



Edgartown Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

DECEMBER 13, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Andy called to order the regular meeting of the Cemetery Commission at 4:00pm on Tuesday, December 13, 2016, at the Edgartown Library, 2nd Floor Small Conference Room.

II. ROLL CALL:

The following persons were present:

Cemetery Commission: Andy Kelly, Susan Brown, Liz Villard, Debbie Manley-Smith.

Selectmen: Michael Donaroma

Other: Stuart Fuller, Juliet Mulinare

III. OPEN ISSUES:

1. The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes from November 15, 2016.
2. Motion placed on the floor by Liz to approve the 11/15/16 meeting minutes, Susan seconds, vote taken and passed. Juliet will post the approved minutes.
3. The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes from November 22, 2016.
4. Motion placed on the floor by Liz to approve the 11/22/16 meeting minutes, Susan seconds, vote taken and passed. Juliet will post the approved minutes.
5. The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes from December 1, 2016.
6. Motion placed on the floor by Liz to approve the 12/1/16 meeting minutes, Susan seconds, vote taken and passed. Juliet will post the approved minutes.
7. The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes from December 6, 2016. Discussion: Liz asked Stuart to review item #6, regarding a single representative from the Highway Department to communicate with Cemetery Commission. Stuart agreed that this makes sense while everyone gets acquainted with the new arrangement.
8. Motion placed on the floor by Liz to approve the 12/6/16 meeting minutes, Susan seconds, vote taken and passed. Juliet will post the approved minutes.
9. The bills were reviewed. Andy informed the Commission that TDR Landscaping was able to perform the leaf removal work for much less than he originally quoted; he wasn't able to clean up everything but the cemeteries look tidy.
10. Motion placed on the floor by Liz to accept the bills. Susan seconds, vote taken and passed.
11. Motion placed on the floor by Liz to allow Juliet to sign the bills and submit the warrant. Susan seconds, vote taken and passed.

12. Motion placed on the floor by Susan to allow Juliet to sign the warrant. Debbie seconds, vote taken and passed.
13. Andy read the Commissioners a piece of correspondence from a concerned citizen regarding the transfer of cemetery maintenance responsibilities to the Highway Department. [The author of the letter asked to go on record and requested the letter be made public. It is attached to these minutes.]
14. Susan stated that the author of the letter must be recognized as biased, as she is the mother of the recently resigned Cemetery Superintendent.
15. Andy presented notes he gathered from Jen and Mike regarding the amount of hours each cemetery requires to maintain properly. The Commission discussed the mowing and trimming of each cemetery with Stuart, as well as what types of equipment can be used at each location.
16. Liz mentioned that the cemeteries might benefit from less mowing and more detailed trim work. Stuart commented that this would significantly increase the time needed to perform maintenance. The Commission commented that their main concern is minimizing the potential damage done to the gravestones by the mower.
17. Selectmen Michael Donaroma joined the meeting.
18. The Commission continued with discussion about how to plant the area between the New Westside and the Robinson Rd outdoor recreation area in an effort to provide some privacy for those in the cemetery.
19. The Commission informed Stuart that maintenance of the wrought iron fences was not included in the summary provided by Andy.
20. The Commission discussed the placement of American flags on the graves of veterans. Susan said she has a list and personally places flags for all Civil War and Revolutionary War veterans but does not have a list for veterans of other wars. Both the Police Dept and the Fire Dept place their own flags, which are provided by the Legion.
21. Susan suggested that the process of placing flags should be organized more efficiently and the parties responsible for placing flags should coordinate. The Commission continued to discuss what time of year the flags should be placed and at what point they should be removed. Everyone agreed that this, along with the placement of other items on stones, was discretionary.
22. Stuart questioned whether it was possible that Dennis might return, noting that he was a good worker and would be good for department continuity to have him come back and work for Stuart in the cemeteries next season. Andy said he would probably be willing to consider returning, if the conditions were more inviting.
23. Andy asked Stuart how he felt about adding the cemetery maintenance to his work load. Stuart commented that it was a lot of work and it will be an ambitious move, but with cooperation, updated equipment and good communication between departments, he thinks it can be managed.
24. The Commission discussed the health of the grass in the cemeteries. Andy said they have never been fertilized. Liz mentioned that it would be worthwhile to focus on maintaining the health of the grass, especially in the older areas, while CPC money is being used to restore the gravestones; they tip over because the ground is not sturdy enough to hold them up and this could be exacerbated by over-mowing.
25. Andy asked Stuart if he had a maintenance schedule already planned out. Stuart said that it's still open-ended and they will have to see what works best. Andy reiterated that the Commission would like a single person to direct communication towards, preferably someone who can regularly attend Cemetery meetings. Stuart again suggested the benefit of having either of the previous seasonal employees return.

