

Princeton Cemetery Commission Meeting – Wednesday May 6, 2020
Remote-Meeting
Minutes

Present: Chair Charlie Steele, Greg Miranda, Lynne Grettum

Absent: Lou Trostel, Paul Constantino, and Cemetery Superintendent Bill Bergstrom

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steele at 5:30 P.M.

This meeting was held remotely using WebEx as recommended by the town during the current health advisory prohibition on in-person meetings. The agenda was limited to essential business due to the circumstances. The meeting start was delayed due to issues with the WebEx system.

Cemetery Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bergstrom was absent during the meeting.

Outsourced Maintenance Contract – Two Bids

Two new bids were received after reposting the request for bids, one from the current contractor, New England Acreage Group, and a second from Einstein's Solutions. The total 3-year bid from Einstein's Solution was \$77, 472.84, and the 3-year total from N.E. Acreage was \$99,150.00. The N.E. Acreage bid included about \$12,000 in work estimates that went beyond the specifications of the contract (i.e. extra mowings). Even if an adjustment is made, their estimate is still significantly higher than the bid from Einstein's Solutions. That makes Einstein's Solutions the preferred contractor based on the lowest bid. For what it's worth, the Einstein bid is approximately \$1000/year higher than the budget for the previous 3-year contract, and also includes a higher number of mowings per season than the previous contract.

Members discussed the option of bringing the cemetery maintenance work back in-house, to potentially be performed by the Highway Department. Town Administrator Patch has found the Highway Superintendent receptive to the idea. L. Grettum mentioned past problems with finding seasonal employees and/or with the quality of their work, which was a major consideration in switching to the current external contractor several years ago. While cognizant of past issues, it was decided to pursue the idea further in the interest of potential cost-savings. Chair Steele will try to arrange for a remote-meeting between involved parties (Cemetery Superintendent, Highway Superintendent, Town Administrator, Cemetery Commission Members) in the next week if possible. A decision regarding maintenance services is required within the next few weeks.

It was noted that the current maintenance contractor has also been providing gravesite-preparation services for the town, outside of the maintenance contract itself. Since it appears that we will be switching to a new maintenance provider (either new external contractor or town highway department), provisions need to be made for someone to continue that service.

Chair Steele noted that the Town Advisory Council has approved our request for transfer of \$8000 from the Reserve Fund to help alleviate overages in the current FY 2020 spending.

Memorial Day

Due to health precautions, the annual Memorial Day services cannot be held this year. However, plans are underway for the normal preparations to the cemetery grounds, including the planting of flowers and flags on veterans' graves for Memorial Day weekend.

Items not anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before meeting

None.

Next Meeting – TBD

The next meeting will be scheduled when appropriate by Chair Steele.

G. Miranda motioned to adjourn, seconded by L. Grettum, passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 5:49 P.M.

Submitted by Greg Miranda, Secretary
PCCminutes 5.6.2020