

Freetown Cemetery Commission
Minutes of the Tuesday, February 25, 2020 Meeting
Town Hall — Assonet, Mass.

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J. Brown

Present: Keven Desmarais and Mike McCue.

Absent: Adrienne Levesque.

Call to order: Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

Receipt of Minutes / Superintendent's Report

Minutes of December 6th and 20th, 2019, were received. The Superintendent's Reports for December and January, including bills paid since the previous meeting, were also received.

FY21 Budget Update

Mr. McCue reported on his meeting with Kim Fales and David DeManche. Their recommendation was to add a line for office supplies and budget it at \$50.00, rather than paying for office supplies out of the Printing line.

Discussion of Potential Warrant Articles

Five potential articles were discussed, one having been omitted from the agenda by error:

- a. The annual article to transfer funds from the Sale of Lots account to benefit the Assonet Burying Ground will be submitted.
- b. No article will be submitted for tree work at this time due to time constraints, but prices will be obtained over the summer and an article will be submitted in the fall.
- c. Discussion was held on submitting an article to fund headstone repairs. Mr. McCue noted that the repairs at the Assonet Burying Ground to date have been paid for out of perpetual care, and that an article of this sort could fund repairs in other cemeteries that do not have trust funds. Mr. Desmarais considered the pros and cons of such a plan, including whether the focus should be on town-owned cemeteries or the various abandoned cemeteries. Mr. Desmarais asked if \$5,000 would be enough, and Mr. McCue suggested that \$2,500 would be a fair starting point. He stated his aim would be to look at the Plummer Burial Ground first, since it's the most visible and would provide the best evidence of success or failure. Consensus was to seek \$2,500 and see how far that would take us.
- d. Mr. McCue reported that Tom Copeland gave an estimate for repairing the stonewall in front of the Dean Family Cemetery at Camp Welch. At a little over \$2600, it was felt the price was fair but that the funds could be put to better use elsewhere at this time.
- e. Omitted from the agenda was the annual appropriation for the care of veterans graves, which would remain at \$500.

A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mr. McCue, to submit articles (a), (c), and (e).

Assonet Burying Ground

The following items were discussed under this heading:

- a. Quotes received from All American Signs Plus for replacing the flag pole in the Veterans Section were discussed. The company provided quotes for 25-foot poles with yardarms, either fiberglass or aluminum. The aluminum pole would be about \$2,000 more expensive. Mr. Desmarais was concerned about how a fiberglass pole would hold up to the elements, both wind and temperature. All American will be asked for their advice, and if they have installed poles in any other cemeteries that we could drive by and view. They will also be asked about solar lighting.

- b. No work has been carried out on the old shed, although the asphalt roof shingles are blowing into the field.
- c. No additional headstone work has been completed due to the winter season.
- d. Discussion on the fence was postponed to a later meeting.
- e. Richard Brown's request for a used, small utility tractor was discussed again. Mr. Desmarais offered to check on the possibility of having a used golf cart with utility body donated. Mr. McCue thought this would be good, as it could be used for groundskeeping as well as for taking interested persons around the cemetery when buying lots.

Updates on Old Business or New Business

The following items were discussed under this heading:

- a. Mr. McCue reported that Tom Copeland had finished work at the Capt. Job Terry Burial Ground, and that the few remaining trees could probably be taken down by volunteers in exchange for firewood. Mr. Copeland has moved on to the Robinson Burying Ground, and had completed a little less than half of it as of Saturday morning.
- b. No work has been carried out at the cemeteries at Stop & Shop.
- c. Mr. McCue reported that Mr. Copeland had completed the Payne's Cove Cemetery. He also noted that Mr. Copeland figured out the difference between his original quoted prices for several cemeteries, and the actual cost when a slash-and-burn system was used instead of hauling material. Burning the brush had saved over 50% of the original estimated costs.
- d. Mr. McCue reported that as far as he could tell from watching a recent selectmen's meeting, the overall DPW study seemed to have been abandoned in favor of focusing just on changes at the Highway Department.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mr. McCue, to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Michael T. McCue, Chairman