

Princeton Cemetery Commission Meeting – Monday November 21, 2019
Town Hall Annex - Small Meeting Room
Minutes

December 15, 2019

Present: Charlie Steele, Lou Trostel, Greg Miranda and Cemetery Superintendent, Bill Bergstrom

Absent: Paul Constantino

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steele at the Town Hall Annex – Small Meeting Room at 7:08 P.M.

Review of October 21, 2019 Meeting Minutes

The minutes for October 21, 2019 were reviewed.

A motion was made by Chairman, Steele to accept the minutes as written.

The motion was seconded by member, Miranda.

The motion passed. Vote: 3 – 0.

Cemetery Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bergstrom reported on the status of a variety of completed and ongoing issues.

The lights at Woodlawn cemetery have been repaired.

The grounds repairs in North cemetery were supposed to have been taken care of this fall but the contractor did not follow through. The project will need to be started over in the spring.

An inquiry was made with the Princeton Highway Department regarding repairs to the guardrail outside South cemetery; they will take a look at the situation.

Repairs to broken and fallen memorial stones were completed by the contractor in Woodlawn and South cemeteries. It was mistakenly noted in the minutes from the 10/21/19 meeting that repairs would be performed at Meetinghouse, however that cemetery is under the care of the Princeton Historical Commission. The other cemeteries will be inspected again in the spring to see if any further memorials still require repairs.

It was noted that there is a dispute regarding the number of graves owned/available at the *Densmore* lot in Woodlawn cemetery, where it was asserted that there should be 8 plots rather than 6. According to Superintendent Bergstrom the area under discussion, Lot #13, consists of 6 plots which are all full. Chairman Steele is to follow up on the issue.

Green Burials

Discussion took place regarding the status of the initiative to introduce Green Burials in the Town of Princeton. The concept had been unanimously approved by the Commission at previous meeting on 10/21/19, but a variety of details and issues remain to be worked out before the alternative method can be put into practice.

Superintendent Bergstrom has been investigating the regulations and practices employed by other towns in Massachusetts that already utilize green burial and has been speaking to

officials in some of towns, for example in West Roxbury. He requires more time to continue those efforts.

Chairman Steele had started some preliminary work on drafting amendments for the Princeton Cemetery Rules and Regulations, to both allow for and describe the conditions for green burials. Those were put on hold for the time being as the actual technical details and overall specifications and regulations are still a work in progress.

Chairman Steele will wait to notify the Princeton Board of Health regarding the Commission's intent to introduce the practice of green burials until all the details are resolved.

Superintendent Bergstrom expressed the opinion that it would be preferable to set aside a specific area in one cemetery in which to perform all of the green burials in town. While this is the practice in some other towns, there are no technical specifications requiring the green burial plots to be segregated on their own. Among the issues specific to the town of Princeton is the ability to find a contiguous space in any of the existing cemeteries that could be dedicated to this new purpose. Another question arose regarding how to handle a case in which the owner of an existing plot decides they would prefer a green burial but don't want the location of the grave to be moved away from other family members to a separate area or different cemetery.

Further investigation and discussion will be required to formulate the regulations to implement this alternative burial practice in Princeton. The topic will be a continuing agenda item for the next meeting.

Lot Sale Limits

Regarding the issue as to the Andersons request to purchase a 12th plot within a family grouping in Woodlawn cemetery, Chairman Steele is questioning whether there is a 12th plot available, thinking there may actually only be space for the existing 11. He intends to inquire with the former Chairman to see if more information is available.

No changes were proposed for the existing regulations, specifically Section II, part 2, which states "The total number of lots purchased by a resident may not exceed four."

Next Meeting – December 16, 2019

Chairman Steele set the time and date for the next meeting, 7:00 P.M. on December 16, 2019 at the Town Hall Annex - Small Meeting Room.

Member, Trostel motioned to adjourn.

Seconded by Member, Miranda.

Motion Passed: 3 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 P.M.

Submitted by Greg Miranda, Secretary
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