

Nov 18 2021 11:47 am



City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts
 TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC BURIAL GROUNDS
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CEMETERY TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 21, 2021

The Cemetery Trustee Board meeting was held in the West Meeting Room, 1st Floor at City Hall, 718 Main St. An online link and phone number were provided for those who wished to participate remotely.

Call to Order: Chair Judith A. Perla called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Trustee Members Present: Judith A. Perla, Diane R. Ouellette, Andrew J. Hawthorne

Trustee Members Absent: Andrienne G. Clark

Others Present: Nicholas J. Erickson, PE - Interim Commissioner of Public Works and City Engineer

Others Present Remotely: Michelle Sciabarrasi – Trustee, Jaquelyn R. Poirier – Cemetery Superintendent

Public Forum: No one was present, either in person or remotely wishing to speak.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Andrew Hawthorne and seconded by Judith Perla to approve the minutes from the board meeting held on September 16, 2021. Vote was 4 in favor, 0 opposed. Motion passed. Minutes approved.

General Discussion of Cemeteries:

Staff Reports: Cemetery Department Report 10/21/2021- Progress report given by Jaquelyn Poirier

Forest Hill

Routine maintenance of grounds

- Equipment maintenance
- Cutting and trimming
- Seeded Graves
- Watering graves and flowers
- Installed Veteran markers
- Checked off site Cemeteries
- Cleaned up trash from bike path and cemetery barrels
- Cleaned up down limbs
- Built new leaf box

- Fence Repairs

INTERMENTS	5
INURNMENTS	5
UP RIGHTED MONUMENTS	
UNCOVERED FLAT MONUMENTS	
MONUMENT FOUNDATION MARKING/PHOTOS	4
CATCH BASIN REPAIR/CLEAN	
FILLED SINK HOLES	
TRIMMED TREES	
TRIMMED SHRUBS	
PHONE/OUTSIDE MEETINGS WITH FAMILIES	49
PAYMENTS - INVOICED/PROCESSED	25
FAMILY GENEALOGY	28

Laurel Hill, South Street, West Street & Dean Hill & Hartwell

Cleanup of branches – change flags as needed – weed control

Cemetery Staff

- 3 full-time workers – (1 Light Duty out injury since 10/15/2020)
(1 retirement – 9/27/2021) – Job in process of being posted
- 2 Summer Help
- 1 Superintendent

Administration

Routine administration tasks

- Cemetery Software – meetings with CompuTemps –working on cleaning the data – Laurel Hill migration of data in process
- Columbaria area –design – on temporary hold
- Coordinating with Human Resources personnel issues
- Communication with Facilities Director – mausoleum roof – working on scope of work for RFP – sent information and pictures to help with RFP.
- Mausoleum – Richard Demers - Monty Tech – sent request to Jim Hachey- Vocational Director waiting on approval to schedule repair of stairs
- Working on collection issues due to C19 – sent letters – phone calls
- Meeting with Sally Cragin – Letters from the Front performance – started brainstorming for future events
- Meeting with monument dealer – monument issues
- Organized United Day of Caring
- Updated Veteran Maps
- Both cars have not passed inspections – 2001 Crown Vic – 2006 Ford –Working with Business Manager
- Laurel Hill/Cemeteries - Video management –communication with Chief of Police
- Laurel Hill security proposal questions

New Leaf Box



Fence Repairs



Andrew Hawthorne asked if police reports were filed for any fence damage caused by cars driving into the fencing, and whether the cost for repairs would be covered by an individual driver's insurance. Superintendent Poirier explained that they are not always able to identify the individuals that caused the damage. Police reports are filed, and if an individual is identified, that person's insurance would cover the cost of repairs.

Sally Cragin - Stratton Players Production, New Production, Donation to Cemetery Department:

Sally Cragin is planning a Veterans Day program to be held on the Saturday after Veterans Day, November 13, at 1 p.m. in Forest Hill Cemetery. The program will include a Tribute to Veterans by the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Civil War re-enactors and a walking tour that will highlight some of our Civil War Veterans who fought in the 1861 Battle of Ball's Bluff. Diane Ouellette made a motion to approve the program and the motion was seconded by Andrew Hawthorne. Vote was 4 in favor, 0 opposed. Motion passed. Program approved.

