

CITY OF DOVER

CEMETERY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery - 145 Court Street, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, December 9, 2025**
Meeting Time: **5:30 pm**

Members Present: Chair Susan Kelsch, Vice-Chair Belinda Labourdette, Secretary Jessica LaMontagne, Cathy Beaudoin, Councilor Robert Warach

Members Excused Absent: Katie Smith

Alternate Members Excused Absent: Mike Wilson

Alternate Members Unexcused Absent: Jamie Tymann

Staff Present: Mark Colonna, Facilities, Grounds & Cemetery Superintendent, Jennifer Bretz, Facilities, Grounds & Cemetery Office Manager

1. Call to Order & Attendance

Meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of September 9, 2025

Motion: Beaudoin made the motion to approve the minutes, Labourdette seconded.

Vote: U/A

3. Cemetery Staff Updates

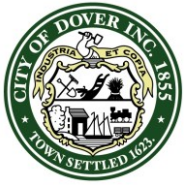
August 2025:

The Facilities, Grounds and Cemetery Division received 83 Service Requests of which 73 were closed, and 99 Work Orders of which 88 were completed and closed in the month of August. There were twelve work orders pertaining to cemetery issues, thirty-five work orders pertaining to facility issues, ten work orders pertaining to grounds issues, fifteen work orders related to sign issues, nine work orders related to traffic and street light issues, twenty-two work orders related to recreation, seven work orders pertaining to tree issues.

Three full burials, three ash burials, and no columbarium niche interments were conducted in the Pine Hill Cemetery this month. Two full graves, no cremation graves, and no columbarium niches were sold this month.

The Indonesian flag was raised for the week on August 17th to honor Indonesian Independence Day. State flags were lowered in honor of fallen Norwood Fire Captain Christopher Brown on Thursday August 28th. All flags were lowered to half-staff through the Labor Day weekend in honor of the victims of the tragic school shooting in Minneapolis Minnesota.

Crews brought in and spread new bark mulch at all the playgrounds throughout the city, concentrating on getting the ones located at schools finished up before the start of the new school year. Also, for the start of the new school year, School Zone traffic warning lights were tested, adjusted, cleared of obstructions and turned on.



CITY OF DOVER

CEMETERY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery - 145 Court Street, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, December 9, 2025**
Meeting Time: **5:30 pm**

Crews brought in and spread fresh sand at the Long Hill Dog Park. They also cleaned up and prepared several more Adopt-a-Spots for their new adopters. The crew also took some rainy-day opportunities to assist the Planning Department with removing several non-compliant 'yard' signs throughout the city. Unfortunately, these signs have become a blight on the landscape. On the Thursday afternoon before the holiday a volunteer group, led by the American Legion, places American flags on hundreds of veteran's graves throughout the cemetery. In addition to that there is a ceremony at the Veteran's Circle at Pine Hill Cemetery on the Monday holiday orchestrated by the Woodman Museum and includes guest speakers.

September 2025:

The Facilities, Grounds and Cemetery Division received 93 Service Requests of which 75 were closed, and 100 Work Orders of which 80 were completed and closed in the month of September.

There were nine work orders pertaining to cemetery issues, twenty-six work orders pertaining to facility issues, six work orders pertaining to grounds issues, nineteen work orders related to sign issues, eleven work orders related to traffic and street light issues, twenty-two work orders related to recreation and seven work orders pertaining to tree issues.

Two full burials, and four ash interments were conducted in the Pine Hill Cemetery this month. Six full graves and no cremation spaces were sold this month.

In the city's ongoing mission to replace the sickly ash trees downtown, six more were removed and replaced this month with a variety of young trees. The new trees being installed are a mix of native varieties so that they are acclimated to the region and hopefully will not all fall prey at the same time to any future diseases or pests.

Crews took some time to clean up Immigrants Park, at the corner of Main Street and School Street. The white painted walls and benches were pressure washed and the trees were trimmed up to make the flags more visible. The planting bed had been prettied up with seasonal plants also.

Crews have been working with contractors to continue the process of replacing the obsolete decorative street lights along the downtown corridor. An additional twenty-two light poles have been removed and rewired. The installation of the new poles will be ongoing until they are done.

Additional Winter Parking Ban signs were installed on New York Street, Freeman Court, Northway Circle, Western Ave, and Westgate Drive. These signs will prevent vehicles from parking on the street art night during the winter months so that plow crews can keep those roads open.

Every year on September 11th, flags are lowered to half-staff in honor of Patriots Day, in remembrance of all the lives lost to the tragic events of September 11th, 2001. Additionally, this year, flags were lowered to half-staff from September 11th until September 14th. This was a proclamation by President Donald J. Trump "Honoring the memory of Charlie Kirk".



CITY OF DOVER

CEMETERY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery - 145 Court Street, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, December 9, 2025**
Meeting Time: **5:30 pm**

October 2025:

The Facilities, Grounds and Cemetery Division received 94 Service Requests of which 80 were closed, and 116 Work Orders of which 102 were completed and closed in the month of October.

There were thirty-four work orders pertaining to cemetery issues, thirty work orders pertaining to facility issues, three work orders pertaining to grounds issues, seventeen work orders related to sign issues, fourteen work orders related to traffic and street light issues, fifteen work orders related to recreation and three work orders pertaining to tree issues.

