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

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<http://www.brooklinenh.us>

***Brookline Cemetery Trustees Minutes  
Wednesday, June 17, 2021***

Meeting held in person at Town Hall

Attending:

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

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.  
There was no public input.

**Approve invoice**

An invoice had just been received for mowing/maintenance at Pine Grove and Lakeside cemeteries, and was approved unanimously. Mowing Pine Grove runs around 15 hours, \$900; for Lakeside typically about 4 hours, \$240.

**Approve minutes**

The minutes of May 26<sup>th</sup>, June 12<sup>th</sup> and June 13<sup>th</sup> were approved unanimously as written.

**Update from Sexton**

The DOT has provided guidance for the state right-of-way which will govern the position of the rock wall to be constructed at North Cemetery. **Weather permitting, a wall-building “party” will take place on July 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 9am and 3pm. Brian will post on social media an invitation seeking volunteers.**

**Mike will secure an estimate for tree trimming at Lakeside,** to include heavy deadwood from the large maples, light deadwood over the nearby stone wall, and the “woodpecker tree” at Pine Grove.

We had **extensive discussion around fencing completion, encompassing all four cemeteries**. Woods is granite posts with horizontal manufactured rails – simple and low maintenance. Manufactured pickets along the road at Lakeside are not particularly compatible with snowplowing or auto accidents, but they do match the ones at Pine Grove (those from North did not). Stone wall might be better for Lakeside, with the pickets moved to Pine Grove. Discussion about accidents, risks to slate grave markers nearby.

Pine Grove’s manufactured pickets are expensive and fragile, and we will need many more for completion. Another possibility mentioned was post and chain. And another question arose: Do we treat the stones and trees along western Cross Road as “fence,” or how do we handle that section? **Mike suggested that we might swap materials among cemeteries. He will check into pricing** toward further discussion. **We will need an inventory of all materials that are under consideration for use or re-use**. Given the five-figure anticipated cost, **Judy** raised the question of whether a warrant article would be a better approach for funding than a large budget item.

Asked about adding gravel to some of the roads in Pine Grove, **Mike** said he simply had not had time. (For the record: more burials than usual this year due to Covid postponements, moving forward on North Cemetery wall replacement; the new Brookline Public Works (BPW) building construction, many changes at the Transfer Station; and roadwork and planning, all the latter being his primary responsibilities.)

### **Systems for assigning plot numbers**

**Judy** would like to overlay Pine Grove with a new numbering system. The current system derives from a history of successive acquisitions and decisions made to expand into initially unassigned areas. We need to maintain the currently mapped numbers, as they are incorporated into legal documents, but would develop a cross-reference list so that new numbering would start at the top (north) section of the map and work downward. Brian would like to see a single list which incorporates all of the cemeteries; the current Word document does that by using the prefixes N, L and P. **An issue that must be addressed is making it obvious within the numbering formats whether one is looking at an original number or the updated one.** New plots would follow the new scheme.

Mike noted that a “rule of thumb” says that we have **space remaining for approximately 1,000 new burials at Pine Grove**, with the current mix of full burial and cremains.

### **Request to plant a tree on a lot**

A request has been made to plant a tree within a plot. We agree that size and growth characteristics are critical. **Mike will talk with the family and bring the result to the Trustees for approval.**

### **Discussion of policy regarding planting trees and shrubs as monuments**

In light of the above, **Brian will draft a policy for us to formalize.** It will include pre-approval. Only small and slow-growing shrubs and trees will be approved for individual graves.

### **Repair and cleaning of monuments**

**We agreed unanimously that the five Rockwood monuments currently labeled P149 in T2-W will be a good place to test cleaning and repairing.** They are stained, they are tilted, and two are broken. **Judy will arrange it.**

### **Public notice of repairing monuments that are not actively being cared for**

**Ann** was concerned that notice of plans to repair unattended markers was required by individual grave. **Brian's** reading of the RSA suggests it speaks only to full cemeteries, not individual graves. He understands cleaning and repair of individual monuments to be within the purview of care and maintenance.

### **Cemetery in the Woods kiosk cleanup**

**Judy will contact the Scouts** to see if they would be interested in refreshing the kiosk, a lovely and appreciated project whose contents are showing their age.

### **Trash handling at Pine Grove**

**Judy** observed that many people are casual about leaving things behind from plot cleanups. She suggested we provide picketed areas for visitor use. After some discussion, we agreed that **for now Mike will manage the cleanup routinely and we will evaluate how successful that is.**

### **Flags, public interest, cemetery space** (unscheduled conversations)

-**Judy** reported that the flags for Vets project with the Historical Society is coming along nicely, with generous donations received.

-**Judy** has spoken to the Historical Society about the possibility of having the NHOGA present a program to them, both for its own sake and in the hope that interest will be stirred in developing a Friends of Brookline Cemeteries group.

-**Judy** and **Mike** would like to determine which spaces at Pine Grove are permanently unused and could potentially be recovered by the town for future interments.

-**Judy** also suggested that we consider what other town lands might be appropriate for additional cemetery space in the years ahead. Currently, most undeveloped town lands are held for conservation.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m. The next meeting will be Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Ann C. Somers