The Stratton Players gifted \$100.00 to the Cemetery Department from donations received from a recent production held at Forest Hill. This prompted a lengthy discussion about donations vs. charging admission for programs in our cemeteries, permitting, and liability. Commissioner Erickson suggested seeking an opinion from the City Solicitor regarding this issue. Permits have been issued for all programs that have been held.

Laurel Hill Cemetery Fencing – Phase 4: Superintendent Poirier is waiting for a quote from the vendor.

Review of Current Cemetery Price List: Superintendent Poirier provided a comparison of the current cemetery price list and proposed price increases. Trustees would like more time to consider what would be an appropriate increase and will discuss at the next meeting.

Preservation of Cemeteries Update: Michelle Sciabarrasi will update and send an email to the Fitchburg Historical Commission to reflect that the Trustees are only asking for historic status for four of our cemeteries instead of all six cemeteries. Trustees are removing Laurel Hill from the list due to the possibility that the upgraded fencing, still not completed, could preclude it from qualifying for MHC grants. Forest Hill is being removed from the list because of concerns that the expense for the proposed expansion plans at Forest Hill and mausoleum repairs could increase significantly, due to strict renovation standards once it becomes adopted as a local historic site.

Mausoleum Repairs Update: Facilities Director Russell Karlstad is still working on an RFP for repairs needed on the mausoleum roof.

Discussion centered around identifying the exact scope of all needed repairs on the mausoleum before requesting money, whether it be from “free cash” or other funds. The question of the cemeteries qualifying for ARPA funds was also discussed. Commissioner Erickson will check to see if this would fall under the guidelines for this funding source.

Superintendent Poirier has received an email from The Massachusetts Marketing Partnership/Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism (MMP/MOTT) regarding a Fiscal Year 2022 Earmark in the amount of not less than \$25,000 from the Massachusetts State Budget for the “restoration and expansion of Forest Hill Cemetery”. Commissioner Erickson asked that the DPW be allowed to utilize this money toward repairs on the mausoleum. Andrew Hawthorne made a motion to approve this, seconded by Diane Ouellette. Vote was 4 in favor, 0 opposed. Motion passed.

Temporary Camera – Laurel Hill: Due to problems with training on the equipment, the Police Department has not yet placed the temporary camera in Laurel Hill Cemetery.

Superintendent Poirier received more information from the video surveillance company that answers some of the questions asked by the Trustees at the previous meeting.

There are still some unanswered questions regarding details of camera installation. Commissioner Erickson will check with Unitil about permission to mount equipment on their poles. It also needs to be determined whether the equipment could interfere with the city's street lighting system.

The IT department needs to be consulted on the network requirements for this system Trustees would like to have Trevor Bonilla attend our next meeting to answer questions on this.

Trustees up for reappointment in January 2022: The terms for two members of the board, Chair Judith A. Perla and Andrew J. Hawthorne are due to expire on January 1, 2022. The process to request re-appointment was reviewed.

Events: The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday November 18, 2021, at 9 a.m. in the West Meeting Room at City Hall, 718 Main St.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Diane Ouellette made a motion to adjourn, and Andrew Hawthorne seconded the motion. Vote was 4 in favor, 0 opposed. The motion passed. Chair Judith Perla adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Meeting Schedule 2021:

November 18th
NO MEETING in December

Respectfully submitted,

Diane R. Ouellette
Clerk, Trustees of Public Burial Grounds

Distribution:

Cemetery Trustees
Jaquelyn R. Poirier, Cemetery Superintendent
Nicholas J. Erickson, P.E., Interim Commissioner of Public Works & City Engineer
Gary Withington, Superintendent of Streets
Honorable Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale
Patrick Hare, Mayor's Chief of Staff
Joan David, Administrative Aide to the Mayor

Amanda Alford, Provisional City Clerk
Bernard J. Schultz, Ward 1 Councilor
Amy L. Green, Councilor-At-Large
Tricia Chabot
Peggy Page