



City of Dover

CEMETERY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery – *145 Court Street, Dover, NH 03820
Meeting Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2022
Meeting Time: 7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE

Vice Chair Marggraf called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rob Marggraf – Vice Chair, Susan Kelsch – Secretary, Cathy Beaudoin – Alt. Member

MEMBERS ABSENT: Martha Haley – Chair (excused); Grover Tasker (excused); Belinda Labourdette; Roderick Blake – Alt. Member

STAFF PRESENT: Sharon Sirois – Facilities, Grounds & Cemetery Superintendent; Mike Wilson -- Facilities, Grounds & Cemetery Working Foreman; Meghan Moisan – Administrative Coordinator

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – Minutes were reviewed for September 14, 2021 meeting.

Motion: Kelsch made a motion to accept the minutes

Second: Beaudoin seconded the motion

Vote: U/A

3. CEMETERY STAFF UPDATES – Employees remained busy the past several months as fall cleanup moved into winter operations. In addition to keeping the roads clear within the cemetery, crews assisted Public Works with plowing and snow removal throughout the city. Seasonal employees also provided assistance during their school breaks. Foundations were marked out, dug and poured for 10 monuments in October, and marker installations continued into December. Last year was a record-breaking year in both grave sales and burials. There were 95 burials (the highest in 20 years, since 2001) and a total of 131 graves sold – Moisan's spreadsheet only goes back to 1985, but it was the highest number in those 37 years. January slowed down a bit with 4 burials and no graves sold. The office stayed busy, however, continuing to field calls relating to lot purchases, ownership/burial rights, etc. Several burials have also been scheduled or pushed out into spring. Wreaths were placed again on various veteran graves at Pine Hill and surrounding cemeteries on December 11th as part of the Wreaths Across America event. Lastly, Moisan has made a very difficult decision and will be resigning from her job to help care for a family member. She has enjoyed her 16 and ½ years with the City and will miss her co-workers, the families she's been honored to assist, Pine Hill Cemetery, and all of the Cemetery Board members.

Sirois noted that the crews had quite a bit of tree work and other cleanup from windstorms during the fall. The Wreaths Across America event happened in a cold, intense rain, but 70 volunteers were in Pine Hill Cemetery that day. Sirois believes they put out around 600 wreaths in one hour. Members discussed Moisan's resignation, which will be effective at the end of February. Everyone on the Cemetery Board will be very sorry to see her go, we thank her for years of service to the City, and we wish her the best. Beaudoin commended Moisan on her excellent service to the Library and individual citizens in researching graves and the history of the City's cemeteries. While Sirois expects the position to be filled in the near future, it will take some time.



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There are currently 5 open positions in the Community Services Division. The City advertises and accepts employment applications through the Workable website, which is maxed out on the number of postings right now.

Motion: Beaudoin made a motion to accept the staff updates

Second: Kelsch seconded the motion

Vote: U/A

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Status of Sign for Roberts Cemetery (a.k.a. First Settlers)

Julie Black from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) reached out asking to move forward with the sign project previously started by JoAnn Eaton. They asked if the City would be willing to create and maintain a database listing the names of those buried in the Roberts Cemetery. Moisan was able to connect them with Library Director Denise LaFrance and their IT staff member Nick Gagnon, who were very willing to help. The Library just received a grant to update their website and thought this would be a great addition to the historical pages. The DAR has already done quite a bit of research and will work with the Library directly on the information side of this project. Julie Black had indicated they'd like the Cemetery staff to be involved throughout the process; however, Sirois and Moisan didn't feel that was necessary at this time. Sirois noted the division is only responsible for maintenance of the sign in the Cemetery. The Cemetery Board will approve the proposed design and verbiage of the sign. This sign will have a QR code or some kind of link so citizens can go see the information being put online by the Library. This way, research and updates can happen going ahead without having to change the sign.

B. Progress on New Columbarium

Sirois had a meeting today, February 8, with the City's Finance Department and Watertown Engineering (who is installing the 2 new columbaria). The original contract was for polished granite units, with granite on the inside and also individual granite shutters on the outside. This is different from the columbarium that is already in place, which has a poured concrete interior. Unfortunately, the new columbaria are being delayed due to shipping issues, as the granite comes from China. The new units were originally scheduled to be completed by April 2022. With the supply issues, Watertown requested the date be extended to October 2022, but there's a good chance they'll get further delayed until at least April 2023. As an alternative, they proposed that we switch to the poured concrete interior, which is something Watertown can do, and get the granite for the exteriors from Vermont, which is where the granite for the existing columbarium came from. If we agree to this, then chances are much better that they will be completed by October 2022. Even though the granite units are more expensive, the Watertown manager said they'll charge the amount agreed to in the contract. He is willing to do this because he doesn't like to miss deadlines and wants to honor the contract as much as possible. Marggraf noted that the internal portion of the columbarium is rarely seen, i.e. only briefly when ashes are inurned. After further discussion, the Cemetery Board agreed to go ahead with the alternate proposal. Sirois will take that recommendation back to Watertown. Finance has already agreed to the alternate proposal.



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C. Update on Request to Create Children's Garden in Cemetery

Sirois shared a drawing of the proposed stone, benches and features of the Children's Garden monument. If the Cemetery Board agrees to the design, then it will go in front of the City Council for approval at the end of February. Once this happens, then the carving of the stone can begin. This is being financed by Jasper's Heart, a non-profit organization that members met during previous Cemetery Board meetings. Wilson noted that the design is acceptable from the point of view of mowing and maintenance.

Motion: Marggraf made a motion to accept the design of the Children's Garden in the Cemetery

Second: Kelsch seconded the motion

Vote: U/A

D. Update on Changes to Meeting Schedule and By-Laws

The City Council approved the changes to our by-laws on October 13 (as discussed in September 2021). The number of meetings was reduced from 6 meetings per year to 5, eliminating the May meeting and moving the November meeting to December. The meetings will now be held on the second Tuesday in February, April, June, September, and December.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on Review of Cemetery Rules & Regulations – Sirois, Moisan and Wilson met to review and discuss updates to the Cemetery's Rules and Regulations. They made it about halfway through, noting a number of proposed changes. They will continue a first pass of changes, and will present them to the Cemetery Board for approval later in 2022.

B. Letter of recommendation to re-purpose the Pine Hill Cemetery barn area (South Pine St)

Sirois read a letter she drafted to Community Services Director John Storer regarding recommendations on re-purposing the barn area on South Pine Street. Members agreed the letter accurately stated the opinion of the Cemetery Board, as discussed in the last meeting. Sirois made a copy of the letter for Vice Chair Marggraf to sign and she'll deliver it to Director Storer on behalf of the Board.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Marggraf made a motion to adjourn at 7:26 PM

Second: Kelsch seconded the motion

Vote: U/A