

Freetown Cemetery Commission
Minutes of the Monday, March 15, 2010 Meeting
Town Barn, 201 Chace Rd., East Freetown, Mass.

Present: Ralph Gurney, Adrienne Levesque, and Mike McCue.

Guests: Keven Desmarais.

Call to order: Chairman Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 7:03p.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of January 25th were received and read by Mr. McCue. A motion was made by Mr. Gurney, duly seconded by Mrs. Levesque, that the minutes be approved as read. The motion carried unanimously.

Retirement

Mr. Gurney's retirement will take effect at the town election on Monday, April 5th. Mr. Desmarais will be taking his seat on the Cemetery Commission. Mr. Gurney brought with him a number of maps, blank deeds, and other documents to turn over to the board. Mr. Desmarais asked questions regarding grave digging, a potential site for a veterans' cemetery, and other matters pertaining to cemetery business. Most of these questions were answered by Mr. Gurney.

Index

Mr. McCue reported the cemetery index is close to completion. He is waiting to meet up with Bruce Wilbur to visit a cemetery off Burns Lane and another off the railroad tracks near J.M. Equipment.

Assonet Burying Ground

Albanese Monuments will continue their repairs in the spring. Mr. McCue reported that Greg Myers phoned recently to confirm he will be mowing this cemetery and the Evans Cemetery again this year. He will be sent a letter with the dates for holidays as was done in the past.

Mr. McCue reported that a complaint was received about branches strewn about the cemetery, and other groundskeeping conditions. He explained to the caller that the caretakers come through in the spring, summer, and fall, but not the winter. He also answered other questions about cemetery maintenance.

Two area funeral homes will receive letters reminding them that the Cemetery Commission needs to be contacted prior to burials. This is in response to two burials that took place in January and March before which we received no communication.

East Chipaway Road cemeteries

New Bedford has been contacted several additional times about creating a right-of-way to access the cemetery at Lot 31, both by the Cemetery Commission and by Selectman Jean Fox, but they have not responded. As for the town-owned cemetery at Lot 29.01, an effort will be made to cut brush in this cemetery when the weather clears.

East Freetown Cemetery

Mr. Gurney reported learning of an additional grave already in this cemetery, and will be in touch with the family regarding where exactly the grave is. Dave Cass has been in contact about continuing the work in this cemetery. It is expected that we will begin offering graves here this summer, and it was noted that the Chace Cemetery may have only ten graves left for sale.

Haskins Cemetery

Mr. McCue reported meeting with Frank Wing about this cemetery on March 11th. The cemetery is still in the name of Mr. Wing's company, which is no longer in business. A question has been posed to Town Counsel as

to whether Mr. Wing can sign this deed himself, or whether he needs to reactivate his company to sign on its behalf. An article was submitted for the Annual Town Meeting to accept the deed to this cemetery.

J. Emerson Ashley Cemetery

Mr. McCue reported meeting with Don and Mim Gurney about this cemetery, which is on their land. There was a great deal of vandalism here many years ago. Some names were taken down from the headstones. No work will be done here, but we will keep an eye on it. Ralph Gurney asked about the Spooner Family Cemetery nearby to this cemetery. Mr. McCue will be visiting it when the weather clears.

Mother's Brook Graveyard

Adam Chapdelaine, City Administrator in Fall River, keeps in contact periodically about this cemetery, but the new mayor in that city is focused on other projects. Mr. McCue reported visiting the cemetery and walking the grounds. If need be, there is enough room to expand this cemetery behind the historic graves. A road could potentially be cut along the stone wall with the new condos, allowing the modern cemetery to bypass the historic cemetery. He also noted the sign had come apart at the entrance.

Plummer Burial Ground

The volunteers working in this cemetery continue to make progress, even in the winter months. Mr. McCue reported that through research, he has determined that Leslie Hershkowitz (formerly Leslie Kirker) is the owner of this cemetery, inheriting it from her father. Mrs. Hershkowitz had been in contact several times regarding the ownership issue. Norine Davis, who is a friend of Mrs. Hershkowitz, suggested we not pursue this matter right now as Mrs. Hershkowitz has not been well.

Richmond Cemetery

Mr. Gurney reported that Wallace DeMoranville is working more hours. We will have to be in touch with him to find out if he is still interested in taking care of this cemetery and the Winslow Cemetery. His work in both last year was very impressive.

Winslow and Nichols cemeteries

Mr. McCue reported sending a letter to Thomas G. Nichols of California regarding his part-ownership of the Winslow Cemetery and his ownership of the Nichols Cemetery. Mr. Nichols replied by letter on March 6th asking for information on someone who could take care of the Nichols Cemetery. Two attempts have been made to contact Mr. Nichols by telephone, to make sure he knows just how far gone the cemetery grounds are before trying to find someone to serve as caretaker. If we are able to contact him, we will offer that the town would be able to maintain the cemetery if a deed is signed transferring ownership.

Next Meeting

A meeting will be posted for Monday, April 26, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned

Upon motion of Mr. Gurney, duly seconded by Mrs. Levesque, the board voted to adjourn at 8:23p. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Michael T. McCue, Chairman