

Historic Cemetery Commission Minutes
Town Hall, Conference Room B
April 7, 2015
6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Deron Murphy (Chair), Jason Beaumier, Chris Feisthamel,
and Gene Dumas.

Members Absent: Mary Louise Formisano (Vice-Chair).

Others Present: Alan Clarke.

Staff present: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner

Approval of Minutes – March 3, 2015

Motion by Mr. Dumas to approve the March 3, 2015 minutes as written.
Seconded by Mr. Beaumier. Approved 3-0 (Mr. Feisthamel abstained).

Logistics for the April 18th Cemetery Cleanup

At this point the Commission has one volunteer and three Commissioners for the cleanup. Mr. Dumas has contacted Mr. Dean Thompson to inform him there will be a cemetery cleanup on his property on the 18th which he had no objection to. Mr. Murphy will bring his hedgetrimmer on the day of the cleanup.

Mr. Feisthamel offered to purchase supplies prior to the cleanup since he was not able to attend; the Commission gave him the authority to purchase \$250 worth of supplies (amount of DEM grant). Mr. Murphy indicated the expenditures must be compliant with the DEM grant and purchased before May 17th; the decision was made to purchase D2 solvent/cleaner (1 gallon = \$40), 2 loppers, pole saw, and a hand saw. Ms. Hitchen would inquire about the use of the Town credit card or how to purchase the items tax free.

Mr. Dumas informed the Commission he researched the cost of low maintenance grass seed at Allen's Seed, located at 693 South County Trail – a slow growing grass seed will cost approximately \$2.00/lb. Ms. Hitchen will keep the information on file for when the time comes to purchase the seed.

Discussion of Equipment: Next Steps/Options

The Commissioners requested Ms. Hitchen to prepare a spreadsheet indicating all of the equipment that was donated from the School Department.

Long Term Strategy for Commission & Vision Statement

Mr. Murphy informed the Commission that he would like to establish a plan, vision and mission statement. He asked everyone to think about the HCC goals and objectives over the next couple of months and the Commission could discuss again to collect individual and collective thoughts. Mr. Murphy handed out an example bulleted list of his ideas including: making sure all cemeteries are identified and visited at least "x" times per year; determine what needs to be done for each cemetery; solicit volunteers; funding; trash/material removal; tools; communication to public; and meetings.

Recent Information from Mr. Clarke re: Cemeteries #4 and 10

Mr. Clarke mentioned that he would really like to get Cemeteries #4 and #10 cleaned up and adopted by the neighborhood association if it is in their restrictions. He suggested scheduling a weekend cleanup to help get the neighbors started and ask for their cooperation. The Commission suggested restoring Cemeteries 4 and 10 at the May or June cleanup and reaching out to the homeowners via letter inviting them to the cleanup. Ms. Hitchen would get a list of the homeowners in the Crystal Creek neighborhood.

State Cemetery Advisory Representative Report

Mr. Clarke announced he will be retiring from the State Commission later this year. His primary focus this year will be finding and recording new cemeteries. Mr. Clarke has been dismantling his cousin's bird sanctuary which contains decent steel square tubing railing; he would like to reuse the railing as permanent fencing around some of the smaller cemetery plots. He mentioned a new burial will take place on April 11th at Cemetery #72, the Wickes Lot,

located on Division Rd, recalling that the HCC cleaned this particular cemetery last year. Mr. Clarke's opinion was if family members are around they should be able to maintain the grounds.

Mr. Clarke raised the question as to who actually owns Cemetery #62 located on Wine Street. It appears the parishioners of First Baptist Church think they own the cemetery while the DAR has adopted it; if the church wants to claim it they should take care of it.

Staff Report

Ms. Hitchen informed the Commission the FY 16 budget has been released; the Cemetery Commission is proposed to be receiving \$2000.00. She reminded the Commission this could change and budget presentations and hearings will be held in late April.

Attain Date for Demonstration of Gravestone Repair

Mr. Dumas contacted Betty Mencucci from Burrillville who would be able to attend a gravestone repair demonstration in May; her contact info is bmencucci@cox.net.

Public Comment

Mr. Feisthamel noted the Warwick Cemetery Commission received a grant from PAL (Public Archaeology Laboratory) to perform LiDAR on the cemetery located at Eton Street.

On April 11th Mr. Murphy will be cleaning Cemeteries 23, 24 and 25 as part of his Day to Give Back community service event. Mr. Murphy also recognized Zac Magiera's official rank to Eagle Scout which happened at the Seabee Museum.

The Commissioners acknowledged James Deakin's historic cemetery restoration senior project mentioned in an article in the East Greenwich Monthly.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Dumas, seconded by Mr. Beaumier.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.