Historic Cemetery Commission Minutes Town Hall, Conference Room B April 1, 2014 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Deron Murphy (Chair), Mary Louise Formisano (Vice-Chair), Jason Beaumier, Gene Dumas, and Chris Feisthamel (arrived at 6:25 pm).

Others Present: Alan Clarke.

#### Staff present: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner

A concerned neighbor introduced herself to the Commission, mentioned she has a cemetery in the vicinity of her property, #71 and is interested to have the Commission clean it up. Her main concern is poison oak.

### Approval of Minutes – March 4, 2014

Motion by Mr. Beaumier to approve the March 4, 2014 minutes as written. Seconded by Ms. Formisano. Approved 4 - 0.

# Staff's Report

Ms. Hitchen reported that after some intense research she found some possible landscaping equipment the School Department no longer uses; she, Mr.Clarke and Mr. Dumas will be looking further into a donation of riding lawnmowers, a John Deere tractor/mower, trailer, small hand tools, leaf vacuum, etc. later this week. According to the Director of School Facilities this could be all donated but we will need to see the condition of the tools before the Commission takes them. There is a chance a local volunteer may fix the equipment free or at a reduced fee. The Commission discussed where the equipment could be stored – Mr. Clarke suggested storing the equipment at his place, it was also mentioned to store the tools at the Glenwood Cemetery until a more permanent storage facility is erected.

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Ms. Hitchen met with the IT Coordinator regarding the Commission's landing page on the Town's website on March 13<sup>th</sup>; Ms. Hitchen will be forwarding content to upload onto the webpage, i.e. highlighting special commission events and things such as do's & don'ts for cemetery cleaning, adopt a cemetery registration form, etc.

Staff met with DPW Director, Town Manager and Director of Parks & Recreation on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Hitchen noted Mr. Duarte indicated his department could build the Commission a shed for the storage of equipment but not until the fall some time and approximated the cost at \$1000; the possible location of the shed could be at Boesch Farm, the Police Station or Frenchtown Fire Station #2 – a location where there is a person present the majority of the time. Both the DPW and Parks/Rec. Directors indicated they do not have the equipment the Commission is looking for and if they did it would be a liability issue to have non-employees using town-owned equipment on private property. Mr. Duarte and Ms. Bradley pointed out their departments are understaffed and simply do not have the manpower to directly assist the Cemetery Commission although Mr. Duarte offered to have his staff pick up debris and lawn bags after a cleanup. It was also noted that the Commission can bring trash and bags to the transfer station every Saturday from 7-3pm.

Ms. Hitchen asserted the Cemetery Commission ought to request funding from the Town Council for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. She noted that can assist Mr. Murphy with a draft letter – at this point the commission should request as much as possible knowing if any money is granted it may be significantly less. The Commissioners discussed seeking as much as \$5000 noting that based on the condition of the donated School Department equipment it may cost money to fix those pieces; the Commission needs money for startup costs, shed, ongoing supplies, (i.e. gas, grass seed, etc.).

Mr. Beaumier stated that he has already applied for two grants; those being a Walmart grant for \$500 and a CVS grant for \$1000 to which he should hear a response within the next three months.

## Review of Volunteers & Volunteer Groups

Ms. Formisano offered to maintain the volunteer and group list. Mr. Murphy indicated he had a number of interested people contact him from the published articles/editorials in the newspapers including a professor from

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Salve Regina who specializes in stone maintenance and repair. He will forward his contacts to Ms. Formisano. Ms. Formisano asserted she has put the Commission information on her Facebook account. Mr. Beaumier commented the Main Street Association is still interested in participating in the cleanup although the Lions Club has yet to confirm. Mr. Feisthamel confirmed he will most likely get a few 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade kids from OLM to contribute in the cleanup.

### Establish Schedule and Frequency for Cleanups

The Commission unanimously decided to hold the first cleanup on Saturday, May 3, 2014, from 9 am to 12 noon; rain date Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. After much deliberation the Commissioner's chose three cemeteries to clean; those being Cemeteries #23, 24, and 25 located on Cedar Avenue; Cemetery #31 on Sleepy Hollow Road behind DiMare Restaurant; and Cemetery # 62 located on Crop and Wine Streets.

### Available & Needed Equipment & Tools

Mr. Dumas will be in charge of obtaining lawn bags from Job Lot, Ace Hardware (Salk's), Benny's, Home Depot, and, Lowe's.

The Commissioner's agreed to have a logistical get together on April 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in order to get preparations in order for the first cleanup.

Mr. Murphy tabled Agenda Item # 6 – Develop Plan for Outreach to Private Homeowner's with Cemeteries on Their Property until next month.

Mr. Clarke requested that he have a formal place holder on every agenda since he is the state cemetery advisory representative. He asserted that he is updating his "Cemetery Bible" and adding content from Mr. MacGunnigle's book as well as inserting information that he and Ms. Hitchen obtained from Land Evidence records.

The next meeting will take place on April 29, 2014 at 6:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.