

Freetown Cemetery Commission
Minutes of the Wednesday, August 1, 2012 Meeting
Town Hall, 3 North Main Street, Assonet, Mass.

Present: Keven Desmarais, Adrienne Levesque, and Mike McCue.

Guests: Dan LeBlanc.

Call to order: Chairman Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 7:00p.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of June 18th and July 9th were received. A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque, seconded by Mr. Desmarais, to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Assonet Burying Ground

Mr. LeBlanc was present as Veterans Agent and Veterans Graves Officer of the town to discuss the proposed veterans area in sections 35 and 36. Mr. McCue provided a brief background of how the area came to be and what was proposed for the area. It was noted that the intent was to create a uniform appearance, free from decorations and plantings, that would resemble a state or national cemetery on a smaller scale. The ultimate goal was to provide an option for those who may find Agawam and Bourne to be of inconvenient distance.

Mr. LeBlanc discussed options available for headstones, both marble and granite. He stated that not everyone who has served in the military qualifies as a "veteran" under state and federal law. Although the area will be open to those serving in the military, the VA will not provide free headstones to those who are not legally a "veteran". However, any monument company can produce what appears to be a VA headstone for those who do not qualify for a free headstone. These stones would need to be purchased at private expense. Likewise, spouses and children who do not qualify for the free VA headstones could purchase matching stones at private expense. After some discussion, it was decided on unanimous consensus to require upright marble headstones in this area.

Mr. LeBlanc also discussed other benefits available to veterans, and the ability to replace weatherworn VA stones from the Civil War era with the appropriate information and paperwork.

An application form will be developed for the veterans area, asking that a copy of the applicant's form DD-214 be included with the form when available. Mr. LeBlanc will then review the applications to determine whether the applicant qualifies as a "veteran" under the law.

Braley's Cemetery (East) & (West)

Mr. McCue reported that Heath Chace had not had an opportunity to come up with a price for this cemetery yet.

Chace Cemetery

It was acknowledged that the deadline given to the Chace Cemetery Association, Inc., to repay their existing perpetual care deficit had passed on July 31st. Commissioners expressed continued concern that the Chace Cemetery Association had made no effort whatsoever to contact the Cemetery Commission throughout this process.

It was agreed on consensus to refer the matter to the Board of Selectmen, informing them of the Chace Cemetery Association's unwavering silence and offering any resources necessary should they feel it appropriate to refer the matter to Town Counsel.

East Freetown Cemetery

Mr. Desmarais reported no further action has been taken toward placing the stone.

Edminster Cemetery

No new information was available to report.

Guilford Evans Burial Ground

Mr. Desmarais reported visiting the Crystal Springs School and being unable to locate the cemetery. He will meet Mr. McCue on August 2nd at 11:00 a.m. at the school to locate and review the cemetery.

Robinson Cemetery

Mr. Desmarais reported he had not yet gained access from Churchill & Banks.

Tisdale Burying Ground

Mr. McCue reported discussing the cemetery again with Heath Chace. Mr. Chace provided an estimate of \$1,000.00 to clear the cemetery of growth and create a path for access. This estimate was accepted by unanimous consensus.

Winslow Cemetery / Signs

Prices and information were discussed from both sign companies. A decision was reached to purchase the signs from Signs by Tomorrow of Norton, as per the style used in Berkley. Four signs will be purchased initially, one for each of the Friends, Plummer, Richmond, and Winslow cemeteries.

Next Meeting

No further meetings were scheduled.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mrs. Levesque, to adjourn at 8:43p. The motion was carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____

Michael T. McCue, Chairman