

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting  
Meeting Location: Pine Hill Cemetery – 131 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820  
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, February 10, 2015**  
Meeting Time: **7:00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Belinda Labourdette – Chair, JoAnn Rohde, Rob Marggraf

**STAFF PRESENT:** Sharon Sirois – Facilities, Grounds & Cemetery Superintendent, Meghan Moisan – Administrative Coordinator

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Grover Tasker – Secretary, Scott MacKenzie, (*Otis Perry - Resigned*)

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Labourdette called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes were reviewed for the November 18, 2014 meeting.

**Motion:** Rohde made a motion to accept the minutes.

**Second:** Marggraf seconded the motion

**Vote:** U/A

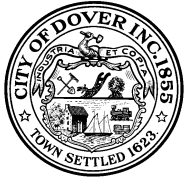
**3. CEMETERY STAFF UPDATES:** Sirois provided the staff updates. Services for former Cemetery Board member Bill Knowles were held on November 21<sup>st</sup>. A total of six burials were performed in November, five in December and four in January. Branch removal and leaf pickup in PHC continued into December. A lot of time has been spent dealing with a variety of F&G-related requests. Employees kept busy trying to keep up with the snow, both outside the cemetery and within. Extra time was also spent maintaining roadways, clearing lots and thawing the ground in order to accommodate recent burials. It's not uncommon for a winter burial to take upwards of 18 man-hours to complete, particularly after the recent storms. The grave heater has been essential when having to dig through a foot or so of frost. Various lots were pre-marked in Group 21 to help locate graves once the grounds became snow covered. A new employee was recently hired into the division and another vacancy is expected. Sirois is almost finished working on a map of the cemetery for new signs to be posted at the entrances. She would also like to get everything together soon for the master plan.

Members questioned the process of winter burials and high costs associated with performing them. Burials scheduled immediately after a large snowstorm are especially time-consuming. Possible solutions were discussed, such as holding off on burials or adding a surcharge if additional labor and/or equipment are needed. Marggraf believed it would be a lot more feasible to postpone a burial for a couple days, if needed, as opposed to cutting them off altogether during certain times. A cost analysis done several years ago indicated the numbers evened out; however, it was agreed this was something the board should look into again. The current rules do state (under Section 5): "The Cemetery Division reserves the right to postpone interment time due to acts of God, nature, civil and national emergencies". Members felt any changes would need to be spelled out and not open to interpretation. Labourdette asked to have this added to the April agenda for further review.

**Motion:** Marggraf made a motion to accept the report.

**Second:** Rohde seconded the motion

**Vote:** U/A



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#### 4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

##### A. REVIEW CEMETERY RULES & REGULATIONS

**1. Review Draft Copy of Proposed Rule Changes (postponed from last meeting)** – Labourdette briefly explained the review process, how it was initiated, and recapped some of the proposed changes. Once the draft changes are accepted by the board, they will be presented to the City Council for approval. Rohde said she had not been present for the discussions, since she recently joined, but wanted to comment on the differences she's observed between the two sections of the cemetery. She felt the layout in the groups was too uniform and didn't have the same character as the sections. Rohde also thought the engraving guidelines for columbarium niches were too rigid and would like the rules to allow for more creativity (noting an earlier request she submitted to the Cemetery Board for the inclusion of a border had been denied). Marggraf recalled the determination had not been easy; however, the uniform design was purposely chosen because of the close proximity of the niches. Therefore, the Board backed their original decision to not allow modifications. Sirois believed another columbarium would likely be added down the road and another layout could be chosen at that time. Labourdette said she liked what they had for proposed changes so far but wanted to add or expand on the section re winter weather considerations. Any additional charges agreed on by the board would be identified in the fee schedule but should also be mentioned in the rules. Since the columbarium rules were just adopted in 2009, the board had decided not to include them in the recent review process. It was questioned whether the two sets of rules should be combined. Moisan was asked to email members a copy of the columbarium rules prior to the next meeting.

**5. NEW BUSINESS:** Rohde inquired whether Pine Hill was considered a non-profit cemetery. She passed around information on a few non-profit cemeteries from different states, explaining some of the advantages. One benefit would be the ability to solicit donations, which could help fund chapel restorations and beautify the cemetery. Some of the cemeteries offered tours, classes, volunteer opportunities and promoted park-like atmospheres. Rohde thought these ideas could create interest in Pine Hill and make it more visible to the community. Members discussed sustainability and whether there would be issues with funding. Sirois said she would check the status with the Finance Director. Labourdette asked Rohde if she could email these links to the members.

Labourdette informed members that Otis Perry had resigned from the board. His years of service are appreciated and he will be missed. Labourdette relayed her concerns with the recent loss of some long-term members, who had the best grasp of the rules and procedures. She thought it would be a good idea for the board to reach out for assistance to ensure we're following the rules and going about things the right way.

#### 6. ADJOURNMENT:

**Motion:** Rohde made a motion to adjourn at 8:05 PM

**Second:** Marggraf seconded the motion

**Vote:** U/A

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 14, 2015*