toilets will be on site at both cemeteries.

Trustees discussed various methods of letting the public know of the need for volunteers. Andrew Hawthorne would like to post the information at various clubs and organizations around the city. Judith Perla suggested utilizing Facebook postings again this year. Andrienne Clark will contact the Fitchburg Sentinel.

An invitation will be sent to the Mayor asking him to welcome the volunteers at Forest Hill Cemetery again this year.

Remarks and Comments from Trustees

Andrew Hawthorne expressed concern about several areas in Forest Hill, one being the Frog Pond area, and the other, the paved road in Section Q that does not drain well. The Frog Pond area has leftover brush and roots from a downed tree that will be cleaned up. Mr. Hawthorne asked if a berm at the edge of the road in Section Q would help with the drainage problem. Gary Withington stated that a berm would not be an option for the road, as it could pose a tripping hazard.

Events:

The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, April 18, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cemetery Office.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Nancy Maynard, and seconded by Andrew Hawthorne, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed, 5 in favor, 0 opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

Meeting Schedule 2019:

April 18, 2019

May 16, 2019

June 20, 2019

September 19, 2019

October 17, 2019

November 28, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

Diane R. Ouellette

Clerk, Trustees of Public Burial Grounds

Distribution: Cemetery Trustees
Jaquelyn R. Poirier, Cemetery Superintendent
Lenny Laakso, Commissioner of Public Works
Gary Withington, Superintendent of Streets
Honorable Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale

A.J. Tourigny, Mayor's Chief of Staff
Anna M. Farrell, City Clerk
Amy Green, Ward 1 Councilor
Tricia Chabot
Peggy Page