Five full burials, and four ash interments were conducted in the Pine Hill Cemetery this month. Two full graves and no cremation space were sold this month.

In the city's ongoing mission to replace the sickly ash trees downtown, five more were removed and replaced this month with a variety of young trees. The new trees being installed are a mix of native varieties so that they are acclimated to the region and hopefully will not all fall prey at the same time to any future diseases or pests.

Crews have been working with the city electrician to continue the process of replacing the obsolete decorative street lights along the Joe B Parks Riverwalk. A total of sixteen light poles have been replaced and rewired. The installation of four new poles within Waldron Court will be next up on the replacement list.

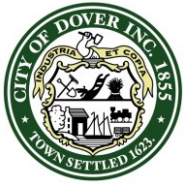
Several crew members worked with a contractor to assist with removing and repouring concrete sidewalk panels throughout the downtown area to correct several trips hazards that have developed over the years due to ground heaving and shifting.

Additional chevron signs were added at the curve in outer Sixth Street, where there have been fatal car accidents in the last couple of years. These chevrons will make the curve more visible on approach from both directions.

The Emergency Warming Center, located in Somersworth, is operated jointly by the cities of Dover, Rochester and Somersworth. Each Fall, in preparation of the upcoming season, there are safety inspections performed at the facility. The Fire Chiefs of all three cities perform a walk-through and make note of any obvious corrections that are needed. This division then performs those corrections. In addition, the fire alarm system and sprinkler system are tested to make sure all devices are in working order. All fire extinguishers are also all inspected.

In the month of October, the Fall foundation pour is performed at the Pine Hill Cemetery. This pour entails tallying orders from local monument dealers, generating maps so that crews can locate and dig holes where needed, and pouring the concrete bases that the new monuments will be set on.

Crews worked with members of the Streets & Drainage Division and members of the School Department maintenance contractor, CW, to install additional drainage under the outfield of Woodman Park Ball Field.



CITY OF DOVER

CEMETERY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery - 145 Court Street, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, December 9, 2025**
Meeting Time: **5:30 pm**

Motion: Labourdette made the motion to accept the staff updates, Lamontagne seconded.

Vote: U/A

4. Unfinished Business

A. Ground Penetrating Radar Review

Discussed GPR surveys of the Roberts and Pine Hill Cemeteries. Colonna provided a copy of an email from Jacob Tumelaire that is conducting the survey, and described how the survey machine works and the preliminary findings. So far it appears there are 112-116 graves in the Roberts Cemetery. Very few have markers. The final survey will give a better idea of the size of the rows and shape.

There was discussion regarding the Pinkham Cemetery. June Pinkham is cleaning up the cemetery with help of a volunteer. Beaudoin commented that we tried to organize a Friends of the Cemetery group of volunteers, similar to the Friends of the Library but this did not really take off. Will try to get that going again.

Colonna also discussed that June Pinkham was interested in the city taking over the cemetery. He told her that once a cemetery is considered abandoned, the process of trying to get the city to take over is a very long one. He encouraged her to keep up with the volunteer route. He does not feel the department has the staff to take on more cemeteries to maintain.

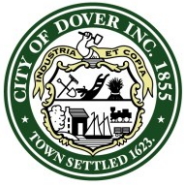
B. Green Burials

Bretz confirmed that the City Manager has received the report. Beaudoin commented that the City of Portsmouth is looking into green burial.

5. New Business

A. Veteran Medallions or Flag Holders

Colonna reported that we've always had rule of thumb: nothing in or on the grass. This is because flags or medallions can make it harder for mowing and weed whacking. Flowers, sentimental items, and rocks (in the Jewish section) are also left against policy and are problematic for ground maintenance. However, this practice still goes on. Colonna commented about the lack of clearly written and updated rules, and an inability to police violators of this policy. The two weeks around Memorial Day "the cemetery super bowl" was also discussed in which cemetery staff with local Veteran's groups who put flags up on all the Veteran's graves, and they keep them up for the weeks before and after the holiday and then we take them down. Colonna would like to have a policy of allowing flags or medallions (flag holders) between monuments only, where they won't get in the way of the lawn mower. They cannot be allowed over the flat markers because the mower needs to run over these. It was suggested that we try to get work crews from the county jail again to help with maintenance. The board also discussed getting ahead of any negative publicity regarding veterans by organizing a meeting or event so the public understands our Memorial Day exemption to this policy and the general policy.



CITY OF DOVER

CEMETERY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery - 145 Court Street, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, December 9, 2025**
Meeting Time: **5:30 pm**

B. Cemetery Condition

Beaudoin commented that she sees a lot of deterioration of the stones and pathways in Pine Hill. Colonna said he wants the cemetery to look better but does not have enough staff. Staff focus on area around upcoming burials but cannot keep cemetery in best condition without more staff.

C. Privacy

There was discussion about privacy for both board members and staff by having their phone numbers and addresses on the city website, and how staff no longer have cell phones posted but can be reached 24/7 in an emergency.

D. Scattering Area

There was brief discussion about the possibility of a scattering area in back of Lot 24, the wooded area past the unknown graves. There are already natural paths back there.

6. Next Meeting Date

February 10, 2026

7. Adjournment

Motion: Labourdette made the motion to adjourn at 6:49 p.m., Beaudoin seconded.

Vote: U/a