



# City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts

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 16, 2020

### **Call to Order:**

Chair Judith A. Perla called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

### **Trustee Members Present:**

Judith A. Perla, Diane R. Ouellette, Andrienne G. Clark

### **Trustee Members Absent:**

Andrew Hawthorne

### **Others Present:**

Jaquelyn R. Poirier – Cemetery Superintendent, Nicolas H. Bosonetto - DPW Commissioner, Ryan Killeen – Jr. Engineer, DPW

### **Election of Officers for 2020:**

The floor was opened for nominations. Andrienne Clark nominated Judith Perla as Chairperson. Diane Ouellette seconded the nomination. Judith Perla nominated Diane Ouellette as Clerk. Andrienne Clark seconded the nomination. Both accepted the nominations. Nominations closed. Election was held. Judith Perla was elected Chairperson, 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Diane Ouellette was elected Clerk, 3 in favor, 0 opposed. Election closed.

### **Public Forum:**

No one was present wishing to speak.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

A motion was made by Andrienne Clark, and seconded by Diane Ouellette, to approve the minutes from the board meeting held on November 21, 2019. 3 in favor, 0 opposed - Motion passed. Minutes approved.

**Staff Reports: Cemetery Department Report 1/16/2020-** Progress report given by Jaquelyn Poirier

### **Forest Hill**

Routine maintenance of grounds, leaf clean up, snow removal, trash, keeping graves to specifications

- Opened catch basins for drainage

- Equipment maintenance

INTERMENTS	5
INURNMENTS	6
UP RIGHTED MONUMENTS	2
UNCOVERED FLAT MONUMENTS	0
MONUMENT FOUNDATION MARKING	0
CATCH BASIN REPAIR	0
FILLED SINK HOLES	0
TRIMMED TREES	0
TRIMMED SHRUBS	0
MEETINGS WITH FAMILIES	32
PAYMENTS - INVOICED/PROCESSED	44
FAMILY GENEALOGY	27

### **Laurel Hill**

- Picked up Veteran flags /Routine maintenance

### **South Street/West Street & Dean Hill & Hartwell**

- Picked up Veteran flags / Routine maintenance

### **Cemetery Staff**

- 3 full-time workers
- Light Duty - 1 LMEO – 1 1/2 days a week
- 1 Superintendent

### **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, collection calls, genealogical searches
- End of calendar year paperwork
- Sales - graves, veterans' foundations, veterans' flag holder, brick, cremated remains table rental, columbarium
- Scheduled trailer for servicing
- Coggs hall schedule – including scheduling and schedule changes with recreation department, ordering supplies
- Meeting with care provider – Medicaid legal paperwork
- Working on with Purchasing RFP –Software bid needs to be evaluated
- Columbaria area –Engineering will continue to monitor wells and will have a clear picture in the spring of exactly how many graves area will support. Currently estimated 800 minimum graves.
- Mausoleum –Found that exterior limestone block wall needs repointing – water is getting through gaps in mortar. Need to add to capital improvement plan for funding
- DPW Commissioner and Engineering working on GIS map of potential cemetery sites. Identifying 7 + acre lots – in process - working on criteria – access to lots, any wetland issues, grades of land
- Meeting with CompuTemps –Database management and GIS mapping at Forest Hill – cemetery coordinates added to database. South Street, Dean Hill, West Street, Hartwell and Laurel Hill in process
- Working with Eagle Scout – new project path signs Forest Hill
- Meeting with funeral provider new transitional assistance rules and guidelines

- Attended Historical Commission meeting – informational meeting – working on getting Laurel Hill, Dean Hill, West Street, South Street and Hartwell cemeteries on the State and National register of Historical places – this will enable funding resources for restoration
- Onsite meeting with Comcast at Laurel Hill – informational surveillance cameras
- Attended New England Cemetery Association (NECA) Seminar

### **Old Business:**

Reappointments – Andrienne Clark and Diane Ouellette were both reappointed by Mayor DiNatale for three year terms as Trustees and confirmed unanimously by the both the Appointment Committee and City Council on January 9, 2020. Their terms will expire in 2023.

Cemetery Software – Bids – Purchasing received one bid in response to the RFP for cemetery software which needs to be evaluated by the Superintendent, Trustees, DPW and IT Department.

Forest Hill Master Plan B – Phase 2 – New sites – Ryan Killeen presented a GIS map showing two more potential sites that minimally meet the criteria for cemetery expansion. Both sites present challenges that make them the least suitable for cemetery needs. Since all of the potential sites found to date have not been ideally suited for cemetery development, the trustees would like to revisit the original plans for expansion at the site located on Electric Avenue.

Mausoleum Repairs Estimate – Needed repairs to the mausoleum will be added to the Capital Improvement Plan.

Laurel Hill Fencing Phase 2 bids – The expenditure of funds from the Cemetery Perpetual Care Trust Fund for the new fencing at Laurel Hill was approved by the Finance Committee on November 12, 2019 and the order was adopted by the City Council on November 19, 2019. New bids will be accepted in the spring, not to exceed the approved amount of \$13,885.

Historical Register for Cemeteries – Trustees Judith Perla, Diane Ouellette, and Andrienne Clark, along with Superintendent Poirier attended a meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Commission on November 21<sup>st</sup> to apprise them of plans to seek historic status for our cemeteries and seek their input on this process.

Discussion today included what steps to take next, and whether to seek historic status for the mausoleum in Forest Hill Cemetery. This decision requires further information. Superintendent Poirier and trustees Judith Perla and Diane Ouellette will meet with Tom Skwierawski at the Planning & Community Development office to gather more information.

### **New Business:**

Goals for the Cemeteries Going Forward – Superintendent Poirier presented a list of projects completed by the Cemetery Department over the past year, and a list of upcoming projects for this year.

Mrs. Ellen DiGeronimo - Historical Commission and Susan Navarre - Historical Society – Trustees would like to invite both Mrs. DiGeronimo and Ms. Navarre to the next meeting, (or subsequent meetings), to further discuss the process of seeking historic status for the cemeteries.

Pursue Funding for Repairs at Laurel Hill Cemetery – Discussion on how to pay for ongoing repairs at Laurel Hill. DPW will work on damaged walls and stones.

Rules and Regulations for Cemetery – The Rules and Regulations will need to be updated to reflect the rules listed in the new License of Burial form that is not yet finalized. Trustees will work on changing the language as needed to conform to the new form.

A discussion was held on enforcement of cemetery rules and keeping graves in spec during the winter months.

Forest Hill Fencing Repairs – Various options to repair some of the chain link fencing along the Rollstone Street side of the cemetery were discussed.

**Events:**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 20, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. at the Cemetery office.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Diane Ouellette and seconded by Andrienne Clark to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed, 3 in favor, 0 opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m.

**Meeting Schedule 2020:**

February 20, 2020

March 19, 2020

April 16, 2020

May 21, 2020

June 18, 2020

September 17, 2020

October 15, 2020

November 19, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Diane R. Ouellette

Clerk, Trustees of Public Burial Grounds

Distribution:

Cemetery Trustees

Jaquelyn R. Poirier, Cemetery Superintendent

Nicolas H. Bosonetto, Commissioner of Public Works

Gary Withington, Superintendent of Streets

Honorable Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale

A.J. Tourigny, Mayor's Chief of Staff

Mary de Alderete, City Clerk

Susan A. Davis, Director of Human Resources

Bernard J. Schultz, Ward 1 Councilor

Amy L. Green, Councilor-At-Large

Tricia Chabot

Peggy Page