

City of Dover

CEMETERY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery – *145 Court Street, Dover, NH 03820
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, April 19, 2022**
Meeting Time: **7:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE –

MEMBERS PRESENT: Martha Haley – Chair; Rob Marggraf – Vice Chair, Susan Kelsch – Secretary; Grover Tasker, Roderick Blake, Belinda Labourdette Alt. Members

MEMBERS ABSENT: (excused) Cathy Beaudoin – Alt. Member

STAFF PRESENT: Sharon Sirois – Facilities, Grounds & Cemetery Superintendent;

Members of the public: Julie Black, Chris Drown representing the Daughters of the American Revolution

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – Minutes were reviewed for Feb 8, 2022 meeting.

Motion: Grover Tasker made a motion to accept the minutes

Second: Martha Haley seconded the motion

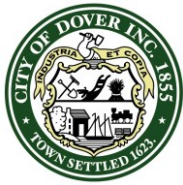
Vote: U/A

3. CEMETERY STAFF UPDATES

Cemetery Staff Updates: The gas tank at the new Facilities Grounds & Cemeteries building was moved to its permanent location and fencing was installed around it and also along the front of the building. We have been very busy with facilities issues, which is not uncommon in the winter months, when it is tough to do maintenance in the cemetery. During decent weather, we have begun cleaning up after winter and some of the windy rain storms we've experienced in the last two months. Seasonal employees that had stayed through the fall and winter left in March for five weeks, but are now back. We can only have them work a maximum of six months out of the year. They will be employed through August. We will be getting ready to mark out foundations and will be digging them for a pour date in the week of the 18th of May. We have been installing markers as they come in and the frost has left the ground. The office remains busy, continuing to field calls relating to lot purchases, ownership/burial rights, etc. Facilities, Grounds, & Cemeteries employees bid a sad farewell to Meghan Moisan, who moved on to a different adventure after sixteen years with the City (the last eight and a half with Facilities, Grounds, & Cemeteries). We were happy to welcome Bill Currier as our new full-time laborer. Bill made the switch from long term employment with Market Basket to the vocation his father works in, which is Public Works. He was tired of looking out the window while working very long hours and seems very happy to have joined Facilities, Grounds, & Cemeteries.

Discussion: No

Motion: Tasker made motion to accept the staff updates, unanimous in favor



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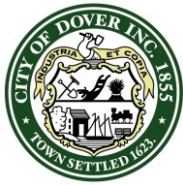
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4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

- a. This project was started in 2018 by Joanne Eaton, a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), as a gift to the city of Dover. However, she has now passed away and the impetus for action has fallen to her husband and other members of DAR. Julie Black and Chris Drown join us to discuss designs and verbiage for the sign/marker. Goal is to have the sign installed in late 2022 or spring of 2023.
- b. Black and Drown brought with them a printed design for the sign, along with proposed verbiage. Black noted that she has met with folks from the City's IT department and the Library to work out the technical details of the QR code that will be on the sign, so citizens can link to the Library's Web site and see more information about the Roberts Cemetery. This will include a spreadsheet of names of all persons believed to be buried at the Roberts Cemetery, according to research done by the DAR. The QR code will be removable in case it ever needs to be updated, or if new technology comes along to supersede the QR code.
- c. As for the design of the plaque itself, the DAR are now working with sign companies on price quotes. They have proposed two styles, one being a "lectern style" that the local DAR members like, but decision is still pending. We discussed briefly the importance of a design that will stand up to weather and salt/plowing.
- d. Kelsch requested that the verbiage in the explanation of the Roberts cemetery be changed to note that this is the final resting place of the first "European" settlers, and everyone agreed to that change. We also discussed if the reference to the Bible psalm would raise any objections by the City. We agreed that no, as far as we know, there is no blanket objection to such a reference on city property. The City will ultimately be the owners of the sign, although the cemetery itself is private.
- e. The sign will be located inside the cemetery, on the left side, but not too far back. Once the DAR has made a decision about the design of the plaque/marker, then Sirois and other Facilities staff will go with the DAR representatives to look at the cemetery and choose the best location. We recognize that there is already a sign on the fence surrounding this cemetery, and that sign will remain, independent of this DAR plaque/marker.
- f. The Cemetery Board agrees with the proposed design and verbiage of the sign, assuming the changes mentioned above. Next the DAR will put the wording in front of the Dover City Council (probably by email) for their initial approval. Once they agree, then the wording of the plaque will need to be approved by the national DAR organization, and they will probably have some minor tweaks. The Cemetery Board assumes that the changes by the national DAR organization will not be significant, and the DAR representatives will let us know if they are. Once those changes are made, then the Cemetery Board



