 **City of Salem, Massachusetts**

**Department of Open Space**

***Cemetery – Shade Tree – Open Space***

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**CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**AUGUST 30, 2017**

A meeting of the Cemetery Commission was held on Wednesday, August 30, 2017 at 6:30 pm at 120 Washington Street. Members present were Roberta Clement, Patricia Donahue, Ruth Kapnis and Anthony O’Donnell. Sean McCrea, Assistant Director of Public Services, Christine Lutts and Charlie Lipson of Friends of Greenlawn, Mary Ann and Frank Silva, Kate Fox of Destination Salem and Dave Cronin foreman of the Cemetery division, were also in attendance.

Motion was made and seconded to accept minutes of Secretary’s Report as read. The appointment of a new Chairperson will be done in executive session.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Broad Street Cemetery –status of tree trimming –** Sean reported that Patrick Cheney, (recommended by Tim Jenkins, Friends of Broad Street),had given him a target start date of August 31,the work taking about three days. He has not heard from him. Today, Cemetery workers removed a nuisance dead pine that concerned Friends of Broad Street. The Cemetery Commission wants the work started by September 13 or we will look elsewhere.

**Cemetery Signage Rules of Etiquette in Spanish–status**- Sean reported that sign department at the DPW is working on this with the Human Resources Director to make sure translation is accurate. The recommendation from the Cemetery Commission is to add two new signs in Spanish in the Burke lot section and two new signs, one each, for the front, replacing the original signs with the Spanish and English translation.

**Computer Status-update-** Sean reported that he had to cancel his meeting with the trainers and is rescheduled for September 11. The Commissioners hope this new computer system will be available to the public to use very soon.

**Fountains –final decision and vote** – We had previously discussed the possibility to save money of purchasing only 2 fountains (one for Sargent Pond in addition to continuing to use refurbished fountain and one for Fountain Pond). However, Sean reported that the refurbished fountain is showing signs of “demise”. We also discussed the possibility of replacing the fountain in Fountain Pond with a smaller one with a lower spray circumference (perhaps one with less horse power) because the spray pattern is too big for the small area. There was discussion about possibility having no fountains in Sargent Pond, putting fountains in cemetery entrances, and replacing fountains with an underwater generator which would be more practical but noisy and not aesthetically pleasing. Most of us agreed, however, that people have enjoyed the beauty and peacefulness of fountains in the ponds and it would be hard to eradicate them. We also discussed the runoff from Kernwood. Sean sent an email to Kim Driscoll expressing concern. Barbara Warren from Salem Sound Coast Watch and Beth Rennard with a picture of a huge truck spraying on Sargent Street. He also notified the engineering department to see if they could verify where the runoff is coming from. Sean said that whatever they are spraying, whether an insect deterrent or a fertilizer contributes to runoff into Sargent Pond and he is convinced that whatever leeches into the ground and runs off into the pond contributes to the algae problem. This runoff is not good for the wildlife or the pond. Dave is going to clear out the growth covering the pipe from Sargent Street running into the pond so it can be seen better. Sean stated that if we could oxidize the water enough and get rid of the runoff, we might not need the algae control contractor (Solitude Lake Management) that is very expensive. The hope is that the water is tested to prove that runoff is coming from Kernwood and solutions to the problem will follow. (close off pipe, etc?). We are delaying decision and have set a target date for January 1, 2018. It is anticipated the monies would come from the Meldon Fund . A letter is being prepared to the Trust Fund Commission to request payment for the $4500.00 invoice to Solitude Lake Management in addition to a request for a quarterly report of the interest earned from the various Trust Funds. It was our initial understanding that Sean had already met to request this money but he had only met for an educational session about trust funds .Sean indicated he will email us a copy of the invoice from Solitude Lake Management. It was determined that quarterly updates from the trust will be sent to Kelly Ryan with **Attention: Cemetery Commission** .

**Doggie Bags and Barrels** - Sean asked us to keep this as unfinished business. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided to have 3 doggie bag dispensers and signs at each walk in gate on Liberty Hill Ave, Orne Street, and at the map next to cemetery office on Orne street . We agreed that the doggie bag dispenser in the Salem Common was an example of something that could be very appropriate for Greenlawn Cemetery. It was decided to purchase one to three extra bag dispensers and signs to use where needed in cemeteries. Presently we have 10 barrels in cemetery but will purchase 3 more for a total of 13 barrels. Sean assures us it will be completed by the next meeting**.**

**Greenlawn Cemetery Master Plan-progress and status –** Sean reported that this is still in the hands of Erin Schaeffer who is drawing up a draft of the scope. He will reach out to her to come to the next meeting to update us .Other than Greenlawn we need to focus on all of the cemeteries. Charter Street renovation is already in progress.

**New Business**

**Presentation by Kate Fox, Destination Salem**- Sean suggested that Kate visit to talk about film permits. She presented three things:

1. How would the Cemetery Commission like us to handle filming requests in cemeteries? She receives them a couple times a week and more as October looms. She understands that these are to be approved by the commission. The requests have previously been rubber stamped by Ellen Talkowsky, Ron Malionik In the future as Kate gets film requests, she will notify Sean and a group email will be sent out from Kelly. Perhaps usage fees could be charged for film use in cemeteries. It was agreed that a list of rules and regulations regarding historic cemeteries be composed along with a set usage fee structure to benefit cemeteries. It was also mentioned that a fee structure should be in place for chapel use, e.g. weddings, memorial services, etc. We will work on this in future meetings. We would like to look at a similar list of rules and Kate agreed to look for us.

2. What would the cemetery commission like visitors to know about cemeteries .

3. Walking Tour community is engaged in preservation and protection of cemeteries. Most requests are for Howard St, Broad St, and Charter St.

**Vote on burial obligations** - Kim Driscoll was unable to be here so this is tabled until next meeting

**Cemetery projects to date** Anthony O’Donnell reviewed all of the meeting minutes and agendas to check what has and hasn’t already been completed. We request that the following be completed by Sean McCrea for the next scheduled meeting:

1. Tree pruning in Broad Street cemetery

2. Cemetery signage- English and Spanish

3. Computer training completed

4. New letterhead sent to Commissioners

5. Sean will get the exact amount used for annuals for Memorial Day from monies from Perpetual Care Fund, not the Barnes Fund as previously stated

6. A plastic A frame sign, “**Funeral Service Today**” , should be placed at both vehicles entrances. Also, where there is going to be a burial, other plastic A frame signs saying **“Funeral in Progress – Please be Respectful”** should be at the beginning and end of the area used for the service.

7. Uniforms- Contractors and sub-contractors that open the graves should be uniformed. We requested Sean to revisit contract and address this issue. This creates a better image and is done at other cemeteries.

8. Five year continuous maintenance plan as well as beautification plan.

9. We had asked Kathy Holman from Essex Tech about getting assistance from their students and were urged to reapply after July 1st of this year for the fall. If they are agreeable to help Sean will make a list of things for them to focus on.

10. Cleanup of graves will done in one section. Previously we had advertised in newspaper that grave cleanup would be done on April 1st of every year that all material outside of cemetery regulations (eg. shrubs outside of 1 foot from the stone )would be removed. We would like to get back in that tradition. We could also put sign up at cemetery board at front gate.

11. Clarification for protocol for removing flags on veterans graves – Sean spoke to Kim Emerling , Veterans Agent, who said that the only time that we are obligated to have flags on Veterans graves is Veterans Day and Memorial Day. Policy at Greenlawn is that flags are removed for the winter.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, at 6:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:45.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth Kapnis, secretary