



KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL  
MAYOR

CITY OF SALEM  
MASSACHUSETTS  
CEMETERY COMMISSION

98 WASHINGTON STREET - MAILING ADDRESS  
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970  
TEL. (978) 745-0195  
FAX (978) 741-7041

**BOARD MEMBERS:**  
PATRICIA DONAHUE  
BETH GERARD  
ANTHONY O'DONNELL  
JEN RATLIFF

**MINUTES OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSION  
January 20, 2021**

A meeting of the Salem Cemetery Commission was held on January 20, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., via ZOOM, an online video conference call system. Present on call were:

**Roll Call**

Present on call were: Acting Chair Beth Gerard, Members: Patricia Donahue, Jen Ratliff and Anthony O'Donnell; Tree Warden Robert LeBlanc and Joanne Roomey, Commission Clerk.

**1. Robert LeBlanc: Cemetery Work Report**

- Interment Activities at Greenlawn Cemetery for 2020 are as follows:

Full Burials: 69  
Cremations: 65

2019 totals were: 50 Full Burials and 56 Cremations

- The following is an update on the cemetery maintenance and fall clean-up. We have been fortunate that the early snow has melted, and the crews have been able to continue with grounds cleaning. Greenlawn has been mostly complete, just a few pockets here and there, Charter Street Cemetery has been fully cleaned. Essex St. was done on Friday and we will continue on Broad St. and Howard St. as long as the weather holds. Two out of the five staff members were back to work after a (14) day quarantine on the first week of December.
- The Staff continues to follow social distancing guidelines and remains vigilant in the mask wearing protocols during work. Most of the staff are taking advantage of the weekly COVID-19 testing provided by the City.
- With the winter weather and the fewer people tending to the graves, the Staff has reduced the number of barrels in the Greenlawn cemetery. This is also in response to more dumping of construction debris after hours and on weekends at the cemetery. Unfortunately, the reduced barrels have led to dog walkers dropping bags of feces on the ground.

- One of our newer employees, Mark Rooney has decided to move on to another job. Mark was only here for just one (1) year. This now vacant position is classified as a truck driver in the cemetery. I hope to get the position filled before the springtime rush.
- Wreath's across America was a quiet success in December. The truck arrived on December 16<sup>th</sup>, with 2,000 wreathes. The boxes were unloaded by cemetery staff and volunteers and stored inside for the next couple of days. Unfortunately, the following day, December 17<sup>th</sup> was when we got 15" of snow. All the driveways had been plowed throughout the cemetery and the volunteers showed up on Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup>. By 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, all the wreathes had been distributed around Greenlawn Cemetery.
- There has been an unforeseen set back on the work to the garden doors for the Dickson Chapel. Work had begun by Eagle Point wood workers under the supervision of Mr. Dennis Gray of Gray Architectural firm. Unfortunately, Mr. Gray passed away last month, and the wood workers had to stop until a new architect could be secured by the City to oversee the historic renovation work. Hopefully that project will resume shortly.
- On December 27<sup>th</sup> there was a Drone flight at Greenlawn Cemetery that photographed the entire grounds as part of the Cemetery Master Plan by Martha Lyon Architect.
- Right before New Year's Eve, there was a water leak at the cemetery and the water department had to shut off an irrigation line that feeds a spigot near the maintenance garages. This faucet is not in use during the winter months and a full repair will be made in the spring.
- Sixteen additional burial boxes were purchased at the end of December, this supply should get us through till the springtime, depending on the demand in the next couple of months. The purchase of the burial boxes comes from the Sale of Lots and Vaults line item and needs to be approved by City Council to move money into that line item to make purchases.
- Lastly, Mr. LeBlanc is in the process of preparing for spring planting season and spring projects.

## **2. Dr. Lisa Delissio, Salem State University- Update on F. Carroll Sargent Arboretum**

The F. Carroll Sargent Arboretum at Greenlawn Cemetery in Salem was awarded Level 1 Accreditation by The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program. Dr. Lisa Delissio, Professor of Biology, from SSU spoke with the commission regarding community members conducting fieldwork at Greenlawn Cemetery. Students did inventory and collected data on 25 of the hundreds of varieties of tree species found within the arboretum and studied their natural history. Mr. LeBlanc and Christina Lutts visited Dr. Delissio's lab to teach her students on how to measure tree diameters and heights, assess tree health, and determine whether a tree's scientific name has been updated based on recent research.

Dr. Delissio has had her Botany class doing research with the Friends of Greenlawn cemetery volunteers, Charlie Lipson and Marissa Gabrial. She has been awarded a \$2,000 Grant to support the cooperative efforts between SSU, the City and community volunteers, who are working on the arboretum project. Eight backpacks were purchased, complete with measuring tools and notebooks to help the field volunteers continue to collect data on the trees. The goal for this year will be to tag as many trees as possible, get an accurate GPS location and create a map for visitors to the arboretum can use. This survey that is being done was last done almost 100 years ago.

**3. Cemetery Fee Schedule Review and Fee Survey**

Mr. LeBlanc went over the Pricing List he created from a Fee Schedule Survey and none of the prices have changed. You can find the fee schedule on the Cemetery Department's website under **Pricing List:** <https://www.salem.com/cemetery-shade-tree-open-space>

**4. Request from Mr. Edward Bartnicki, Jr., for Fee Adjustment (Vote)**

The commission had a discussion with Mr. Barnicki and among themselves regarding adjusting the Pricing List.

Ms. Gerard made a motion that the Cemetery Commissioners see no need to adjust the present Pricing List or make any adjustments to it. Seconded by Ms. Donahue. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

**5. Greenlawn Cemetery Master Plan update**

Presentations are being scheduled for the following dates: January 26<sup>th</sup> with the Friends of Greenlawn; February 1<sup>st</sup> with the Ward Six City Councilor and the neighborhood; and February 8<sup>th</sup> with the Cemetery Commission, the Historical Commission and the Conservation Commission.

**6. Charter St. Cemetery updates/ plans for re-opening**

The commission is expecting Charter Street Cemetery to re-open the third week in February. The commission is working with Destination Salem, PEM and the City. The Visitor Center will be giving out maps of the cemetery and folks will also be able to take a tour.

**7. Comments from the Public:** None

**8. New Business:** The commission discussed the annual re-organization of the chair for 2021.

**9. Next Meeting Dates:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via ZOOM.

10. **Adjournment:** Ms. Donahue made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Ratliff. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey  
Commission Clerk

**Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and  
City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033**