



TOWN OF BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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CEMETERY TRUSTEES

Minutes

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Present: Brian Rater, Chair; Ann Somers, Secretary; Ann Webb, newly appointed Trustee, not sworn in or voting; Tad Putney, Town Administrator. **Not present:** Jerry Farwell, Sexton

Brian called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Welcome to new Trustee

We welcomed **Ann Webb** as our new Trustee.

Agenda adjustments

We added Budget to the extensive agenda, as it had inadvertently been left off.

Minutes

Ann S moved, seconded by **Brian**, to approve the July 17th minutes as written; voted Yes 2-0, **Ann W** abstaining.

250th Parade review

Brian reported that there was no damage done or any incidents of note at Pine Grove or Lakeside cemeteries.

Cemetery Tour/Lecture

Former Trustee **Keith Thompson** had proposed via email for our consideration a Library program consisting of a lecture and historical cemetery tour, likely next year. **Brendan** had earlier suggested a cemetery tour as part of the 250th celebration, but the resources were not sufficient to make this happen. **Ann W** will explore the idea with the Historical Society for next year.

Record-Keeping transition from Lotus to Excel

Ann S has not yet been able to meet with Jerry to achieve this; she will pursue it. All involved are eager for it to happen.

Reports on cemetery maintenance

1. **Gravel** in Pine Grove's avenue and ways: The deep ruts in the Avenue have been filled. Concerns were expressed variously about addressing Nissitissit Way east and west (**Tad**, ref. **Del Porter**), and part of the west segment of Potanipo Way (**Ann S**). Further evaluation is needed. **Tad** will be in touch with Jerry, including about completing the grid map for the southwest section of the cemetery. No gravel can be put on Potanipo Way until that has been done, and there is also the question about encouraging or discouraging driving in that sensitive area.
2. **Brian** stated that he would like at some point to revisit the question of gravestone maintenance, which currently by policy we do not do.
3. **Tad** reminded us that there remains one large pine on Route 130 that has been rendered dangerous by woodpeckers and must come down. The cost estimate is over \$1,000 due to the need for a crane.
4. We agreed that in general Pine Grove Cemetery is looking well maintained.
5. **Replacing the North Cemetery** fence with a wall: We need a budgetary estimate of costs. There was discussion about whether to prioritize the Pine Grove fence completion vs. the North Cemetery replacement of fence with a low stone wall. We also discussed the visibility in winter of a low stone wall. The snow fence that is currently used could still be used to define and protect a low stone wall under snow. The current fence is within the State's right of way, so a new wall would be built farther away from the road.

Completion of fence at Pine Grove

1. We need to clarify with Jerry whether we have on hand enough materials to complete the fence
2. We agreed with Tad that further fence work on South Main should take place only after the sidewalk project on has been completed next summer.
3. As part of completion, we would like to update the old gate at Potanipo Lane on Route 130, which is in very poor condition and unattractive.

Pine Grove sidewalk update and tree discussion

Next summer there will be 12 large pines removed along South Main Street in conjunction with the sidewalk project. We will be offered replacement trees. There is no expert involved in the project to consult regarding replacement trees. We will need to evaluate and decide upon the types of trees to plant, probably by spring 2020.

Pine Grove old well and pump

Brendan Denehy has brought to our attention that the wood platform surrounding the antique pump has deteriorated and presents a risk. The pump is only decorative at present. After considerable discussion, we determined that we would simply have the well hole filled for safety. **Tad** will contact DPW Director Mike Wenrich to that end.

Columbaria

Including columbaria at Pine Grove (grouped niches for storing cremated remains above ground) has been of interest to the sexton and public for some time. **Ann S** reported on research which suggests that lower-end units run about \$200-300 per niche. Per conversation with Jerry, Pine Grove typically has around 7 burials per year, some regular burials and some cremations (several of which can fit in a single plot). Jerry suggested a goal of 500 niches. Questions arise as to cost (\$100,000+ to do 500 at one time) or whether matching styles is desirable/possible if purchases are spread out. We agreed that such a project needs more consideration and planning. There was general agreement that some sort of peaceful place for reflection would be a part of the plan.

Invoice process

It has come to our attention that payment for work contracted by the Cemetery Trustees has been handled via a process that predates the formation of the Cemetery Trustees and needs to be updated. Following clarification by **Tad** and general discussion, **Brian** moved, seconded by **Ann S**, that as a matter of policy we [now] require the signatures of at least two of the Cemetery Trustees on all checks.

Budget

Tad brought a draft from last year to facilitate discussion.

While the entire two-year plan for tree removal at Pine Grove was achieved in 2019, there is an additional tree at Pine Grove that was recently found to need removal due to woodpecker activity. Also, there are trees at Lakeside that need attention and/or removal. Brian noted that the long-term goal for the Cemetery Trust Funds is that the funds grow to the point where maintenance can be managed from the interest. **Ann S** moved, **Brian** seconding, that the Cemetery Trustees budget for 2020 be \$20,000. Voted Yes 2-0, **Ann W** abstaining.

Cemetery Trustees contact information

The Trustees exchanged personal contact information.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The next meeting will be held December 17, 2019, 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted

Ann C. Somers