

**Freetown Cemetery Commission**  
Minutes of the Tuesday, March 23, 2011 Meeting  
Town Hall, 3 North Main Street, Assonet, Mass.

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

**Call to order:** Chairman Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 7:05p.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of February 22nd were received. A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque, duly seconded by Mr. McCue, to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously. (Mr. Desmarais arrived after this vote.)

**Correspondence**

Mr. McCue stated he would be sending a letter to one of the trustees of the Evans Cemetery advising that body that although the updated list of trustees was placed on file with the town, they should update this list at the Registry of Deeds in Fall River since their trust and trustees are recorded there.

**Assonet Burying Ground**

Mr. McCue provided an update on the damage to the fence that was sustained near the tomb. He reported that the homeowner was resistant toward the repair work that was requested, but that it appeared someone had repaired much of the damage. On consensus, the subject was tabled for the time being.

Mr. Desmarais apologized that he did not bring the copies of the cemetery map with him, but stated he does in fact have them.

A discussion was held on the mowing situation for the spring, as the normal time for clean-up and the initial mowing would be coming up in early April. Mr. McCue stated that rather than increase funding for the Cemetery Commission, the selectmen appeared poised to increase funding for the Highway Department, with the caveat that one or more employees from that department would mow the cemetery. A question was raised as to whether this arrangement would begin April 1st or July 1st. Mr. McCue reported asking Chuck Macomber, the Highway Surveyor, and stated that Mr. Macomber did not seem to care either way.

Mr. Desmarais asked what the funding situation was for the spring, and Mr. McCue stated it was no better than it had been. Mr. Desmarais then made a motion, duly seconded by Mrs. Levesque, that a letter be sent to Greg Myers stating that as no additional funding has been made available to the Cemetery Commission, we would not be able to keep him on for the Assonet Burying Ground, and that instead the Highway Department would assume the mowing. The motion carried unanimously, and the Highway Department will be asked to start on April 1st.

Mr. McCue asked what that would mean for the Evans Cemetery, as Mr. Myers also mows that cemetery. (The Assonet and Evans cemeteries have been mowed by the same person since at least the 1980s.) All felt that since the Evans Cemetery is adequately funded, that Mr. Myers should be able to continue there if he chooses to, so long as the trustees of that cemetery remain satisfied with the work. It was agreed to include that in the letter.

**Budget for FY12**

Discussion was held on the changes to the budget request as currently proposed by the Board of Selectmen. The selectmen have proposed funding the Cemetery Commission at \$6,000, and while taking the remainder of the request plus additional funds and allocating this to the Highway Department. The \$6,000 figure would include funds for the Nichols Cemetery (see "Annual Town Meeting" below). There were no objections to this plan, as the end result would be that the cemetery is still mowed as needed.

As part of this topic, discussion shifted to the Nichols Cemetery. Mr. McCue explained how the Nichols family acquired the property in 1783 from Robert Treat Paine, and how the Hadleys came to own the land around the

cemetery. He also noted that a right of access to the cemetery from Water Street, as granted in a 1960s deed, contradicts the established right-of-way to the cemetery from North Main Street. Mr. Desmarais and Mrs. Levesque each asked questions regarding the established right-of-way. A suggestion was made that Jack Conway and the Hadleys should be approached to put something in writing regarding the existing right-of-way.

As an extension of that conversation, Mr. McCue stated he would like to obtain something in writing from the Coites on South Main Street to allow the town to trim and cut brush and small trees to the east of Section 1 at the Assonet Burying Ground. It was questioned whether they might be interested in deeding some of the land to the town, as their property is divided by a stream and the rear portion abutting the cemetery has no frontage or potential for development. All felt it wouldn't hurt to ask.

### **1995 GMC Pickup**

Mr. Desmarais, who also works for the Water Commission, stated that the Cemetery Commission should move forward with a request for the 1995 pickup, and the Water Commission/Sewer Commission will focus on the 1990 pickup. A letter will be sent to the selectmen requesting the truck when it becomes available.

### **Annual Town Meeting**

Mr. McCue reported that of the three articles already submitted (Sale of Lots transfer, amendment to 1874 vote, and \$330.00 for the Nichols Cemetery), the only article to receive feedback has been the one for the Nichols Cemetery. The selectmen have proposed eliminating this article while increasing their original recommendation for the cemetery budget. There was no objection to this course of action.

Mr. Desmarais reported on his conversation with Jack Healey regarding the employment article. Mr. Healey's recommendation was to wait until a future town meeting, and to focus less on maintenance and more on administrative tasks. Mr. McCue noted that he does not mind volunteering for the administrative tasks, but is not opposed to the discussion. Mr. Desmarais noted that commissioners should be reimbursed for mileage and other minor expenses incurred.

### **Next Meeting**

No further meetings were scheduled.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

Upon motion of Mr. Desmarais, duly seconded by Mrs. Levesque, the commission voted to adjourn at 8:10p. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

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