

Meeting Minutes
Princeton Cemetery Commission Meeting – Monday February 14, 2022
Town Hall Annex – Small Meeting Room and GoToMeeting

Present: Lynne Grettum, Paul Constantino, Greg Miranda, Lou Trostel, Andy Brown
Absent: None

The meeting was called to order by Chair Grettum at 7:05 P.M.

Review of Meeting Minutes from January 10, 2022

The minutes from the 1/10/2022 meeting were reviewed and approved as written, by unanimous vote of 4-0.

Superintendent Report (see attached report for details)

Highlights

- Two burials have been scheduled for the coming spring/summer.
- Andy reported his best accounting of grave lots in all town cemeteries based on existing database.

Andy's findings were reviewed. He calculated 1108 graves as listed in the database, versus as many as 3018 from a public website FindAGrave.com. It is known that many older records have not yet been entered into the existing database; the accuracy of the public website is also uncertain. Work remains to be done with data entry whether using the existing database or a newer data management software package, which we are hoping to acquire.

Questions regarding suggested projects were discussed.

- Decision was postponed on which cemetery would have the next flagpole installed; Parker II had been suggested.
- Members approved having Superintendent continue looking into solar lighting options for flagpole installations. Besides hoped for energy cost savings over time, solar power would allow more flexibility in location of flagpoles.

Review Commission Membership Application

An application had been submitted for the open position on the Cemetery Commission by Princeton resident Doug Anderson. In addition to his other qualifications, Mr. Anderson spent significant time and effort volunteering work on various maintenance activities in the town cemeteries during the summer of 2021. Members did not feel a personal interview was necessary, between Mr. Anderson's application information and personal knowledge of the applicant by the Superintendent and various members.

A motion was made to accept Doug Anderson's application for Cemetery Commission membership, which passed unanimously, 4-0.

Appointment must be finalized by the SelectBoard at upcoming meeting.

Demonstration of Existing Cemetery Database

Superintendent Brown brought the laptop used for the existing ACCESS database of cemetery records, with the intention of opening the database for a brief review by Commission members. Unfortunately, it was not possible to open the database and the demonstration was cancelled. If anything, this points to the continuing need for better software, as we are currently investigating.

Progress Updates

FY23 Budget:

The review process of the FY23 budget proposals from the various town departments is ongoing, with nothing new to report.

Advisory Committee liaison Michael Cote suggested the possibility of making cutbacks in the Superintendent salary increase that had been approved mid-FY22, in effort to meet proposed 3% reduction in overall department budget. Members considered the prior increase to be part of current fixed expenses, and did not approve.

Highway Department Discussion:

Chair Grettum gave an update on status of current discussions about the Highway Department taking over various maintenance duties from the Cemetery Department.

- Discussions advancing at rapid pace.
- Chair Grettum and Ben Metcalf are to meet and formulate a financial comparison of 'merger' versus current arrangements.
- Highway Dept. could make good use of a mini-excavator beyond gravesite preparations.
- Highway Dept. having difficulties finding new employees.

Spring Projects

- Superintendent Brown received 40 new veteran's markers from Gardner Veterans associate.
- Obtain quote to finish repairs of crypts in Meetinghouse Cemetery.
- Reinstall the stone entrance pillars at West Cemetery.
- Repair of fence along road at South Cemetery.
- Major tree work – tree removals are currently part of overall planning by town Tree Warden, Tom Sullivan.
- Cemetery Database – the evaluation team is finished with online demonstrations by four software companies. After aggregating data and opinions, finalists will be asked to submit proposals.

Items not anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before meeting

None

Action Item Update

- L. Grettum and G. Miranda – Continue evaluation of cemetery management software.
- L. Grettum – Continue discussions regarding Highway Department take-over of certain cemetery operations.

Schedule Next Meeting

Chair Grettum scheduled the next meeting for Monday March 14, 2022, to be held at 7:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Annex.

A motion was made to adjourn, seconded, and passed unanimously, 4-0.
Meeting adjourned at 8:14 P.M.

Submitted by Greg Miranda, Secretary
PCCminutes 3.6.2022