



Telephone (603) 673-8855
Fax (603) 673-8136

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

P.O. BOX 360 – 1 Main Street
BROOKLINE, NH 03033-0360

<http://www.brooklinen.h.us>

***Brookline Cemetery Trustees Minutes
October 28, 2022***

Meeting held in person at the Brookline Public Works building and via Zoom

Attending:

Brian Rater, chair

Mike Wenrich, sexton

Ann Somers, secretary, via Zoom

Judy Cook, member

The meeting opened at 10:35 a.m. There was no public input.

Approve minutes

The minutes from September 30th were approved unanimously as written: **Ann-Y, Judy-Y, Brian-Y.**

Sexton's report

Mike reported that he had purchased the agreed-upon whiteboards from Walker Products for \$670, below our budget of \$750. The Monahan repurchase of plot P345 has been completed and the \$600 check sent.

Mike stated that it has been a quiet month for burials, which is fortunate because Tyler is out for a month and current BPW efforts toward winterizing take priority. The water-access system will be installed in the spring.

Discussion of budget

Brian advised us that the town is now anticipating legal fees in excess of \$1M in connection with a lawsuit regarding the town's response to a workforce housing proposal, and we should anticipate austere conditions for other department budgets, including ours, going forward.

Update on records

Judy reported that by chance, while cleaning monuments, she learned from a visitor of a plot at Lakeside where they had recently installed monuments on a plot for which we have no records of burial. In Pine Grove, the locations of two infant burials from 1919 and 1921 within one 20 x 20 plot are uncertain. **Mike** noted that when it comes to the last two likely burials in that plot, he expects to be able to accommodate the conditions. **Judy** reiterated her suggestion of our using ground-penetrating radar in spots of particular interest at both Lakeside and Pine Grove.

Update on monument cleaning/restoration

Judy reported that the Rockwood Five (P149) are now vertical and intact, and similar work on the Rockwood Six (P135) will continue next year. The Shattuck markers on the corner between them will be straightened up at that time; likely a tangling of tree roots was the cause of their misalignment; the tree is gone. **Judy** anticipates that next year Jim Larsen, an Andres/Symposium associate, will use his truck with a boom to lift and re-set the tall and heavy Jeff Smith monument (P128).

Judy informed us that, thanks to the very welcome help of various volunteers, this year ALL of the flat makers in Pine Grove will have been adjusted to appropriate ground level and surrounded by pea stone.

The grave markers in the Ancients section (the southeast corner including along the Route 130 fence), that have been discovered/uncovered this year but remain lying on/in the ground to be covered again by leaves and pine needles, have been identified by **Ann** with snow stakes so they can be found readily next year when there is time to address them.

Sidewalk at Pine Grove

The planned sidewalk along South Main Street is currently scheduled for Spring 2023. It appears that uncertainty remains in some quarters as to whether that is definitive. We will seek clarity prior to our next meeting.

Pine Grove layout

To evaluate how best to lay out the southwest corner for future gravesites, **Ann** met with **Mike** on site to understand his requirements and preferences, then **Ann** and **Judy** met to evaluate how those might best play out on the land available. A number of thoughts were gathered and recorded for further consideration; there will probably not be time (or need) to address it in the very near term. **Judy** is interested in near-term installation of granite corners on all plots, including those missing from long-established plots. **Ann** has been uncovering, as she comes to them, many corners that had become partly or fully hidden.

Pine Grove fencing

1. **Judy** suggests that we close permanently the old gate on Route 130 and re-use its tall granite posts for the South Main entrance of Potanipo Way when that is repositioned.
2. **Judy** suggests that we make use of the rock pile adjacent to the rock wall along Cross Road to extend that wall east toward (but not as far as) the existing picket fence.
3. **Ann** suggests that we install between the current Cross Road picket fence and the expanded rock wall a post-and-chain gate protecting the well access. This will echo the post-and-chain fencing we envision for the

currently unfenced section along South Main, which will be extended toward (but not to) the Cross Road intersection.

Vault repair

Judy reported that the “vault” building which we currently use for storage of tools and materials, which is made of concrete blocks with a concrete roof, has a number of cracks in the joints and needs to be repointed. There also is exposed rebar in one indoor area of the roof. **Brian** knows of a good mason and will contact him to evaluate.

Visioning

Ann spoke of having heard three times this year that Pine Grove was the worst-kept cemetery in the area. She noted there are two clear differences between Pine Grove and cemeteries viewed in surrounding towns. Brookline allows substantial freedom in family decoration of plots and gravesites, while most cemeteries have restrictions. This appeals to the taste of many, but not of all. And Brookline has not invested over the years in actual lawn management, but rather simply mows what is there – which ranges from planted grass in some spots to mixed and/or sparse natural vegetation in others. She would like to get a sense of what the general population of the town wants to focus/spend on.

Brian noted that the Selectboard had talked of 10-year “visioning” for the Master Plan, and we had asked to be included. Mike suggested, and we agreed, that each of us should write up our own ideas and bring them to the next meeting. We also agreed that we will need to decide this winter what trees to plant at Pine Grove in the spring.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 9, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Ann C. Somers