

NANTUCKET CEMETERY COMMISSION
Posted Meeting of June 12, 2019, at 3:00 pm
Department of Public Works Office, 188 Madaket Road

DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Attendance: Commissioners Frances Karttunen, Scott McIver, Allen Reinhard (Chair), Lee Saperstein, and Barbara White.

Absent: Rob McNeil

Guest: None

1. Call to Order.

Chair Allen Reinhard called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. There was a quorum at all times.

2. Public Comment

There was none.

3. Approval of Minutes from June 12, 2019.

Scott McIver moved and Frances Karttunen seconded approval of the minutes from the meeting of June 12, 2019; approval was unanimous.

4. Chair's Announcement and Approval of Monument Applications

The Donald Stewart inurnment at the Historic Coloured Cemetery is tentatively scheduled to be on the 28th of July at 1:00 pm. Scott McIver said that the monument design is complete; we are waiting on submission of an approval form.

He also related that the Chick Walsh monument for Polpis Cemetery awaits an approval form.

5. Progress report: Perpetual Care definition, Declaration of Newtown Boundary.

Allen Reinhard reported that the officers went before the Select Board on June 19, 2019, to ask for approval of two amendments to the Cemetery Regulations; they approved the scheduling of a public hearing on July 24th, subject to three successive legal notices in the *Inquirer and Mirror*. Lee Saperstein reviewed the procedure for regulatory change: submission to the Select Board, their acceptance and scheduling of a public hearing, the hearing itself, and final disposition of the request. He reminded the Commission that the request also includes the amendment to monument size in Polpis. The hearing will be scheduled in the Board's agenda as part of its regular business; if scheduled under "Reports from Committees" it could be late in their agenda.

He reported also that, according to Ken Beaugrand, the Newtown boundary request will be the subject of a second submission once Town Counsel has reviewed the request. We are hopeful that something will be submitted on Newtown at the July 24th meeting.

6. Polpis Land Swap Update.

Allen Reinhard said that he has had no word from attorney for the abutting landowner. Scott McIver said that he was tired of this unending delay and suggested that we become more aggressive with respect to their structure's encroachment onto the cemetery lands. Lee Saperstein agreed with him and the two suggested that we send them a notice of encroachment and a request for a remedy. Agreement was unanimous and the action became an approved motion. [Action: Allen Reinhard to meet with Ken Beaugrand to consider next steps in the request for a prompt remedy to the encroachment.]

Incidentally, Allen Reinhard reported that, from his regular tour around the cemeteries, they look great.

7. Next steps at Newtown.

Once the existing boundary is accepted by the Select Board, Allen Reinhard suggested that the Commission should define steps needed for the cemetery's upgrade. These include formal surveying of the boundaries and recording of an acceptable plan; removal of scrub vegetation; completion of the Ground Penetrating Radar, GPR, survey; design of the new layout for the cemetery including entrance, parking, and a grave-free relocation of Cow Pond Lane; and a budget estimate for the projected work for consideration by the Capital Program Committee. It was mentioned that the initial work on Newtown can be covered by our improvement grant but that major items will need Town support.

Barbara White said that the layout might define a section where full-body burials would go and another where inurnments would be. It was agreed by the Commissioners that planning for full-body burials could be helped by a section dedicated to them.

8. Green Burials: Options and Thoughts.

Allen Reinhard reminded the commissioners that we had agreed to continue our discussion of green burials. Scott McIver said that we should define green burials for eventual inclusion in our regulations. The definition may need to distinguish between full body interment and that of cremation remains. Barbara White said that we need to read more and asked that commissioners share any and all thoughtful articles about green burials. Are vaults and coffins potential land contaminants, she asked. We need to understand long-term consequences of current practice versus suggested alternatives. Lee Saperstein added that burial practices for Jews and Muslims did not include embalming and required rapid burial in simple wooden coffins without vaults. He also added that Nantucket soils may not tolerate additional phosphate fertilizer, i.e. bone meal. Frances Karttunen mentioned that re-disturbance/re-purposing of graves, such as would happen with reburial in another location, second burials in the same plot, or legal exhumation upsets all plans for green burials. Allen Reinhard added that, when we consider the longest term,

sea-level rise also should be considered. Commissioners agreed that we should continue to discuss green burials.

9. Pet Ashes in Burial Lots with Lot Owners.

Allen Reinhard reminded the Commissioners that the issue of pet burial arose from a single request but that a return to the issue was well warranted. Discussion converged on the feeling that the Commission is not strongly in favor of a pet cemetery but could accept a single pet name on the monument if ashes had been commingled. All agreed that we are not in favor of a subsequent pet burial in a plot. For exceptional circumstances, we can always approve an individual waiver.

10. Update: Access to Historic Coloured Cemetery.

As we wait for final clearance of the debris from the old hospital, nothing new has happened with landscaping an entrance to the Historic Coloured Cemetery but invasive weeds are growing under the fence Allen Reinhard reported. A fix for these weeds may come with formal landscaping done by the hospital and we will continue to keep a watch. Frances Karttunen suggested that these weeds are aggressive; let's ask that they be cut before they bloom. [Action: Allen Reinhard will call Rob McNeil to ask for this cutting.]

11. Commissioners Thoughts and Comments.

As the first meeting of the new administrative year, Allen Reinhard pointed out that this was the time for reorganization of the Commission. Before he could say much more, Scott McIver moved and Barbara White seconded a nomination for Allen Reinhard to repeat as chair and Lee Saperstein as Secretary and all voted in favor.

Future work of the Commission, suggested Allen Reinhard, should include the surveying of the bounds of each of the nine cemeteries with the filing of a recordable plan for each. He noted that there will be a cost and that this would be a good use of CPC money.

Scott McIver reported that he has met with Rob McNeil about a contract for repairing broken monuments in the cemeteries. He indicated that an independent survey of damage would be very useful in preparing a bid. He gave Rob McNeil the name of a company that can do such a survey. Commissioners then posed the question of how comprehensive a contract should be bid: cemetery by cemetery or all at once? Lee Saperstein suggested one master contract could be negotiated that could be divided into separately funded phases. Scott McIver offered that this item should be on the agenda for our next meeting. Mention was made by several commissioners of the cleaning and sealing treatment of monuments at Quaker Cemetery with the D/2 Biological Solution and that they continue to look good.

Allen Reinhard continued with a listing of needed future work, which includes new fencing for each cemetery that has not yet received one. For budgeting purposes, we should have a maintenance plan for each cemetery and an implementation schedule for all of them. Lee Saperstein suggested that this was very similar to project management software.

10. Adjourn.

Adjournment was approved by acclamation at 4:02 pm.

Next regular meeting: Wednesday, August 14, 2019, at 3:00 pm in the conference area of the DPW Office, 188 Madaket Road.

Respectfully submitted: _____; Date: _____

Lee W. Saperstein, Secretary

DRAFT