

Freetown Cemetery Commission
Minutes of the Monday, September 12, 2016 Meeting
Town Hall — Assonet, Mass.

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Present: Keven Desmarais and Mike McCue.

Absent: Adrienne Levesque.

Call to order: Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of June 6th and July 5th were received. A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mr. McCue, to accept the minutes as read. The motion carried unanimously.

Single Signature Payments

The contents of Section 58 of Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2016 were reviewed, which provision reads as follows:

SECTION 58. Section 56 of said chapter 41, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the first sentence the following 2 sentences:- For purposes of this section, the board of selectmen and any other board, committee or head of department consisting of more than 1 member authorized to expend money, may designate any 1 of its members to approve all bills, drafts, orders and payrolls; provided, however, that the member shall make available to the board, committee or other department head, at the first meeting following such action, a record of such actions. This provision shall not limit the responsibility of each member of the board in the event of a noncompliance with this section.

A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mr. McCue, to accept this provision and appoint Mr. McCue to be the single-signature for bills for Fiscal Year 2017. The motion carried unanimously.

Bronze Markers

Discussion was held on setting bronze markers. Particularly since Richard Brown has cleaned around the edges of all the flat markers, it's become apparent that many of the bronze markers were set in a manner that was not particularly neat. Different methods were reviewed, and it was agreed to distribute an information sheet, with names blurred out, showing a "wrong" method and a "right" method.

Fall Town Meeting

It was agreed on consensus to submit an article amending the article from the October 2015 special town meeting, to allow a portion of the money no longer needed for tree work at Plummer Burial Ground to be used at Mother's Brook Cemetery to take down a tree that has concerned some of the neighbors. This money was saved at Plummer Burial Ground when nature took care of two of the trees previously scheduled for removal.

Discussion on Tree Work

Tree work at Assonet, Evans, and Winslow will continue as previously discussed. Tree work at Braley's Station has been put on hold most likely until FY18. Tree work at Plummer will be looked at by Heath Chace to see if it's practical for him to take down one or two of the smaller trees. At Mother's Brook Cemetery, Bruce Durfee will evaluate a tree that has concerned some of the neighbors. Mr. Desmarais suggested that if the tree was not an imminent danger, that the neighbors be requested to split the cost of removal if they still want it down.

Assonet Burying Ground

Discussion was held on cleaning the granite veterans' markers. Presently marble and limestone headstones and markers are being treated with D/2 as time allows, and the results have in many cases been impressive.

Mr. McCue noted there are about 36 granite stones that have lichens and other related growths that could use to be cleaned, and suggested that this could be a good job for the county work crew if their graffiti removal machine uses a soft material such as ground walnut shells (as opposed to sand). Mr. Desmarais suggested that even if their machine would not be of use, they could perhaps clean the stones with soap and water, D/2, or some other method. It was agreed on consensus to discuss this with the crew that would be painting the town hall in September, or if they were not certain, to send a letter to the sheriff's office.

Discussion was also held on creating a firebreak on the east property line, in the northeast corner of the cemetery. A proposal will be sent to the Conservation Commission requesting permission to create a firebreak that would essentially be an extension of the road along Section 1 northerly as far as could be gone. This will not clear a new section and will maintain some privacy with the neighbors, but also protect the neighbors against any fires that may arise in the cemetery woods, such as the small one in July nearer the expressway.

Any Other Business Properly Before the Commission

Mr. McCue reported that one of the Assonet Boy Scouts has expressed an interest in cleaning up the Durfee-Hathaway Cemetery. He proposes to enter from the Johansen property rather than through the Weaver property. The deed from Durfee to Weaver references the creation of a right-of-way, but the Johansens are said to already have a clear means of access to the cemetery.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mr. Desmarais, seconded by Mr. McCue, to adjourn at 4:44 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Michael T. McCue, Chairman