



TOWN OF  
**BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

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**CEMETERY TRUSTEES**

**Minutes**

**Tuesday, June 16, 2020**

**Present:**

Brian Rater, Chair  
Ann Somers, Secretary  
Ann Webb, Member

**Also present:**

Michael Wenrich, Sexton  
Tad Putney, Town Administrator  
Peter Webb, Hollis-Brookline Rotary representative  
Brendan Denehy at Lakeside discussion

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m. at Pine Grove Cemetery. There was no public input.

**Minutes**

The April 2<sup>nd</sup> minutes were approved unanimously as written.

**Appointment of Sexton**

Since our last meeting, **Ann Webb** talked as agreed with Mike Wenrich, who expressed comfort in accepting the Sexton position, and the **Selectboard** recommended that he be appointed. **Ann Somers moved to appoint Mike as Sexton, Ann Webb seconded, and all three trustees voted in favor.** The appointment is ongoing, and the historical election at Annual Town Meeting is discontinued.

**Transition of Records**

**Brian will schedule a meeting** to discuss and determine a process for the transition of records from the care of retiring sexton Jerry Farwell to those who will be involved going forward. In addition to the past and current sexton and the trustees, the parties involved will include the town clerk, town administrator, and one or more members of the former sexton's staff.

### **New trees for Pine Grove/South Main sidewalk project**

The requested detailed recommendations for trees along the fence were provided to Town Administrator Tad Putney, but due to expanded costs for the project, **Tad** said it has been determined there will be no funds available from the project grant budget. He expressed the hope that there will be other means found for adding trees along the fence where the pines will be removed.

### **PINE GROVE CEMETERY**

**Veteran flag stands:** **Brian** said the American Legion (represented by Greg D'Arbonne) would like to add stands for flags on eligible graves that do not have them. **Tad** noted that Greg had done the necessary research and they had acquired a few for Town Hall. **Ann Webb will work with Greg toward adding flag stands where needed.**

**Well/pump:** **Mike** has done a nice job on filling the well for safety and appearance, and securing the pump.

**Gravel in roadways:** We noted the welcome addition of gravel filling in some ruts in the roads, and discussed the need for further additions. **Mike** recommended we commit to an annual budget item for gravel maintenance (a "tri-axle load") and **will provide a figure for our next budget meeting.** We discussed the need to provide sufficient maintenance without encouraging the cut-through use which is an ongoing problem.

**South Main entrances/sidewalk project:** **Tad** requested guidance for the sidewalk project engineers about where to put aprons for the unpaved cross roads. We agreed that Potanipo Way (closest to Cross Road) will become a straight road, with the small pines relocated. **Ann Webb suggested that the two granite posts along Potanipo Way near the vault could be moved to the entrance on South Main Street.** We discussed pros and cons regarding Nissitissit Way (the middle road), with the proximity of two maple trees and some graves and plot corners defining the challenges. At **Mike's** suggestion, **we will have a meeting using a garden hose to help guide our decision. In both cases, the granite posts will be re-established so that they are about two feet farther apart than the two tall ones at the current Nissitissit entrance.**

**Grave/grounds maintenance:** The cemetery has been freshly mown and looks good. There are a number of old stones that are leaning or broken, and **Brian expressed a desire to have a strategy in their regard.**

**Trees:** A silver maple on Sparrow Tucker Avenue (the main road) between 16 Pierce and 5 Storer (T3-W) has one large dead limb (half dropped recently) and a few high dead branches at risk of dropping onto graves. **Mike will talk with Ron of Souhegan tree service about combining this work with the already-planned removal of a large pine along Route 130** which was discovered last year to be dangerously weakened.

**Fencing:** **Tad** suggested we **close the gap between the two runs on fence on South Main Street** (and address a topography issue for the sidewalk project) by angling two sections of the outer fence toward the inner. **All three trustees agreed that was acceptable with the condition that a small gate would provide walking access** into the cemetery at that point. We noted yet again that the fencing remains to be completed, and that state law requires that cemeteries be fenced. There was some discussion around the advisability of entry gates.

### **Gridlines for southwest section of Pine Grove:**

The planned gridding (surveying) of the balance of Pine Grove Cemetery has still not been done. This **needs to be done along with the transition from sexton to sexton.**

## **NORTH CEMETERY**

**Brian** described to Mike our plan to remove the vinyl fence which is on state property and replace it with a rough stone wall within the town's property. We determined that if the stone wall were to align with the two adjacent telephone poles, there would be sufficient room for parking along the street and no graves risked. We would leave a gap in the stones as an entrance.

**Ann Webb will work with Greg D'Arbonne about the possibility of replacing the plaque missing (for years) from one side of the vault.** **Tad** noted that there are old cemetery maps in the downstairs corridor at Town Hall. **Peter** noted that the Historical Society has a 1941 inventory of graves.

## **CEMETERY IN THE WOODS**

We noted the anonymous addition of two lanterns between the monument rock and the fence. The fence is in much better shape than previously, and the grounds look good even without work having been done this year.

## **LAKESIDE CEMETERY**

One of the slabs of the vault has fallen. **Tad will speak with Jerry about action/recommendations/access point.**

The stone fencing on the town (east?) side of the cemetery was never completed; Brian and Brendan are willing to participate in/support completion. They suggest it be done in conjunction with the North Cemetery stone wall. Note: these stones are largely flat, while the North Cemetery stones are generally rounded.

Two gravestones were noted to have fallen. One was replaced on its base during our visit; the base of the other is tilted, so it was left as we found it. No action determined at present.

Some needed tree work was noted; **Brendan will prune the low branches of the large central oak and any deadwood suitable for his equipment.** We will need professional attention for some of the maples, but no urgency or action currently. **Brendan will also trim the bittersweet on the Robbins grave** for mowing convenience; as it is currently not spreading we are choosing not to remove it. It is not clear whether it is being visited/maintained by family.

**Brendan** and **Brian** have cleaned a number of the grave markers; the difference between aged and cleaned is striking, particularly with old white marble markers. **Ann Webb** raised the possibility of a Friends of the Cemeteries committee, whose members might help with graves care, research, fundraising, and the like. Peter said he would be interested.

Next meetings:

**Brian will suggest dates** for: Transition meeting ASAP; "garden hose" meeting at Nissitissit Way; September (budget); December (annual report); and March 2021 (first for new board).

The meeting adjourned at 7:48

Minutes submitted by Ann Somers

*Approved 9/15/20*