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will write a letter approving the design. The local DAR chapter is hoping to get this finally approved in June/July of 2022, and the Cemetery Board could call a special meeting to discuss if need be.

- g. Then after that, the sign design and its location will be approved by the Dover Planning department. The final approval will come from the Dover City Council.

B. Progress on New Columbarium

- a. No news to report since our last meeting. We are waiting on the granite from Vermont, and as far as Sirois knows, the plan is still to have the new columbarium in place in October 2022.

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

- a. Sirois reports that the Children's Garden is moving ahead as we discussed in our last meeting. Sirois sent the leaders of the Jasper's Heart organization a quote (\$1759.68) for the concrete foundations that would be needed for the stone and other features. The hope is to pour the concrete in May at the same time the City is pouring other concrete in the cemetery, as this is the most economical option. We are waiting on their response to the concrete quote. Jasper's Heart is still hoping to have the stones in place by August 2022.

D. Update on Review of Cemetery Rules & Regulations

- a. No news at this time. City staff has proposed some changes. We discussed briefly a rule that says that 24 hours notice is required for a burial. Some members of the City would like to require 48 hours. However, that may pose some problems for Muslim or Jewish families. The City does make special accommodations (overtime) in many cases even now. At this time, no plan to put these rules changes in front of the City Council.

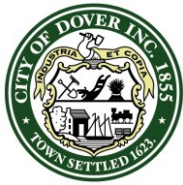
E. Letter of recommendation to re-purpose the Pine Hill Cemetery barn area (South Pine St).

The letter we agreed to in our last meeting was printed, signed by Margraff, and delivered to Community Services Director John Storer.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Fire Department request regarding Fire Department lot.

Near the area of Pinehill Cemetery where the fire department memorial stone and flag is now, Jamie Donovan of the Fire Department has asked if it is possible for firefighters to be buried there, or a portion of their remains be buried there, with markers. Sirois researched the question and could not find record of what was paid or agreed to when the fire department section was first established. No records or contracts can be found. She then asked Tasker if he knew the history, but he did not know the details. Sirois knows that there are 24 lots there, and one firefighter is buried there. Sirois recommended that Donovan reach out to some



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other members of the community who may know the history. Donovan is working on acquiring a memorial stone, using funds from the Fireman's Relief Association, and he will get back to Sirois after that happens. Sirois cautioned him that the City will need to know the criteria for being buried in that section, and whether the firefighters would need to purchase a grave there. Sirois also noted that there has long been a City policy that City employees may be buried in the City cemeteries free of charge for the burial, although they do have to pay for the grave. Sirois will continue to work on this.

b. Tree maintenance in Pine Hill Cemetery

Member Roderick Blake brought up the question of tree maintenance in the older part of Pine Hill Cemetery. He noted a number of trees that seem to have dangerous limbs, as well trees that are already dropping branches. He asked how much tree work is planned. Sirois reports that Urban Tree Service has been working in Pine Hill Cemetery since the start of April, removing limbs and even whole trees. This tree work is an annual practice. And every year the City tries to plant new trees, of different varieties. Sirois will include more details in our June meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Tasker made a motion to adjourn at 8:06 PM

Second: Margraff seconded the motion

Vote: U/A