

## **Minutes of 7/20/22 Cemetery Commission**

**6:00 PM**

### **Remote Access Meeting with Zoom (Under Emergency Order for Pandemic) Approved at the August 19 Meeting**

Members present: Walter Tibbetts (WT), Dina Stander (DS), Susan Millinger (SM). Meeting called to order at 6:11 p.m.

1. Minutes of the June 15 meeting: Motion to accept the Minutes of April 25 was made and seconded. The minutes were amended, and then unanimously approved as amended by a roll call vote.
2. Headstone cleaning and repair workshop:
  - a. It was decided to hold the workshop on September 24<sup>th</sup> if TaMara approves, with a back-up (rain) date of October 1. Alternate date to suggest to TaMara: October 1, with a back-up date of October 8. WT will check the dates with TaMara.
  - b. For publicity: check the deadline for *Our Town* newsletter.
  - c. DS will write up a press release/notice and bring it to the next meeting.
3. Equipment:
  - a. Maintenance
    1. Devon Lane of Belchertown hasn't returned WT's call about maintenance. If Devon Lane is not able to do the work, WT will do it.
  - b. New equipment
    1. The groundskeepers want a leaf-blower. WT borrowed one which was self-moving, which he has, but WT wants to ask the groundskeepers about a back-pack leaf-blower. The Commission had a walk-behind leaf-blower which was purchased by an earlier groundskeeper, but was not being used. The DPW has it now.
    2. SM requested a tour of the equipment in the Hearse House; WT agreed, and one was set up for July 28 at 4 p.m.
4. New email account and website information:
  - a. Gail Fleischaker of the Web Communication Committee needs for the website a new contact phone number for the Commission. WT agreed to provide his: 413-687-4158.
  - b. DS wants a reminder to set up a session with Gail on the website.
5. New burials and lot sales:
  - a. There was a cremation burial in the Locks Pond/Locks Village cemetery (for Joe Jacobs). Finding the pins was a challenge.
  - b. WT met with a longtime Shutesbury resident, Patricia Carson, who wanted and bought a single lot at Locks Pond.

- c. WT received an inquiry from a person who wanted a lot for a green burial which would also contain the cremains of three family members. We have a policy that no more than three cremains can be added to a burial. WT will follow up to see if the family has Shutesbury connections.
  - i. This request led to a discussion about how cremains should be added to a natural burial. DS noted that because cremains have the chemistry of oven cleaner, it is necessary for the health of the environment that they be contained in such a way that they reach the soil only slowly, after enough time has passed for the chemistry to no longer be toxic. DS described the kind of containers accepted by experts in green burials.
  - ii. DS is to bring to the next meeting a description (in a way suitable for inclusion in Natural Burial Regulations) of current best practices for such containers. A suggestion from the meeting was something like: “Cremains must be in one of the following approved containers which permit decomposition gradual enough to prevent harm to the environment:...”

6. Future projects/ ideas:

- a. Maintenance issues at the Locks Pond cemetery.
  - a. Groundskeeper Linus has the place looking excellent, but the road (and we do own the right of way) is a challenge. Only a four-wheel drive can safely make the drive in. We need to make it more accessible to regular cars, but we also don't want to make it so visible, that it encourages partying there.
  - b. Some trees that are becoming overgrown need to be cut back, and a white birch there could become unsafe and should be cut down. Linus could do the work himself or with WT.
- b. Painting the vault door
- c. For West Cemetery: investigate the cost and feasibility of ground-penetrating radar on some lots to see if anyone is buried there. A number of lots are marked as “unknown.” DS recommends contacting Elizabeth Allen Martin, Barre Cemetery Commissioner with whom DS has been in contact. DS has her email address. Could we perhaps receive a grant for this? Does the State help towns with solving this problem? WT to research the topic.

7. Date for next meeting: Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at 6 p.m.

8. Adjournment at 7:02: A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously carried by roll call vote.

Submitted by

*Susan Millinger*

Cemetery Commission secretary

