

PEMBROKE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING

September 14, 2023

Minutes

Present: Daniel Chase, James Garvin, Adam Mendoza, Fleda Young.

1. The meeting came to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. On a motion by Dan Chase, seconded by Fleda Young, the minutes of the meeting of August 10, 2023, were approved as presented.

New Business:

3. On September 11, Catrina Rantala contacted the Cemetery Commission to offer the services of local Scouts to remove the veterans' flags in November. Ms. Rantala expressed her preference for removing the flags from Evergreen Cemetery on Saturday, November 18.

The Commission discussed the offer. Dan Chase, the Commission member who has oversight of Evergreen Cemetery, agreed to the date of November 18. Secretary Garvin will reply to Ms. Rantala to set that date, weather and other circumstances permitting.

4. On September 13, Public Works director V. J. Ranfos received a telephone call from Lisa Franklin offering the services of a youth group to provide a cemetery cleanup day on Saturday, October 14. The group is composed of some 60 youths ranging in age from 12 to 15 years.

The Commission discussed the offer and concluded that the good state of maintenance of the cemeteries, which will continue with mowing and the collecting of leaves through Veterans' Day (November 11), does not offer much possible work for such a large group of youths.

The Commission discussed other possible volunteer jobs for the group, taking into consideration their age range and the possible liability to the town of certain types of cleanup work such as roadside litter collection. Secretary Garvin offered to contact the Pembroke Conservation Commission to see if the Commission needs and could supervise volunteer labor, especially along the Class VI range roads of town which are used as public trails.

Old Business:

5. The Commission reviewed issues of encroaching saplings and tipped monuments that were noted by Commission members Ellen Paulsen and Zachary Sawyer during an examination of Pembroke Street Cemetery on June 20. The Commission also noted that Public Works director V. J. Ranfos will contact the mowing contractor regarding damage to monuments and rutting of the ground in this and other cemeteries.
6. The Commission reviewed the condition of the Ryan Mihill lot in Evergreen Cemetery, noting that the placement of floral ornaments there remains uncorrected. Secretary Garvin sent two letters requesting consolidation of the ornaments to Clinton A. Mihill, the father of the late Ryan, at two addresses on June 5 and September 2, 2023.

Secretary Garvin will re-send the letters to the two addresses with “return receipt requested” so that we can know whether Mr. Mihill resides at either address and has received either letter.

7. Secretary Garvin reported that he had audited the recorded meeting of the Board of Selectmen on September 6, 2023. He reported that the Commission’s letter requesting an amendment to Chapter 155 of the Town Code was approved after a public hearing that was opened at 6:35 p.m. The amended Chapter 155, which now permits weekend burials, has since been posted on the town website.
8. The Commission discussed apparent discrepancies in the record of lot sales and burials in an area of Pembroke Hill Cemetery. An examination of the area by Public Works personnel revealed evidence of former burials not recorded in the town’s Crypt Keeper™ computer database of burials. Public Works secretary Chris Addington is continuing to attempt to rectify the records for this area of the cemetery.
9. Adam Mendoza reported that Public Works will work to ensure clarity in the town’s expectations when the municipal mowing contract is renewed and awarded in 2024. Public Works personnel will meet mowing bidders to explain the specifications for mowing in the cemeteries and to reinforce the need to protect monuments and landscaping from damage.
10. The next regular meeting of the Cemetery Commission will be on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Public Works headquarters on Exchange Street in Suncook Village.
11. On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
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