

Historic Cemetery Commission Minutes
125 Main Street
October 4, 2016
6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Deron Murphy (Chair), Jason Beaumier, Kathy Healey and Chris Feisthamel.

Others Present: Alan Clarke and Gene Dumas.

Staff present: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner

Approval of Minutes – September 6, 2016

Motion by Mr. Beaumier to approve the September 6, 2016 minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Feisthamel. Approved 4-0.

Discussion of Fall Cemetery Cleanups

Mr. Murphy indicated the September 24th cleanup was largely successful due to a solid core of volunteers. The Commission and volunteers restored Cemetery #9, the John Spencer Lot where 25 lawn bags were filled and a pile of branches were left by the road for DPW. Also cleaned was Cemetery #72, the Wickes Family lot where about 50 yard bags were filled and another pile of debris was left by the side of the road. In terms of next steps for Cemetery #72, he and Mr. Feisthamel discussed fixing/placing stones back upright as well as fabricating a base for several stones. Mr. Feisthamel noted Cemetery #62, the Baptist Cemetery was also cleared out.

Mr. Murphy said he and Mr. Beaumier walked the entire length of Partridge Lane and could not locate Cemetery #84, the Spencer-Straight Lot, so that will be scheduled for a future cleanup.

In terms of logistics for the October 22nd cleanup the Commission selected Cemetery #44, the James Sweet Lot and Cemetery #45, the James Pollard Lot since both cemeteries are in the same general vicinity on Shippeetown Road. Ms. Hitchen said she would contact the property owners of both #44 and #45 for their permission allowing the Commission and volunteers onto their property. The Commission also identified Cemetery #35, the Clement Weaver Lot as a cemetery to restore. Mr. Murphy would contact that property owner.

Mr. Clarke asserted he would provide an updated conditions report on all 95 cemeteries for the next meeting.

Correspondence received from General Nathanael Greene – Pettaquamscutt Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

The Commission read into the record the letter received from the General Nathanael – Pettaquamscutt Chapter National Society DAR and acknowledged and accepted their generous donation. The Commission noted the metal detectors are esteemed citizens of East Greenwich and the metal detecting technology in no way disrupts the sacred grounds as sonar only probes six – eight inches deep. Furthermore the detectors never go over grave sites. In spite of this the Commission honored their request that future metal detecting only be done by obtaining permission from the Chapter beforehand.

Ms. Hitchen would send a thank you letter.

Discuss Research of Sheds to Purchase

Ms. Healey provided prices, sizes, various styles and models of sheds from Home Depot, Lowes and BJs. There were numerous options to choose from, all of which seemed expensive and not exactly what the Commission had in mind. Mr. Feisthamel volunteered to research online shed plans to construct themselves in lieu of purchasing with the concept it would be cost efficient.

Storage of HCC Equipment

Staff asked for clarification on location of equipment and assets. Mr. Beaumier has since taken the Marley string trimmer with 2 of the 3 attachment s, rakes and puller bear from Mr. Dumas' garage. Mr. Dumas still

has possession of the working Lawn Boy mower as well as the Billy Goat that he would like removed. The Steiner has been at Alan's Sanctuary for quite some time with the notion it will be fixed and sold. The Van Guard Blower as well as a non-working Lawn Boy mower are still at Lenny's repair shop. The Giant Leaf Vacuum is still on loan to the E.G. Cemetery who have yet to use it.

Long Term Cemetery Planning

Table for a Future Meeting.

Financial Review

As of the last received Bank Newport statement received there is \$4,072.08 in the HCC account.

Participation in Veteran's Day Parade

The Commission members voted to pass on participating in this year's upcoming Veteran's Day parade due to prior commitments.

State Cemetery Advisory Representative Report (Alan Clarke)

Mr. Clarke commented Evelyn Wheeler has now presented her proposal regarding abatement from taxation for property on which a cemetery is located to nearly all cities and towns. At this point the Town of Richmond has declined to pass such an ordinance.

Public Comment

The Commission noted long term planning must be discussed as they are more than a yard clean-up club.

Next HCC meeting is Tuesday, November 1st.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Beaumier, seconded by Ms. Healey. Approved 4 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.