

**Freetown Cemetery Commission**  
Minutes of the Monday, March 16, 2020 Meeting  
Town Hall — Assonet, Mass.

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

**Call to order:** Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Receipt of Minutes / Superintendent's Report**

This item was passed over.

**FY21 Budget Update**

This item was passed over.

**Assonet Burying Ground**

Updated quotes were received from All American Signs Plus for replacing the flag pole in the Veterans Section. The benefits of pros and cons of aluminum flag poles versus fiberglass flag poles were discussed, as were options for installation – whether to have the dealer install the pole, or to ask the Highway Department to handle it. Available funding was also discussed. All agreed it would be ideal to have the pole replaced by Memorial Day if possible, but this would require seeking a transfer request from the Finance Committee.

A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mrs. Levesque, to move forward on the purchase of a 25' aluminum pole with dealer installation. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque, seconded by Mr. Desmarais, to seek a transfer request for the difference between our available funds and the cost of the pole. For discussion, Mr. Desmarais noted that due to the current public health emergency, it could be several weeks or longer before the Finance Committee meets. Also for discussion, consensus was that the project will be held until July if the transfer request is not granted for one reason or another. The vote was then called, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Desmarais will call All American during the week to get details on the method of installation, etc.

**Updates on Old Business or New Business**

Only the following item was discussed under this heading; all others were passed over:

- a. Mr. McCue relayed a request from a resident to purchase burial space at the Tisdale Burying Ground. The most recent burial at this cemetery was in 1825, and the Cemetery Commission only has a say in the area where there are currently burials; the rest of the property is controlled by the Conservation Commission. Mr. McCue felt that if any burials were permitted, they would have to be cremations due to the remote location of the cemetery, but he was also concerned at beginning down a slippery slope. Mr. Desmarais and Mrs. Levesque were also concerned what would happen if additional interested parties came forward. Mr. Desmarais was concerned at the possibility of unmarked graves being resold unintentionally. All agreed that the request was reasonable and that we would like to grant it, but that for various practical purposes it should not be granted.

**Other Business Properly Before the Commission**

Mr. McCue relayed an inquiry from a resident with limited financial means as to the possibility of securing a cemetery lot at a reduced rate. The resident did not serve in the military, so none of the standard discounts would apply. Mr. Desmarais asked what obligations the Cemetery Commission has, and Mr. McCue responded that state law does require the town to provide burial space to its residents. Mr. Desmarais felt the Cemetery Commission has the ability to waive fees, and should explore discounts or waiving fees for certain groups. Mrs. Levesque preferred to review any requests on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Desmarais agreed that a policy

set today could be upended by a future group. It was agreed to place this item on the next agenda for further discussion.

**Meeting Adjourned**

A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mrs. Levesque, to adjourn the meeting at 4:35 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michael T. McCue, Chairman