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**TOWN OF
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Cemetery Trustees**

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<http://www.brooklinenh.us>

***Brookline Cemetery Trustees Minutes
Wednesday, May 26, 2021***

Meeting held via Zoom per Executive Order 2020-04 and Emergency Orders #12 and #23

Attending:

Brian Rater, chair
Ann Somers, secretary
Judy Cook, member
Mike Wenrich, sexton

The meeting opened virtually at 7:31 pm, with members observing Covid protocols as to whereabouts, reason, and others present.

There was no public input. .

Approve minutes

The minutes of April 15th were approved as written. Brian-Y, Ann-Y, Judy-Y

Approve invoice

Judy moved, Ann seconded, to approve an invoice Mike had presented via email for new lumber to protect open graves prior to burials. Judy-Y, Brian-Y, Ann-Y

Sexton: communication, tasking, time management discussion

Brian noted that the Selectboard had approved the Brookline Public Works department's covering sexton duties, following the retirement of Jerry Farwell, with the provision that it should not require an inordinate amount of time, which they are tracking. Brian noted that we should be mindful of Mike's constraints.

Update from Sexton

Mike spoke of the recent transfer of Pine Grove plot #350 from one ownership to another on short notice. He had forwarded the paperwork to the trustees prior to the meeting, and we expressed our appreciation of his smooth handling of the matter. He noted an unusual number of burials scheduled

currently, especially cremations, likely a result of Covid-19 timing adjustments. He was pleased with the records updates by Judy and Ann which made it easier for him to locate plots.

Mike noted that the South Main Street sidewalk project is delayed yet again, which in fact is convenient for our scheduling of lane adjustments, since we have other more pressing matters to address.

Mike has cleaned out the “vault,” the maintenance building at Pine Grove, and will leave it unlocked in the morning for others to look over the remaining materials for possible use or historical interest.

The recently transferred grave is directly behind that building, and that area which has historically been an accumulation spot for various detritus has been cleaned and will no longer be allowed to serve that purpose. **Ann** noted that there is a similar accumulation spot just north of the fence at the pine grove entry. We will need to consider further how to manage/provide for grave-freshening leftovers that people want to leave behind.

Judy asked Mike whether a new roof was planned for the vault – we agreed to check the condition of the present roof to determine need.

Corner markers: **Mike** has switched from granite markers to metal rods for marking plot corners, for both stability and precision. Many families are purchasing custom corner markers, and they may be placed anywhere within the bounds defined by the metal rods.

Mike spoke of the paper trail – full-burial permits (not required for cremations) go to Town Clerk Patti Howard; Mike retains the death certificates. **Judy** expressed an interest in seeing that ALL burials are recorded with birth/death dates and exact grave locations, and are entered into the annual Town Report for genealogical purposes.

Mike raised the issue of getting our documentation data onto the town web site. **Judy** and **Ann** assured him that that was the intent. Judy suggested upgrading our current table to an Excel spreadsheet, and Brian noted that that could be turned into an HTML table that would be searchable by the public without being editable.

Mike reported that his new employee, **Tyler**, is fitting in very comfortably as assistant sexton.

Irrigation Trust Fund

Brian reported that the irrigation trust fund currently holds around \$11,000, and the trustees have access only to the interest. Currently the interest approximately covers the cost of electricity for running the pumps.

Water spigots

The water system has been turned on; there are four or five spigots, one of which is not operational. **Mike** would like to upgrade them, and to have one leaking line repaired.

Stone fence at North Cemetery

Mike reported that he (or his employee Tyler) will remove the old fencing by the end of this week, and will plan to have the rocks on site in time for our June 12th walkaround meeting.

Gate options at North Cemetery

Judy has identified old granite posts at Pine Grove that would provide appropriate support and appearance within the stone wall at North Cemetery. We will view them during the walkaround on June 12th and determine which will be used. She has contacted John Weidman for an estimate for constructing the gate that she and her husband Peter propose to donate.

Pine Grove fencing update

Judy reported that there are a few materials remaining in Jerry Farwell's custody. **Mike will transfer them to the vault. From there he will inventory supplies and determine what will be needed to complete the fence.** We anticipate doing that after the sidewalk project is completed, either late this year or more likely sometime next year. We anticipate hiring the work out. **Mike will also move the several small pines that conflict with the sidewalk project.**

Update to burial process guideline

Mike did an excellent job of describing the process, Ann provided minor edits, and we all approved the document. There are likely to be adjustments in the future to this and to the Right to Inter form.

Update on identification of Veteran graves

The identification of Veteran graves is as close to complete as is feasible; from time to time new ones are found and added to the list.

Update on options for Veteran flag stands

Judy noted that **Ann and Peter Webb** are interested doing something for the Veterans, and **Judy** thought that providing flag holders for those graves which do not have them might be a worthy project. We discussed the possibility of a fundraiser created through the Historical Society or VFW. (The VFW hopes to promote purchases for new interments at the time of burial.) **Judy** noted that resin holders are available at modest cost, while bronze ones are substantially more expensive. We estimated that around 75 would be needed for Pine Grove, as well as some for Lakeside.

Update on status of cemetery burial records

Judy and **Ann** reported progress in both data and photo records, with a hope to be completed by the end of the summer.

Discussion of ground cover

Judy noted that some of the old plots with raised borders would look more attractive with the addition of clover or vinca. We concurred, with the vinca likely used in the more shaded areas and the clover in the sunnier spots. Ann spoke to keeping the blueberries (low bush) in the "Ancient" section as they are. **We will consider this during the June walkaround meeting.**

Repair and cleaning of monuments

Judy has attended workshops focused on repairing and cleaning old grave markers, and would like to do some work on some of markers in Pine Grove, specifically some tall limestone ones that have fallen, and the “Rockwood Five” which are stained, tilted and broken. **We will review during the walkaround.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m. The next meetings are scheduled as follows:

Saturday, June 12, 2:30 p.m. at Lakeside, to include North Cemetery and Cemetery in the Woods

Sunday, June 13, 9:00 a.m. at Pine Grove, north entrance

Thursday, June 17, 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

TBD, Workday at North Cemetery -- To Build a Wall

Minutes submitted by Ann C. Somers