

Hollis Cemetery Trustees

Meeting Minutes, September 22, 2018
Meeting held at North Cemetery, Hollis
FINAL

Trustees in attendance: Melinda Willis, Marc Squires, Raul Blanche, and Amy Armstrong. Melinda called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. Ms. Sandra Ballou Allen attended the initial part of the meeting to provide input on her request (see below).

- 1) **Review Congregational Church construction project** – The planned project seeks to allow increased use of the hall at the church. Therefore, sprinklers and/or improved egress from the building would be needed. The envisioned exit ramp design which would infringe on the cemetery grounds needs to be modified. Since last month, the Trustees contacted Tom Donovan from the AG's office and the town's attorney, Dresher, to discuss the matter and there seems to be agreement by both attorneys that the RSA that guides and restricts the described infringement of the cemetery (TITLE XXVI Cemeteries; Burials; Dead Bodies, Chapter 289 Cemeteries Section 289:3, second sentence paragraph III) would be violated, which means that the existing large tree nor the existing stone wall at the cemetery cannot be removed. However, an exception can be made when such construction, excavation, or building is necessary for the construction of an "essential service". In such case, an approved body of the municipality (in this case the Fire Chief and/or the Board of Selectmen, in concurrence with the Cemetery Trustees) would have to approve the exception. The trustees took an action to 1) request Attorney Dresher write an official opinion on interpretation of the RSA and the Essential Service clause, and 2) schedule a meeting with the Selectmen, the Fire Chief, attorney Dresher, and the Trustees to review and discuss the matter and arrive at a conclusion.
- 2) **Review updated plans for the Howe lots** – Since the last meeting, Ms. Howe provided the necessary information on who is to be buried in which lots. Melinda took an action to mark the recently surveyed map with the desired locations of burials. The Trustees will then review, discuss and approve the burial plan at the next meeting. Documentation of trustees' conclusion in the affirmative, and recommendations regarding allowance for future burials at the existing Howe lots at Pine Hill cemetery will then be provided to Ms. Howe.
- 3) **Review and discuss request from Sandy Allen to allow transfer of ownership of a 4-grave lot in Section D, Lot 9-a from her father Francis Ballou, who is deceased, to herself** – The Trustees met with Ms. Allen and discussed the circumstances of the request. As a result, the Trustees agreed to allow the transfer. Marc made a motion seconded by Amy to allow ownership transfer to Sandra Ballou Allen. The motion passed on a 4-0 vote. A letter requesting the transfer is on

file. In addition, the Trustees took an action to write into the cemetery rules the lot ownership transfer process so that future buyers of lots understand what the process is and actions that they should consider taking to make it easier to transfer ownership of lots.

- 4) **Signs at East Cemetery** – Amy provided information on cost and drawings provided by Classic Signs Inc. on the proposed sign designs. A best and final price for the complete project at East is desired. In addition, once the proposal is obtained, the Trustees will determine whether to start the project this year or next spring, and if funds need to be encumbered this year. Once the information is obtained, then the Trustees will take a vote to approve the plan.
- 5) **Webster-Greene buy back request; motion and vote** – The lots are located in a closed section of the East cemetery. As such they cannot be purchased by the town, nor transferred, nor made available for future burials. Marc made a motion, seconded by Raul to deny the request on the basis that said lots are in a closed section of the cemetery. The motion passed on a 4-0 vote.
- 6) **Conclusion of Lynch Request** – The Trustees approved Susan Lynch's request to place a bench on her recently purchased lots. Amy made a motion to approve the request and Raul seconded it. The motion passed unanimously on a 4-0 vote.
- 7) **Whitworth request** – The Trustees reviewed the request for planting of a tree and interment of cremations to be placed inside a small "railroad" box. The Trustees agreed to deny the planting of a maple tree but allow the interment request with the caveat that the box and ashes be then filled with sand. This would preserve the integrity of the remains. Therefore, two motions were made. First, Marc made a motion seconded by Raul to deny the planting of the maple tree. The motion passed on a 4-0 vote. Second, Melinda made a motion to approve burial of Mr. Whitworth's ashes in a railroad box filled with the remains and sand. Marc seconded it and the motion passed on a 4-0 vote.
- 8) **Discuss a request by Mr. John Graceffa to transfer his ownership of a two-grave lot in Section H Lots 683 and 684 to daughter Laura Graceffa** – The Trustees reviewed and discussed the request. As a result, Amy made a motion to approve Mr. Graceffa's request to transfer lot ownership to his daughter. Marc seconded the motion which passed on a 4-0 vote.
- 9) **Approval of Cemetery Rules update** – The Trustees reviewed and approved all the suggested changes to the cemetery rules, highlighted in Track Changes format.

10) **Review of Financial reports** – The Trustees agreed that the 2019 budget should be increased to pay for specific needs such as monument repairs and alignment (at Church in particular), East expansion plans, and Special Projects, such as adding water supply at North. The Trustees plan to make this recommendation to the town Selectmen at the next annual budget meeting during the fall 2018. Proposed increases are, 1) \$7,500 for Special Projects; 2) \$2,500 for Survey of East expansion; and 3) \$3,500 for monument repairs.

11) **Approval of Meeting Minutes** – The August Meeting Minutes were not reviewed at this meeting. Approval will take place during the October meeting.

12) **Next Meetings** - Scheduled for Saturday October 27th at 7:30 a.m. at East; and Saturday December 1st at 7:30 a.m. at the Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m. on a motion made by Amy that was seconded by Marc. The motion passed on a 4-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Raul Blanche