Andy stated that the Commission did not want to step on Stuart's toes or micromanage his schedule, they just want one point of contact.

26. Mr. Donaroma suggested that the contact person be Stuart himself and Stuart agreed; he would like to know everything that's going on, at least until a routine has been established. Mr. Donaroma said that no matter who the point person is, the new arrangement will allow for cooperation that was previously lacking, and everyone will be working together to accomplish the needs and wishes of the Commission.
27. The Commission, Stuart and Mr. Donaroma discussed the parameters of seasonal employees and the need to update the pay scale in order to entice good employees to return. The seasonal positions within the Cemetery Department have been underpaid for years and compared to the rates of other seasonal positions (i.e. lifeguards and traffic officers), the pay is quite low. Mr. Donaroma suggested that the involvement of three departments, Cemetery, Highway and Selectmen, might put enough pressure on the Personnel Board to update the seasonal pay rates. Debbie suggested going in front of the Personnel Board to further discuss.
28. Stuart commented that the pay scale has not been raised in years and is not keeping up with the economy. As the work expands, more roads, traffic, people and the expansion of the cemeteries all warrant the need for more man power. Andy stated that the Commission's goal is to make sure the cemeteries are kept to the standard that has been set in previous years, while offering Stuart as much support as he requires. Mr. Donaroma said he was confident this could be accomplished, especially with Stuart's willingness to be the point of contact the Commission requested.
29. The Commission discussed with Stuart the procedures for marking out graves and who's responsibility that will become. The administrative position was brought up and discussed. Mr. Donaroma said he spoke with the other Selectmen and this is a position that must be taken seriously; it has many unique responsibilities. This person will work out of Town Hall so that if they have to be out of the office, phones can be answered by Kristy.
30. Andy said he thought 15 hours per week was reasonable for the administrator. Liz stated how important it is to include historical documentation and the update of files to electronic versions (and made available to the public via the Town website) in the job description. Andy agreed that converting everything to electronic versions was crucial to protect the department's records. He also informed the Commission that records in the shed are ready to be moved to Town Hall.
31. The Commission decided to amend the job description draft, first shown to them at the joint meeting with the Selectmen, and to present the amended version at Monday's Selectmen meeting. If the Selectmen approve the amended job description, the Commission will vote on whether to transfer maintenance to the Highway Department. The Commission asked Mr. Donaroma whether it was necessary to call a public hearing. He said it was not, this topic has been in the paper multiple times, discussed at public meetings for which notices have been appropriately posted, and televised at previous Selectmen meetings. He said if people want to ask questions, they are more than welcome to come and do so.
32. The Commission discussed the job description of the administrative assistant and made some changes/added responsibilities. The Commission also discussed the recommendations made by the Selectmen and included language to cover their needs, including that they will continue to control all accounts other than the expense account.

33. Liz stated the Commission still needed to schedule a meeting in order to update the Cemetery Rules and Regulations.
34. Motion placed on the floor by Liz to pay Juliet from the Superintendent's salary account.
35. The Commission asked Juliet to draft a letter to the Selectmen updating them on the wishes of the Commission during this transfer of responsibilities, the updated job description, and their desire and intention to utilize the remainder of their budget to purchase updated equipment for Stuart to have access to (ie. Stand-up mower for narrow areas).

Liz motioned to adjourn the meeting, Debbie seconds the motion. No discussion, vote taken, passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.

Minutes submitted by: Juliet Mulinare