

Freetown Cemetery Commission
Minutes of the Monday, February 4, 2013 Meeting
Town Hall, 3 North Main Street, Assonet, Mass.

Present: Adrienne Levesque and Mike McCue.

Absent: Keven Desmarais.

Call to order: Chairman Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 6:00p.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of November 27, 2012 were received. A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque, seconded by Mr. McCue, to approve the minutes as received. The motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent's Report

The November, December, and January reports were received.

Assonet Burying Ground

Discussion was held on purchasing stone posts to mark section corners in sections 30, 31, 32, 35, and 36, primarily along the lane leading to the loam pile. It was acknowledged there has been difficulty keeping people from driving on the corner lots. Further discussion will be held at the next meeting.

Michael Hathaway Burial Ground

Mr. McCue reported that the Assonet Boy Scouts were planning to clear-cut this cemetery on Presidents Day.

Budget & Articles

Mr. McCue reported submitting the budget for the year beginning July 1, 2013. A level budget of \$10,000.00 was submitted in keeping with the request of the Board of Selectmen to not ask for more unless union contracts required it.

Discussion was held on three warrant articles to be submitted for the Annual Town Meeting:

- ♦ Maintenance of veterans' graves (Ch. 115, §9): This article is submitted annually. The amount requested this spring (\$500.00) is level with the amount requested last spring. There were no objections or changes to this article.
- ♦ Repairs to the main driveway at Assonet Burying Ground: This article was originally planned as seeking to overlay the length and width of the driveway with an estimate of \$31,000. Several quotes were sought, all ranging from \$55,000 to \$90,000. Most contractors had stated they could not overlay what was there due to its deteriorating quality, or that if they did they could not warrant their work.

Mr. McCue reported discussing the matter with the Highway Surveyor, Chuck Macomber. Mr. Macomber felt the Highway Department could repair much of the damage to the driveway and buy time before the whole project would need to be done. In the interim, the driveway suffered further unavoidable damage during winter plowing.

Mr. McCue had floated the figure \$10,000, and Mr. Macomber stated that "would be a start". Mrs. Levesque asked if the amount could be raised to \$20,000. Mr. McCue felt there was no harm in asking for \$20,000, but that no less than \$10,000 should be put before the voters. He said he could check with Mr. Macomber to see if that would be too much or still in the ballpark. It was agreed on consensus, barring any disagreement from Mr. Macomber or Mr. Desmarais, to raise the figure to \$20,000.

- ♦ Employment of commissioners by the board: This article was proposed in a prior year and tabled without submission. It would allow members of the Cemetery Commission to work in the cemeteries for an hourly rate of pay determined by Town Meeting.

Mr. McCue explained the reasoning behind forwarding this request again. Perpetual care at the Morton Cemetery is nearing its end and would be depleted within a year to eighteen months if costs could not be brought down. Funds at the Evans Cemetery had dipped below \$10,000, which was not cause for panic but was cause to be watchful. What was now costing \$225-\$250 in each cemetery could be accomplished for less than \$100 with an hourly rate.

A rate of \$17.50 per hour had been used as a placeholder in the article. It was noted that the Tree Warden is paid \$19.54 per hour, and that the hourly rates for most positions in the Highway Department ranged from a starting rate of \$17.20 per hour to top rates of between \$20.87 and \$22.13 per hour. Mr. McCue did not feel a rate of \$17.50 was unreasonable as it was only slightly above the common starting rate. Mrs. Levesque agreed. Consensus was to leave the rate as shown.

- ♦ The annual article transferring \$5,000.00 from the Sale of Lots account will not be submitted. At this time, a balance remains in the 2011 transfer and the 2012 transfer has not been touched.

A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque, seconded by Mr. McCue, to submit the articles in the amounts of \$500.00 (veterans graves); \$20,000 (driveway repairs); and \$17.50 per hour (employment). The motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

No further meetings were scheduled.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque, seconded by Mr. McCue, to adjourn at 6:58p. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Michael T. McCue, Chairman